

Town of Avon Parks & Trails Safety Enhancement Project – Part I

Project

Avon Parks & Recreation Trail Safety Initiative & Emergency Response Enhancement Project

Community Need

Avon's trails are among the most used public amenities in the community. As usage and surrounding community neighborhoods grow, so do safety concerns: trail users lack clear orientation, current bollards impede emergency vehicle access, and there are no on-trail emergency call systems. With more families, students, and seniors using the trails daily, establishing a clear, modern, and reliable safety system is essential.

The Avon Parks & Recreation Department has a successful record of delivering capital improvements and maintaining strong partnerships with emergency services. Building on this foundation, the department now aims to establish a comprehensive safety protocol for our growing park and trail system—prioritizing *prevention* over *reaction* to better protect patrons, staff, and first responders in our community.

Summary

The Town of Avon Parks & Recreation Department seeks to significantly improve safety, navigation, and emergency response capabilities across the White Lick Trail and surrounding trail network. This multi-part project includes (1) the installation of a standardized, color-coded mileage marker and wayfinding system; (2) color striping trail pavement to coordinate with color-coded mileage signs; (3) installation of trail cameras; and (4) the deployment of Avon's first wireless, solar-powered Blue Light Emergency Tower. These enhancements will increase public safety, reduce emergency response times, support trail usability, and establish consistent safety infrastructure throughout Avon's growing trail system.

Project Description

This project includes four components: A) Trail Mileage Marker & Wayfinding Enhancement (\$3,500) featuring quarter-mile markers, trail identity color coding, and trailhead maps; B) Colored trail striping (\$14,000) coordinating stripes along trails to match mileage marker signs; C) Blue Light Emergency Tower Installation- single unit (\$4,500-\$20,000) featuring a wireless tower that provides immediate emergency communication and precise location identification; D) Trail Cameras (\$TBD) along all trails to provide added security and vantage points for first responders. Initially, we intend to start with emergency tower units located at the ball parks and the current Avon Town Hall and expand into the trails with solar powered camera units in the future. Due to the complexity of adding cameras along trails, this will be completed in a later phase of the project and may vary based on other project components.

Project Timeline

Planning (Month 1), Procurement (Month 1-2), Installation of markers and signs (Month 2-3), Tower installation and testing (Month 4-5)- weather permitting. Trail cameras to be completed in a secondary phase, with no projected timeline. Cameras may be integrated into emergency towers as an all-inclusive option for trail security monitoring.

Budget Estimation Summary

Mileage markers and wayfinding signage: \$3,500.

Color striping of trails: \$14,000


Blue Light Emergency Tower purchase and installation (1 unit): \$4,500-\$20,000.

Total possible project cost: \$37,500.

* All costs presented are preliminary estimates derived from initial research. Final pricing will be confirmed upon project approval and indicated specifics.

