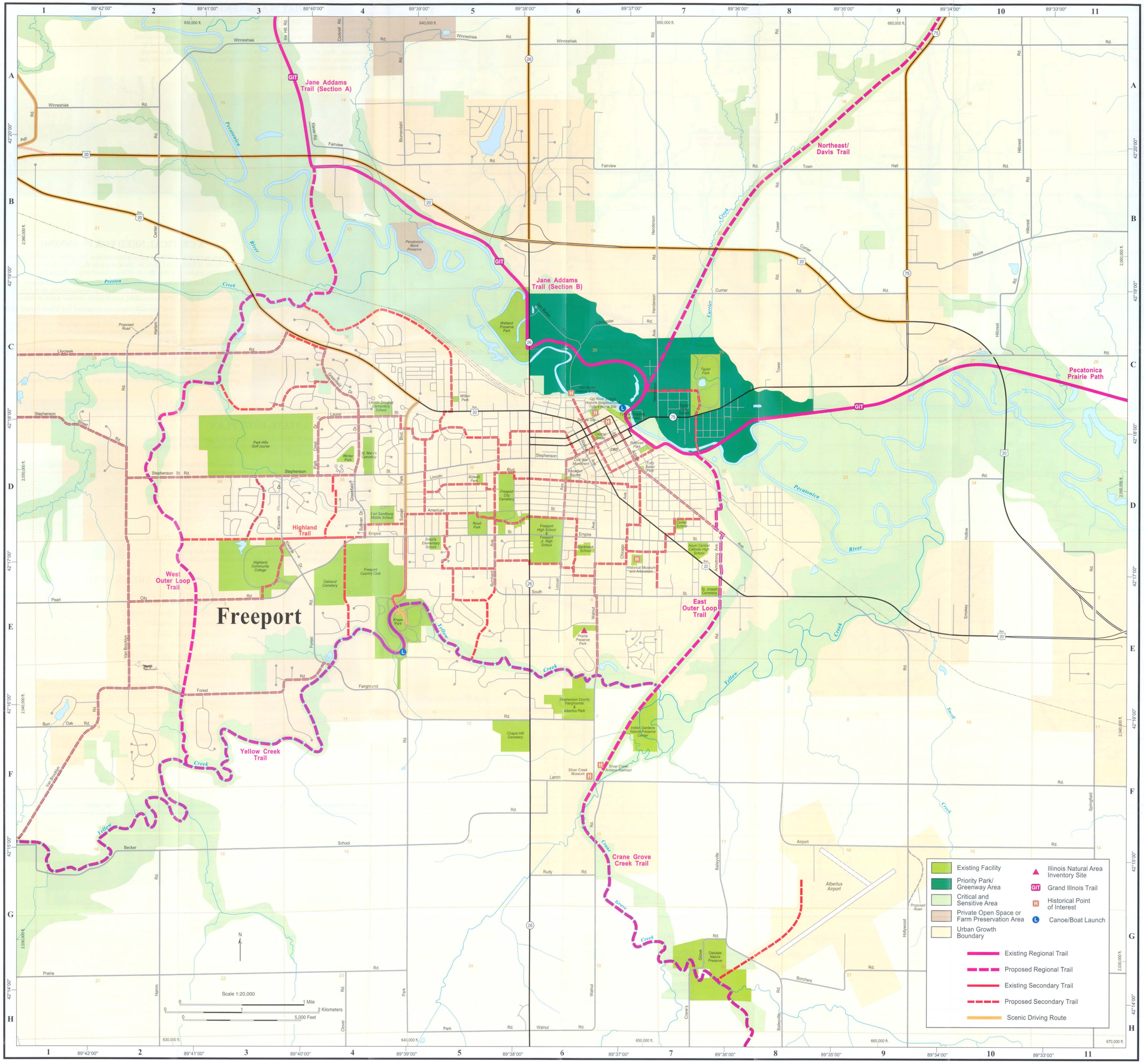


THE OPPORTUNITIES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF GREENWAYS

Greenways...

