KENDALL COUNTY
TRAILS & GREENWAYS PLAN
2004

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Section I - Introduction

Kendall County has been mainly rural since settlement began in the early 1800s. In recent years, suburban growth in the county has accelerated at an ever-increasing rate. This has challenged local units of government to plan for and provide services to a growing and changing population.

In January of 2003, the Kendall County Forest Preserve District and the Kendall County Planning, Building and Zoning Department initiated the creation of the Kendall County Trails & Greenways Plan. The central purpose of the Trails & Greenways Plan is to merge existing municipal, park district and county trail plans, and to plan for the establishment of greenway corridors in suitable locations.

The Fox River Trail at Hudson Crossing Park near downtown Oswego

The Need for Trails and Greenways Planning

Currently, trails and greenways exist in a small portion of the county. However, many comprehensive plans developed by municipalities, park districts and the county address trails and greenways. Ensuring that these plans compliment and enhance one another is critical in providing trails and greenways that effectively serve residents.

Trails and greenways offer many advantages for local units of government and their residents. Trails provide safe recreational activities that are enjoyed by people of all ages. Trails also offer an alternate means of transportation for short, local trips.

The creation of greenways helps to preserve riparian areas, floodplains, woodlands or other significant features of the landscape. Greenways also serve as an important link between parks, natural areas, community centers and residential areas. Preserving greenways as open space is one of the tools, along with proper stormwater and erosion control ordinances, that can be used to preserve the excellent quality of Kendall County streams and rivers. Greenways are usually ideal locations for trails as they are linear and often scenic.

Planning Limits

The planning area for the Trails & Greenways Plan includes all of Kendall County. The planning area contains 324 square miles. There are 13 municipalities and 5 park districts present in the planning area.

Project Partners

The following units of government have participated in the creation of the Kendall County Trails & Greenways Plan by attending meetings and/or submitting information:

- Kendall County Forest Preserve District
- Kendall County Planning, Building and Zoning Department
- City of Joliet
- Village of Minooka
- Village of Montgomery
- Village of Oswego
- Village of Plainfield
- City of Plano
- United City of Yorkville
- Joliet Park District
- Oswegoland Park District
- Plainfield Township Park District
- Fox Valley Park District

Kendall County Trails & Greenways Plan Objectives

The purpose of this planning effort is to provide a broad vision for the creation of trails and greenways in Kendall County. This will be achieved through the following actions:

- **Create a Countywide Trails & Greenways Plan Map** - This map identifies existing trail plans, establishes trail links between these plans, and establishes the locations of greenway corridors.
- **Identify Funding Sources** - The plan identifies and describes various funding sources that exist for trail construction and greenway development.
- **Coordinate Local Planning** - The plan serves to improve and coordinate local planning efforts by incorporating trails and greenways into transportation, land-use and development planning and implementation.

Enjoying the Fox River Trail in Montgomery

Section 2 - Multi-use Trail Inventory

While a number of communities have constructed multi-use trails in Kendall County, the vast majority of the trail system exists only on plans. The Kendall County Trails & Greenways Plan identifies approximately 200 miles of multi-use trails, of which approximately 20 miles already are constructed, mostly in the northeast section of the county.

Regional Trails

A regional trail typically crosses multiple jurisdictions and can be used for recreational and commuting needs. Because of these multiple jurisdictions, maintenance responsibilities and consistent signage must be considered when planning, funding and constructing regional trails.

Regional trails link to local trails and other regional trails to create a trail network that is easily accessible to all residents. Regional trails also link multiple town centers and other significant destinations.