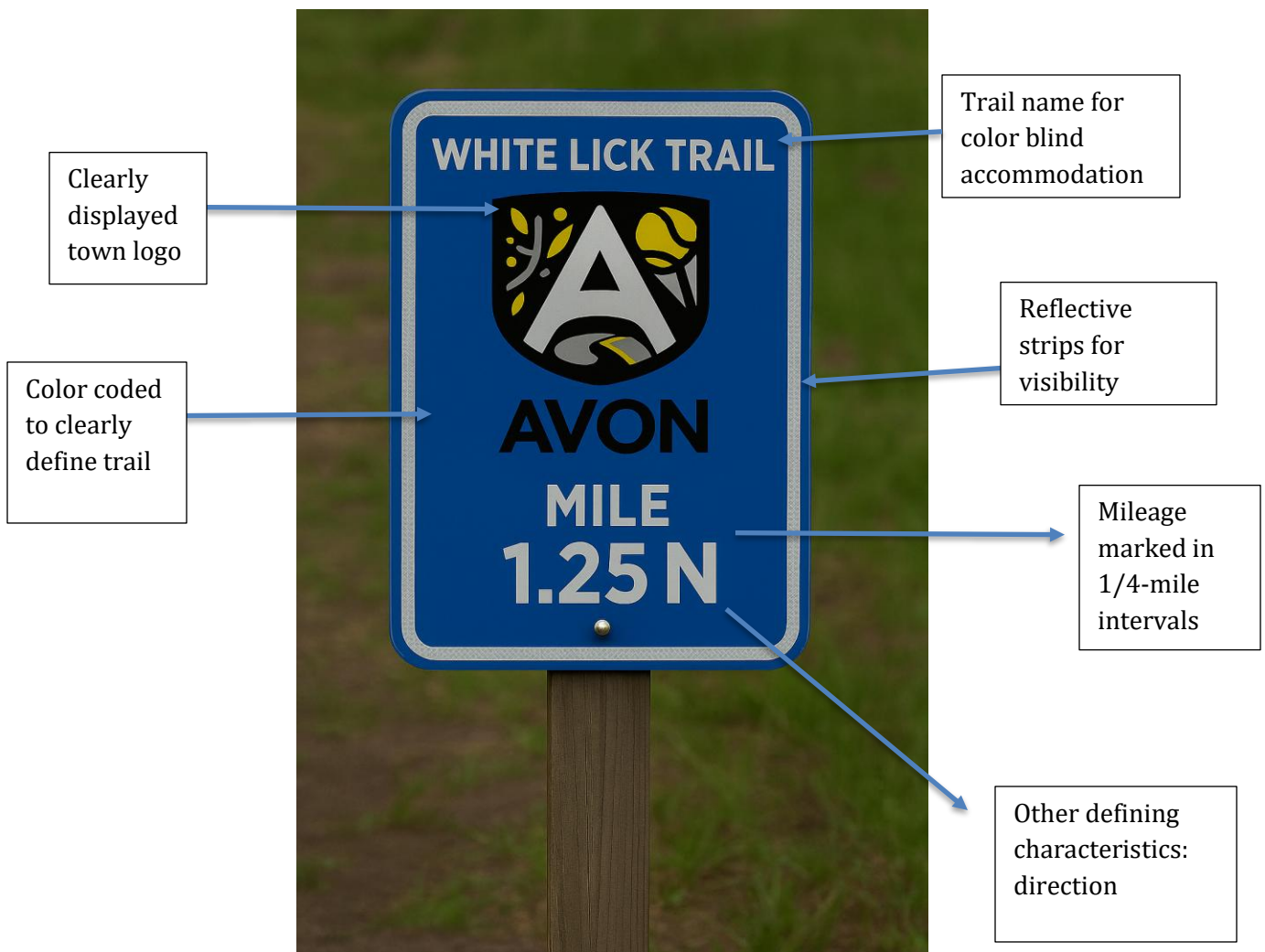
Ongoing Sustainability

The signage system requires minimal annual maintenance, and minimal monthly fees on emergency towers to include a wireless phone line. The solar emergency tower option allows for installation of emergency towers where electricity is nonexistent. The department will incorporate maintenance into its operational budget.

 **This project enhances public safety, navigation, and emergency readiness across the Town of Avon's parks and trail system. As the town continues to grow, and our town-sponsored events gain popularity, our goal is to implement a top-tier safety standard that reflects our ongoing dedication to the community we serve. The department is committed to providing safe recreational experiences for all residents.**

Part II - Examples, Ideas, and descriptions

OPTION 1 - Mile Markers (approximately 3' tall):