- Provide multiple benefits through the **preservation** of sensitive land resources.
- Represent a **long-term** and **cost-efficient** use of public and private resources.
- Act as **filter zones** to stop sediments and pollutants that degrade water quality.
- Allow waterways, wetlands and flood plains to **collect excess storm water** caused from development.
- Preserve or restore **natural ecosystems** so that plants and animals can expand their habitats.
- Provide **buffer zones** between incompatible development patterns, reducing noise, visual and environmental impacts.
- Allow for **access** to important archeological and historic sites. For example, Native American and pioneer trails, abandoned rail lines, or historic trading and commercial routes.
- Serve as **outdoor classrooms** for education in the field of natural and environmental sciences and management.
- Offer **non-discriminatory access** to open space opportunities; especially for the elderly, disabled, and socially disadvantaged.
- Provide **low cost and convenient** recreation opportunities to walk, run, bicycle, cross country ski, horseback ride, canoe, fish as well as snowmobiling and off-road ATV touring.
- Establish an **energy-efficient and safe** means of connecting people and places with trails between homes, schools, shopping, work, parks and other community facilities and points of interest.
- Greatly **enhance** quality of life values and community image, and **support** commercial recreation opportunities and tourist activities.
- **Reduce costs** of land maintenance by utilizing sustainable natural means coupled with heightened environmental awareness.
- **Impart an understanding** of the regional landscape and build a sense of place, cultural identity, and respect for the environment.

Yellow Creek

PRIORITY GREENWAY PROJECTS

A number of specific greenway, open space, and trail projects have been identified for the purpose of instigating an urgency to protect and preserve. As the community continues to work with the plan, new projects should be added and the plan should be periodically updated and amended.

1st Priority (Under Development or Pending)

- Jane Addams Trail, Sections A & B
- Tutty's Crossing, Burgess Site, Trailhead & Boat Launch
- Pecatonica Prairie Path
- Orangeville/Jane Addams Trail Trailhead
- Taylor Park/Pecatonica Floodplain Mitigation Plan
- Forest Preserve/Conservation District Feasibility Study
- Grand Illinois Trail (West from Jane Addams Trail to Galena)
- NW Illinois Audubon Pecatonica Bend Preserve
- Van Buren Avenue Bridge Reconstruction

2nd Priority (Planned - Short Term)

- Yellow Creek/Krape Park/Fox Hollow Trail
- Liberty Trail/Highland Community College Trail Expansion
- Le-Walk-A-Na Trail
- Old River School Historic Neighborhood/Tutty's Home Site Park
- Galena Ave./Stephenson St./Adams Ave. Landscape Enhancement
- U.S. 20/IDOT Prairie Shoulder Enhancement
- Greenway Preservation Zoning Standards

3rd Priority (Proposed - Long Term)

- Crane Grove Creek Trail
- Yellow Creek Trail (Krape Park to Crane Grove Creek Trail)
- Freeport Central Green (CBD)
- Freeport Railroad Park (CBD)
- Secondary On-Street Trails in Freeport
- Kellogg Pioneer Trail Historic Research Study

4th Priority (Conceptual)

- East & West Outer Loop Trails in Freeport
- Yellow Creek Trail (Krape Park to Pearl City & Stockton)
- Northeast Trail (Tutty's Crossing to Davis)
- Southwest Trail (Pearl City to Loran & Mt. Carroll)
- Yellow Creek & Pecatonica River Canoe & Boat Launches
- Winslow/Pecatonica River Trail
- Rural Secondary Trail Network
- Albertus Airport Secondary Trail

Scenes Along Jane Addams Trail

Yellow Creek Trail

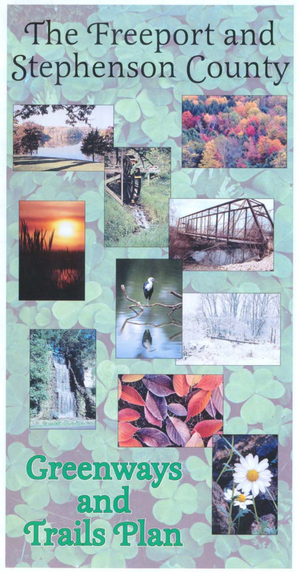
IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES FOR A GREENWAY PLAN

The success of the Stephenson County and Freeport Area Greenways and Trails Plan will require a partnership between a variety of agencies, groups, and organizations. Coordination of local, regional, state, and federal agencies, as well as the public sector, will lay the foundation for a strong greenway plan. Greenways/trail planning will be crucial to future comprehensive land use plans, transportation, public services, and environmental growth management. It will also be used as a tool for acquisition of grants and other funding sources by defining areas of importance.

Because many of the greenways identified include public and private lands, effective greenway implementation and management will require the cooperation and understanding of the greenway concept and long-term goals of a greenways plan by all.

To insure the continued development of a regional greenways plan, local governments are encouraged to add the prioritized greenways in their comprehensive plans, park and recreation plans, and land use plans. To help preserve these areas from incompatible development, utilities and private property owners are encouraged to incorporate greenway planning into their future plans for development and management.