The Kendall County Trails and Greenways Plan identifies several regional trails:

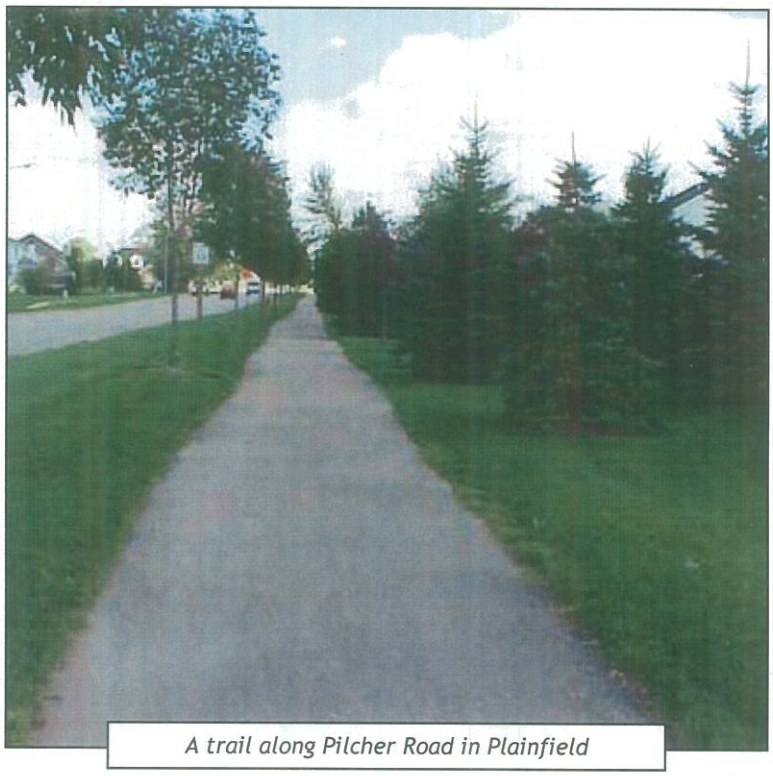
Heading north from Oswego on the Fox River Trail

- *Fox River Trail* - The Fox River Trail is a 35-mile regional trail that begins at Crystal Lake in McHenry County and currently ends in Oswego. The proposed southern trailhead of the Fox River Trail is near Silver Springs State Park. The Fox River Trail connects with many regional trails such as the Illinois Prairie Path and the Virgil L. Gilman Trail. Many local trails also feed into the Fox River Trail.
- *Virgil L. Gilman Trail* - The Virgil L. Gilman Trail's western trailhead is Waubonsie Community College in Sugar Grove. The Gilman extends east to a trailhead on Route 30 in Kendall County. The Gilman may be extended east, possibly to the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie.
- *Aux Sable Trails*- Regional multi-use trails are proposed for the Aux Sable Creek Greenway corridors.
- *WIKADUKE Trail* - A regional multi-use trail is proposed for the WIKADUKE Trail corridor near the eastern edge of Kendall County. This trail will extend south into Grundy County to Route 6 and the I&M Canal.
- *Prairie Parkway Trail* - A regional multi-use trail is proposed for the Prairie Parkway road corridor that extends from east of Plano to Interstate 80 in Minooka.
- *Rob Roy Creek Trail* - A regional multi-use trail is proposed along the Rob Roy Creek from Kane County to the Fox River Trail.
- *Fox & DuPage Trail* - A regional multi-use trail is proposed to connect the Fox River corridor with the DuPage River corridor in Will County.
- *Grove Road Trail* - A regional multi-use trail is proposed to connect Oswego with the Aux Sable Creek trail system.

Local Trails

A local trail is typically a shorter trail that serves a single community, neighborhood or park/forest preserve. Local trails can be stand-alone trails, or they can be linked to a trail network. Maintenance and signage of local trails are typically controlled by a single entity.

Oswego currently has the most significant amount of local trails in the county, although many municipalities are planning and constructing such trails.



A trail along Pilcher Road in Plainfield

Section 3 - Trail Best Practices

Developing a comprehensive network of regional and local trails in Kendall County requires both planning and implementation. Several best practices should be utilized during the trail development process that will ensure that the resulting trail system will adequately meet the needs of the community.

1. **Commit to Design Trail Friendly Communities** - Local units of government are typically responsible for planning, constructing and maintaining multi-use trails. In order to succeed in developing a trail network, these units of government must be committed to providing the required leadership and resources.

   Many communities in Kendall County and the county itself are showing this commitment through various trail planning, construction and maintenance efforts.