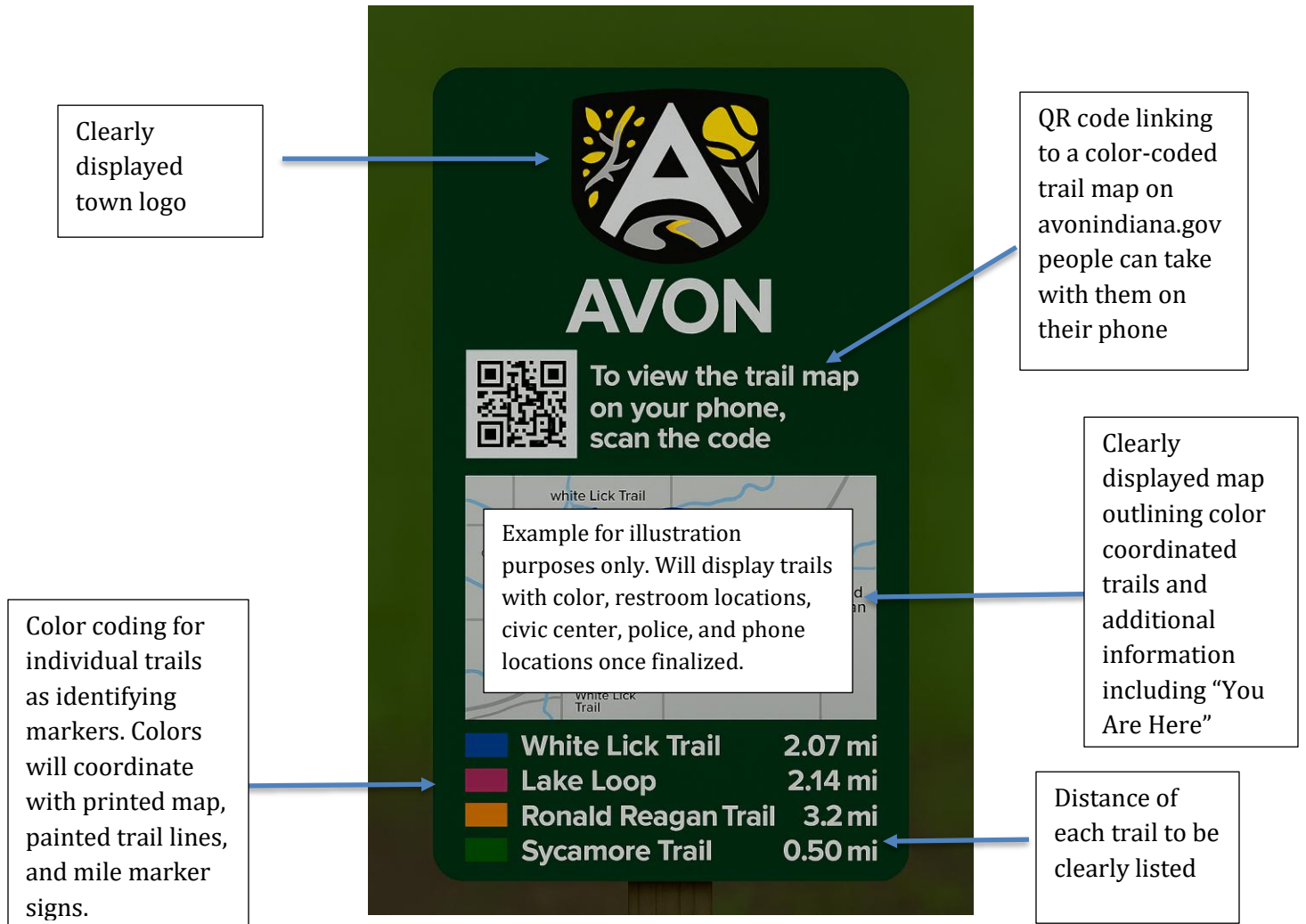


OPTION 2 – Street Signs instead of mileage markers (approximately 8' tall)

Gives the option to have taller signs, similar to street name signs, that are off the ground.



Wayfinding signage: To be displayed in various areas throughout the parks and trails system.



Wayfinding signs will be installed in prominent locations throughout each park and at trailheads. Specific locations to be designated by the Parks Team. Each sign will feature a map with color-coded trail identifiers that correspond to the mile-marker system and paint striping on trails. Maps will include trail names and distances, as well as the locations of nearby restrooms, key landmarks, shelters, the police station, and blue-light solar emergency call stations.

Additional wayfinding signage will be installed to clearly identify shelters and other key landmarks within the parks. Currently, Town Hall Park has no landmark identification signs. This lack of signage previously resulted in an emergency situation where a visitor calling 911 could only report being “near a shelter,” making it difficult for dispatchers to determine their exact location. Installing clearly visible shelter and landmark signs will help prevent similar issues, improve navigation, and reduce emergency response times. In addition, directional signs guiding visitors to commonly used parking areas will be placed at trail entrances to further enhance park accessibility and user experience.

All signage installed in the currently named Town Hall Park will feature the new park name in advance of the official rebranding later this year, once the name has been finalized.