Through education and decisions on preservation, and management such as zoned conservation districts, conservation easements, zoned greenway overlay districts, land trusts, and covenants, the implementation of a greenways plan will be possible. The strength of any greenways movement, and the benefit of the concept, is within the diversity of its form and function. The benefit of this plan includes increased recreation opportunities, tourism, increased values, preserve natural areas, improve water quality and wildlife habitat, as well as a better quality of life.



STEPHENSON COUNTY AND FREEPORT AREA GREENWAYS AND TRAILS PLAN

The Greenways and Trails Plan is an important element for planning future growth in Stephenson County, the City of Freeport and northern Illinois. The plan can offer a cost effective approach to natural resource management and recreational planning and aid in future development. Creating a greenway could cost millions of dollars or it could require no more than convincing land owners to protect thin bands of healthy vegetation. Thus, the importance of cooperation between the private sector, local, regional, state, and federal organizations cannot be understated and will benefit planning and future development of greenways in Stephenson County.

The Stephenson County and Freeport Area Greenways and Trails Plan is also intended to serve as a model and guide to all the local jurisdictions in the County. Change and future development is inevitable. The plan demonstrates how natural areas and planned open space corridors can be used as a structural framework for organizing the future shape of individual local community areas in the County. This plan is critical to long-term protection of open spaces, as well as plant and animal species unique to our region.

To that end, the Greenways and Trails Plan will...

- **Assist** local and regional organizations in implementing greenway and trail projects by referencing the plan when seeking funding and allocating limited financial resources;
- **Show where** buffers can be created to preserve land for the propagation of plants and animals when they are threatened by unplanned development or sprawl;
- **Provide** suitable locations for convenient public trails and places for exercise and the leisurely enjoyment of the outdoors;
- **Establish** regional open space and natural area preservation priorities and a basis for pursuing and forming a Forest Preserve or Conservation District that serves the whole community; and
- **Link** Stephenson County and the Freeport Area to a larger regional greenway and trail network.

The Freeport and Stephenson County

Greenways and Trails Plan

Plan Sponsor:

Partners in Planning
Freeport Area Economic Development Foundation
26 S. Galena Ave.
Freeport, IL 61032
(815) 233-1350

Planning Consultant:

Thomas Graceffa and Assoc.
4777 East State St.
Rockford, IL 61108
(815) 229-4000

Revisions

November, 2000 (RPV, LAW)

Contributing Agencies:

Illinois Department of Natural Resources
City of Freeport
Northwest Illinois Trails Association
Stevenson County
Stevenson County Visitors Bureau
Lena Park District
Freeport Park District
Pearl City Park District
Winslow Township Park District

DECLINATION DIAGRAM

MN
GN
0° 00' 17 MILS
0° 00' 9 MILS

UTM grid convergence (GN) and 1985 magnetic declination (MN) at center of map Diagram is approximate

Scale 1:63,360

0 1 2 3 4 Miles
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 Kilometers
0 5,000 10,000 15,000 20,000 Feet

Base map adapted from U.S. Geological Survey 7.5-minute quadrangles.
Infacing marginal ticks refer to the Illinois Coordinate System, West Zone. Interval is 10,000 feet.

- Federal Highway
- State Highway
- Other Roads
- Railroad
- State Line
- County Line
- Section Line
- Section Number
- Proposed U.S. 20, Freeway Option
- Proposed U.S. 20, Expressway Option
- Proposed New Roads, Freeway Option
- Proposed New Roads, Expressway Option
- Proposed Cul-De-Sac & Bridge, Freeway Option
- Proposed Cul-De-Sac & Bridge, Expressway Option
- Urban Growth Boundary
- Unincorporated Community
- Existing Facility
- Priority Park/ Greenway Area
- Critical and Sensitive Area
- Private Open Space or Farm Preservation Area
- Existing Regional Trail
- Proposed Regional Trail
- Existing Secondary Trail
- Proposed Secondary Trail
- Scenic Driving Route
- Illinois Natural Area Inventory Site
- Grand Illinois Trail
- Rest Stop/Wayside
- Canoe/Boat Launch

WHAT IS A GREENWAY?

Broken down, the word "greenway" denotes two separate images: **Green** suggests natural amenities, such as parks, forest preserves, wetlands, cultural and historic sites in communities; **Way** implies a route, path, or corridor. Together they describe a vision of natural circulation of plants, animals, and people across a landscape that has been otherwise transformed by development. Many of Illinois' greenways border waterways, deserted railroads, swampy wetlands, urban rights-of-way, or rural roads, providing long, linear passageways that join existing open spaces, both pubic and private.