This trail connects residents to Settler's Park and the Plainfield Village Hall

2. **Plan for Trail Facilities** - Developing a plan accomplishes several important items. A plan shows current conditions, lists future goals, and identifies projects and policies to meet these goals. A regional trail plan ensures that local plans connect in a logical manner and fosters intergovernmental cooperation that benefits all.

   Planning is also important in guiding limited resources to priority projects and in securing grant funds for trail construction.

   Several communities in Kendall County have existing trail plans. Trail plans, both on a local and regional level, should encourage connectivity to public spaces, town centers, and other significant destinations.

3. **Utilize Recognized Standards for Trail Construction** - As more and more communities construct trails in Kendall County, potential problems could occur due to different trail standards. The use of consistent design standards is encouraged to prevent this problem and to create a safe and enjoyable trail network.

   Several design guides are typically recognized as the authoritative guides for trail standards:

   - *The AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities*
     American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials
   - *Bicycle Facility Planning*
     American Planning Association, by Suzan Anderson and Terri Musser
   - *A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets, 4th Edition*
     Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE)
   - *Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)*
     U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration

   While these design guides are the recognized standards and are encouraged in most situations, each trail has unique environmental, cultural and funding factors that may necessitate deviations from these recognized standards. The local unit of government providing the resources for trail construction has the ability to adapt these recognized standards to suit these unique situations.

4. **Incorporate Trail Facilities into New Developments** - Kendall County and several communities routinely incorporate trail corridors, easements and trail construction into new residential, commercial and roadway projects. Developing trails in this manner requires a unit of government to have a trail plan or policy that guides the growth process to develop a trail system.

   Incorporating trail facilities into new developments has several advantages. It provides easy trail network access to new residents, requires minimal expenditure of governmental resources and prevents costly retrofits should a trail be constructed later. New trail development should provide connectivity to public spaces, town centers and other destinations.

Trails are incorporated into these new subdivisions in Yorkville and Minooka

5. **Cooperate with Other Local Units of Government on Trails** - Neighboring communities, park districts and county government should communicate and cooperate on specific trail locations, trail design and greenway issues when their boundaries meet. This will ensure that the trail and greenway system in Kendall County has smooth transitions and serves the needs of residents.

6. **Provide Trail Information to the Public** - The public should be kept informed of trail planning and development. This information increases awareness of current facilities, allows for public comment regarding trail facilities and demonstrates the commitment of local units of government to trails.

   Primary types of information that should be available to the public:
   - *Local Trail Plans and Policies* - Local units of governments should have available for the public any plans and policies that involve current and proposed trails. The Oswegoland Park District's Bicycle Trail Guide and the Plainfield Area Bicycle Plan are examples of such plans.
   - *Regional Trails Plans* - Information such as the Kendall County Trails & Greenways Plan and the Kane County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and should be available for the public.
   - *Trail Maps* - In areas with significant trail facilities, maps should be produced that show trail locations, destination and other pertinent information. These trail maps can be stand alone maps or incorporated into road maps or open space maps.

7. **Promote Accessible Trail Design** - There are two federal laws that require trails to be designed and constructed to be accessible to all people:
   - Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) - ADA requires that local governmental services, recreational facilities and systems of transportation, therefore trails, must have equal access for persons with disabilities.
   - Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 - This act requires that all federally funded projects be accessible to persons with disabilities.

   The American with Disabilities Design Guidelines (ADAAG) developed by the U.S. Architectural & Transportation Barriers Compliance Board contains information to design and construct accessible facilities. AASHTO and other design guides also reflect required accessibility in their criteria.

8. **Promote Trail Safety** - Trail users and motorists need to be educated on matters that affect safety on the trail system. There are several ways in which local units of government can promote trail safety:
   - 'Rules of the Trails' Brochure - This countywide brochure would be posted and made available at trailheads and trail access points.
   - Signage - Installing proper signage that highlight trail features.
   - Bike Rodeos - These interactive programs educate youngsters on bike and trail safety.

Section 4 - Trail Signage & Way-Finding

A trail network has many destinations, intersections and points of interest. Trails pass through a variety of areas that many trail users may not be familiar with. Providing adequate way-finding signage should be provided to direct and inform trail users about the trail system. Interpretative signage can be used to educate users and further enhance the trail experience.