Trail Striping

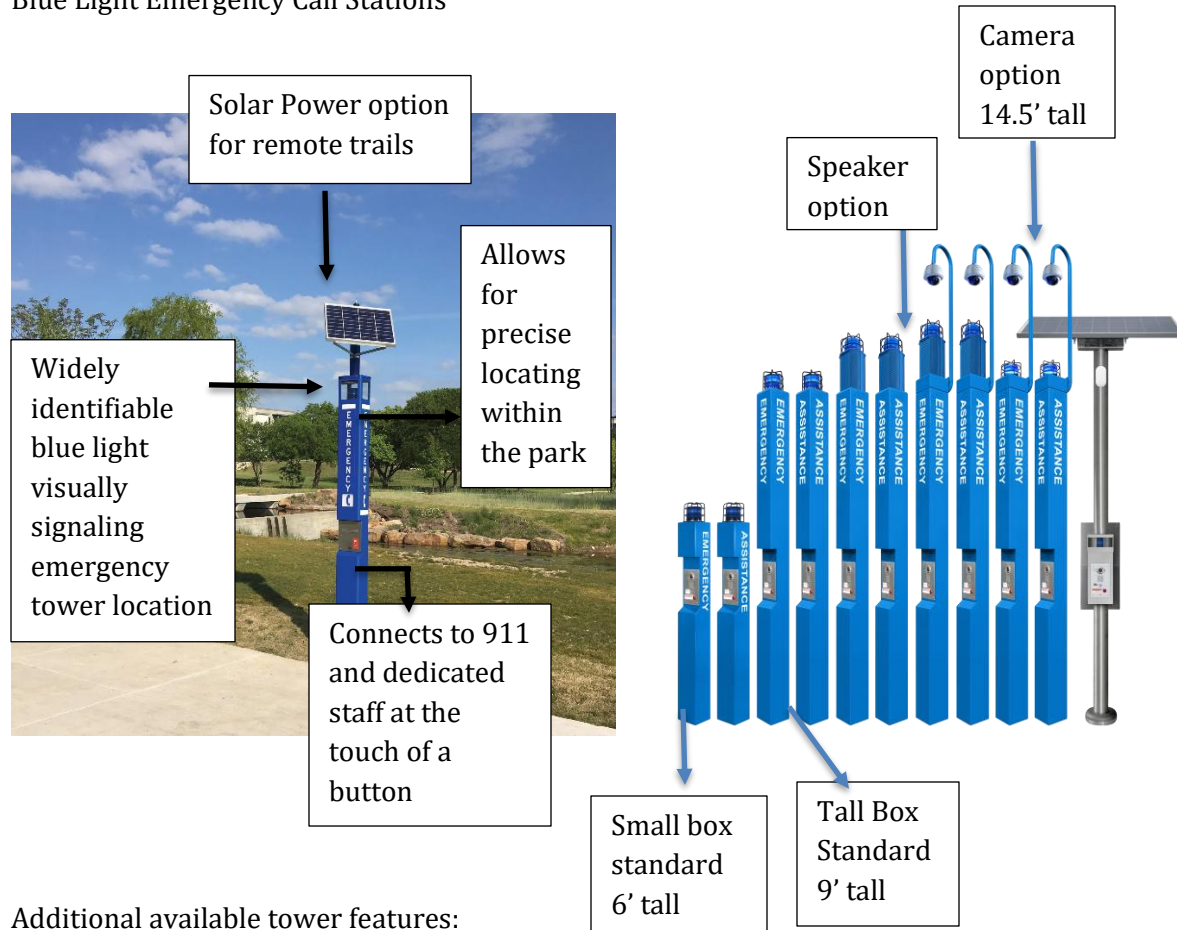
Trails will feature a painted center stripe that matches the designated color used on trail mile markers, wayfinding signage, and online trail maps. This visual cue enables visitors to immediately identify which trail they are on, even when a mile marker sign is not nearby. In an emergency, users can simply report, “I’m on the blue trail,” or “I’m on the blue trail, and the last marker I passed was .75,” allowing responders to pinpoint their location more quickly and accurately.

Additionally, visitors who access the trail system map through the posted QR code can use the colored trail lines to confirm whether they have transitioned onto an adjoining or intersecting route. This system will become increasingly valuable as Avon’s trail network continues to expand and connect across multiple parks and developments.

Trail striping will be applied prominently down the center of the paved trail, ensuring visibility even after snowfall and plowing, as snow typically accumulates along the trail edges



Blue Light Emergency Call Stations



Additional available tower features:

- Ability to turn into an emergency notification system through an optional speaker system attached to the top of the tower. This is increasingly important as our youth sports program grows.
- Ability to add live-feed cameras powered by the solar panel that will allow dedicated staff to see the area surrounding the emergency call station. *This may be an option for adding cameras to the trails rather than making cameras an additional project.
- Ability to run up to 15 solar units on a single wireless network for one monthly fee.
- Ability to add a beeping sound call, acting as a homing beacon when a call tower is alerted. This option gives an audible way to follow an emergency call.
- Ability to automatically program a recorded message that transmits to emergency dispatch in the instance of ADA necessity or incapacitation.
- Ability to use the non-solar options in areas of our trail/park/sports system where electricity is readily available at a significantly lower cost.

➤ Our department is approaching this project with the goal of installing at least one tower in every Town of Avon Park, making the Town of Avon Parks Department the benchmark and industry leader of preventative park safety in Hendricks County.