Fall River Scene

Jane Addams Trail

Scenic Driving Route

A CRITICAL NEED FOR PLANNING

Today, less than 1% of Illinois' native habitat remains. The forests, savannahs, prairies, and wetlands of Stephenson County are continuing to be degraded or destroyed. Current conservation practices can slow the rate of loss, but can't reverse the process.

The total land area of Stephenson County is 568 square miles or 363,734 acres. Since 1870, more than 90% of the county's land area has been developed.Only about 12% or 43,000 acres can be classified as woodland, upland prairie, lowland marsh or wetland.

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources has designated four Illinois Natural Areas Inventory sites that are listed for their high quality prairie communities or significant geological features. These natural area inventory sites, parks, and nature preserves, it should be noted, include both public and privately owned properties and account for less than 1% of the County's total land area.

Thus, it is easy to see how a Stephenson County and Freeport Area Greenways and Trails Plan will create opportunities to address rural, suburban, and urban sprawl, as well as provide a plan for growth management and preservation. A long-term plan such as the Greenways/Trails Plan will ultimately provide a basis for discussion and resolution of greenway planning issues among government, regional, local, and private organizations.

A STATE-WIDE PLAN

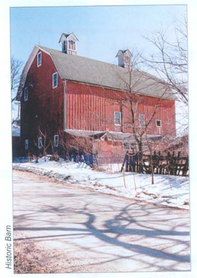
The Illinois Department of Natural Resources, recognizing a need and growing interest in metropolitan greenway and regional trail planning on a nation-wide basis, created the Illinois State Trails Plan in May of 1995.

At the Governor's Workshop on Greenways and Trails (1995), Edward T. Mahon, Director of the Conservation Fund's American Greenways Program, said ". . . those places in this country that have successfully protected their uniqueness - whether natural or man-made - are those places that have used vision, planning, and management to protect their special characteristics. To work, a community's vision must accommodate change and development, as well as conservation and environmental protection." In July 1997, Illinois Governor Jim Edgar approved $3.4 Million in grant money to go toward bike/recreation paths, boosting support for Illinois communities interested in greenway and trail planning.

The Grand Illinois Trail Plan, adopted in December of 1997, is a network of existing and proposed trails in northern Illinois linking Lake Michigan to the Mississippi, as well as trails into Wisconsin and southern Illinois. The proposed trail plan provides a 475-mile loop connecting people, places, and communities of northern Illinois.

Scenic Countryside

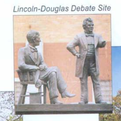
NATURAL AREAS/HERITAGE SITES

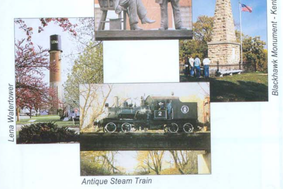


Historic Barn

- Alfolkey Road Prairie Dakota/Wirth Prairie (Dakota Township)
- Artesian Well/Paradise cove (Winslow)
- Blackhawk Monument (Kent)
- Central House (Orangeville)
- Civil War Monument (Freeport)
- Ester Parriott Trust Property (Harlem Township)
- Freeport Prairie (Freeport)
- Freeport Southeast Geological Area (Silver Creek Township)
- Grand Illinois Trail
- Historical Museum & Arboretum (Freeport)
- Indian Gardens Nature Preserve (Freeport)
- Jane Addams Homestead (Cedarville)
- Jane Addams Trail
- Kellogs Pioneer Trail
- Le-Aqua-Na State Park (Lena)
- Lincoln/Douglas Debate Square (Freeport)
- Oakdale Nature Preserve (Freeport)
- Old River School Historic District (Freeport)
- Pecatonica Prairie Path
- Silver Creek & Stephenson Antique Railroad & Museum (Freeport)
- Stagecoach Trail (Lena)
- Tutty Baker's Home Site (Freeport)
- Van Buren Avenue Bridge (Freeport)
- Wetlands Preserve (Freeport)

Lincoln-Douglas Debate Site





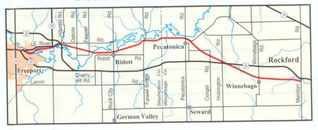
Lena Watertower

Blackhawk Monument - Kent

Antique Steam Train

Stephenson County Park Districts

Pecatonica Prairie Path



Grand Illinois Trail

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