Illustrative Real-Life Scenario

During the 2025 Harvest Hayrides Festival at Avon Town Hall Park, a young child became separated from her parents. Although an officer was nearby and it was the parents who were missing in this scenario, there was no effective method to communicate this situation to the large crowd other than relying on the DJ to make an announcement. In a busy, high-energy event environment, this limited the speed and reach of communication.

Had a blue light emergency tower been available, park staff could have immediately activated the tower's visual alert to signal an ongoing issue, while using its integrated public address speaker system to broadcast a clear, park-wide announcement. This would have provided instantaneous, widespread communication to attendees—far beyond the range of a DJ, helping to engage the crowd as extra eyes and ears during the crucial first moments of a missing-child situation.

Why Emergency Towers Matter

Transforming this real incident into a broader missing-child scenario demonstrates the essential role a blue light emergency tower can play. These towers offer:

- **A highly visible emergency indicator** that instantly alerts bystanders to heightened awareness.
- **An amplified, park-wide speaker system** capable of delivering urgent instructions or descriptions within seconds.
- **A proactive communication tool** that supports first responders before formal emergency activation even begins.


Those early minutes in any emergency are invaluable. Rapid, organized communication can significantly improve response time and outcomes. Whether this is utilized in a large event or a remote trail- communication matters.

Why We Propose Installing Towers in Major Parks and Ballfields First

Major parks and ballfields are the areas where large groups gather most frequently—and where emergencies (and panic) can escalate quickly if communication tools are limited. By starting with these high-traffic locations, we ensure the greatest immediate impact:

- **Greater safety coverage for families and children**
- **A stronger communication network for crowd-based events**

Installing blue light emergency towers in these key areas is a strategic first step toward a safer, more responsive park system for the Avon community.

 **A visible safety infrastructure is part of a standard that proves to the community we are committed to preventing crime rather than simply reacting to it. This added security feature gives park goers a tangible opportunity to see park budget dollars working specifically for their benefit.**

Benefits of expanding to add additional Blue Light Emergency Call Boxes to trail systems

1. Trail systems often include wooded, low-signal areas in which cell phone service may be unreliable for certain carriers. Blue light towers bridge that gap. This makes them valuable even in low-crime settings where medical issues, accidents, or lost visitors may be more common than criminal incidents.
2. A visibly recognizable emergency infrastructure reduces the likelihood of misconduct by increasing the perceived risk of being caught. Even if crime rates are low, preventing isolated incidents is far easier (and cheaper) than responding after the fact. Blue light systems:
 - Communicate that the park is thoughtfully monitored and safety-focused.
 - Reduce negligent-security liability by showing proactive safety measures.
 - Provide a resource before emergencies escalate.
3. Not everyone carries a phone. Some visitors are children, elderly individuals, disabled, or people with limited technological access. Why should this mean they don't have access to emergency response? Blue light towers ensure:
 - Every visitor has equal access to emergency communication.
 - Safety does not depend on personal devices or signal strength.
 - Help is nearby- even in worst case scenarios.
4. Solar-powered emergency towers also create an opportunity to place cameras along the trails without requiring a separate project or additional infrastructure costs. By selecting the solar camera option, park staff gain immediate access to camera monitoring, with the devices powered directly by the tower's existing solar unit.
 - Cameras connected to emergency towers also offer the option for first responders to have a direct line of communication with the person pushing the button and calling for help.

Where do we start? Zero-Cost Immediate Actions That Can Make a Difference

1. First Responder Access

Bollards are currently installed and remain locked, which creates an access barrier for first responders and emergency personnel. Our goal is to improve emergency vehicle access while still maintaining trail safety within the parks.

Solution: Unlock Existing Bollards (No Cost)

Unlock all existing bollards and remove any that are unnecessary. This would allow emergency personnel to lift and fold the bollards out of the way, providing drivable access during emergency situations, without the need to rely on park personnel or a key.

The public will not be aware the bollards are unlocked, and therefore the likelihood of people removing them for personal access is low.

2. Make Officially Naming Landmarks, Shelters, and Trails a Priority

A critical component of the Trail Safety Plan is the establishment of clear and consistent identifiers throughout the park and trail system. This should be the first step in unifying the entire network and creating a strong foundation for the Trail Safety Project. By assigning recognizable names to key locations, we will enhance user experience, improve navigation, and create a park system that is easier for both visitors and emergency responders to identify immediately.

3. First Responder Data – Stay in “the know”

We intend to collaborate closely with dispatch, police, and fire departments to ensure all emergency personnel have accurate and up-to-date information regarding our parks and trail systems. Input from Dave Margason (APD), Greg O'Brien (911 Dispatch) and Jason Porter (AFD) have been incorporated to strengthen and expand the Town of Avon Parks Department's Trail Safety Plan. Additional key identifiers and response details will be further refined and finalized upon completion of the Trail Safety Project. These details may include:


- Detailed notes in the dispatch system
- Trailhead and common landmark names
- Best trail access points
- Trails that are not accessible by vehicle

Proposed names and recognition plan

After the project is completed, all updates will be submitted to Google to ensure accurate representation on Google Maps and updated through the GIS system to align with dispatch operations. Once these names appear on the platform, they become more widely recognized and easily identifiable within the community.

Trail/ Shelter	Location	Proposed Name
Red Fox Shelter	Avon Town Hall Park	Red Fox Shelter
Blue Heron Shelter	Avon Town Hall Park	Blue Heron Shelter
Small shelter near lake	Avon Town Hall Park	Lakeside Shelter
Small shelter in north park	Avon Town Hall Park	Lookout Shelter
Small shelter at old barn	Avon Town Hall Park	Barn side Shelter
Sitting area northside prairie	Avon Town Hall Park	Prairie Path
Trail around lake	Avon Town Hall Park	Heron Loop
Trail to north side park	Avon Town Hall Park	Heron Loop North
Trail to 625N	Avon Town Hall Park	Heron Loop West
Trail down 625 to ball fields	Outside Avon Town Hall Park	Heron Loop South
Trail from park to library	Avon Town Hall Park	Lakeside Tale Trail
White Lick Creek Trail	North of 36	White Lick Creek Trail N
White Lick Creek Trail	South of 36	White Lick Creek Trail S
Avon Town Hall Park	Avon Town Hall Park	Lakeside Trails Park
Iron Bridge	AYS ball fields	Iron Bridge
Ferkins Lawn	Avon Town Hall Park	Lakeside Concert Lawn
Crawfords Barn Area (bocce ball, horseshoes, yoga area)	Avon Town Hall Park	Leisure Lawn
Trail to AUMC Parking sign		AUMC Parking (arrow sign)
Trail to Parkside church parking sign		Parkside Church Parking (arrow sign)

The trails, landmarks, and shelters outlined above represent the first phase of our trail safety initiative. A critical first step in moving this project forward is the formal naming of the current Town Hall Park and its associated trails, shelters, and landmarks. Establishing these official names is essential for advancing the project with the necessary clarity and urgency.

 **Following the completion of planned construction, all trail systems, including Burnett Woods, the upcoming Easton Grey development, the future park and trails on the Summerlots property, and any additional networks throughout the Town of Avon will be updated to align with uniform safety and wayfinding standards.**

Part III- Project Succession Plan

Phase I – Naming, Funding & Grants

- Officially name/rename trails and landmarks within the current Avon Town Hall Park
- Apply for grants and/or sponsorships with local businesses to help offset improvement costs.
- Move forward with phase II-III with or without additional funding sources
- Expand the Trail Safety Program to include wayfinding signage and multiple Blue Light Emergency Towers throughout Avon Parks and adjoining trail systems.

Phase II – Signage Improvements

- Obtain quotes for trail mile marker signage and wayfinding signs
- Obtain quotes for signs on all shelters
- Determine way finding sign locations
- Obtain parts and supplies for mile marker and wayfinding sign bases
- Install bases and signs throughout trails (using in-house maintenance team)
- Updates to google and other mapping tools to include newly created names

Phase III – Trail Stripe Painting

- Obtain quotes for trail striping costs
- Stripe trails using hired contractor
- Release public “grand opening” featuring the new trail safety features

Phase IV – Installation of Blue Light Emergency Tower (s)

- Using Park, emergency, and town personnel, determine the best place for installation of the first Blue Light Emergency Towers. Park proposed options include both ball parks and the current Avon Town Hall park, using power based rather than solar based systems to lessen cost, and expanding to the Avon Civic Center once completed.
- Obtain quotes for installation, instruction, and programming of blue light emergency tower
- Determine whether Blue Light Emergency Tower(s) should be equipped with cameras (see Phase V)
- Connect blue light tower to wireless network

Phase V – Camera Research and Determination

- Research possible options that may include gaining additional solar emergency towers equipped with preinstalled cameras to eliminate the need for park-installed cameras on trails (See Phase IV)
- Research and identify ongoing associated costs
- Research and identify possible grant options