Types of Trail Signage and Way-Finding

- Directional and Route Signs - Maps, arrows, mileage markers and other signage that inform trail users where they are, where they are going and how to get there. Route signage is also used to inform motorists of the location of trails. Maps containing an overview of a trail system should be located at trailheads, while directional arrows and destination information should be installed at trail intersections.
- Interpretative Signs - Educate trail users on the historical, cultural and natural features that are located adjacent to a particular trail.
- Welcome Signs - Introduce trail users to destinations such as a city, park or trail. Welcome signs typically include the name of the managing agency.
- Cautionary and Regulatory Signs - Cautionary signs are posted near potential hazards and caution trail users of upcoming roadway and railroad crossings, steep grades, sharp curves, etc. Regulatory signs inform trail users of trail rules and are posted at trailheads or trail intersections.

Regulatory signage in Oswego and interpretative signage in Plainfield provide information to trail users

Some types of route, cautionary and regulatory signs have standard colors and symbols that are universally recognizable. Maps and directional, interpretative, and welcome signs should be customized to give trails an identity. Regional trails that pass through multiple jurisdictions should utilize consistent signage for the entire length of that trail. Regional trail signage could include a logo that clearly identifies the trail and associated facilities.

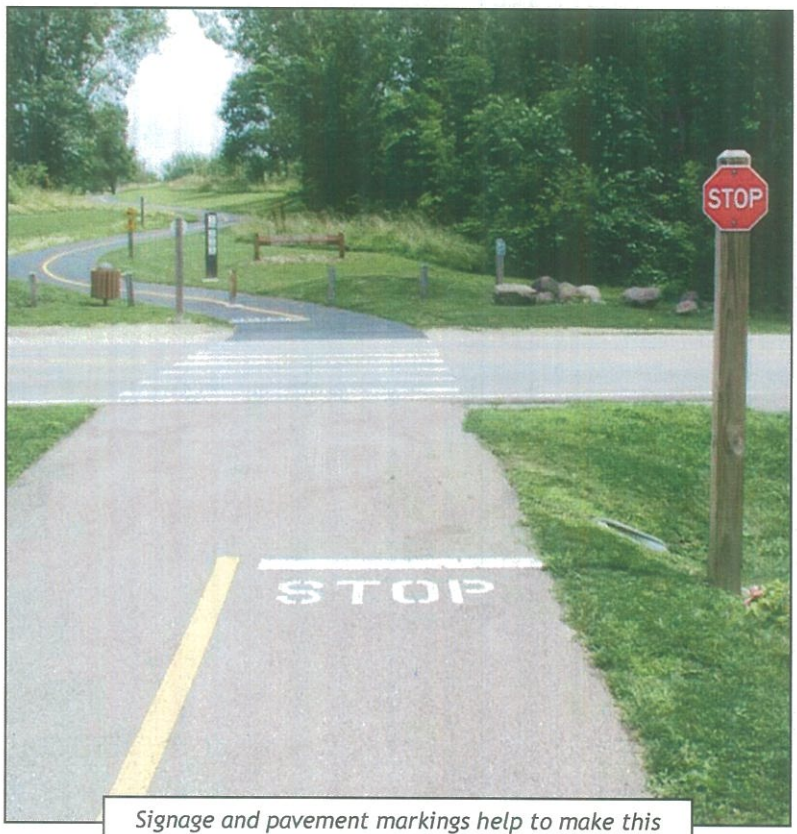
Signage and Way-Finding Best Practices and Design

There are a number of factors to be considered when designing and installing a way-finding system. The way-finding system should present clear, relevant information that does not present trail users with too much or inappropriate information.

- Sign Location - Locating signs in a consistent manner assists trail users with quickly locating and understanding the signs.
    - Signs should be clearly visible and placed at a consistent distance from the trail.
    - Signs should have letter sizes that are easily readable.
    - Cautionary and regulatory signs that have universal symbols should not have words unless necessary.
    - Way-finding signage should be located at trail intersections, trailheads and other decision making locations.
    - When appropriate, trail signage can be painted on the trail surface.
- Sign Frequency - Installing way-finding signage at predictable intervals assists trail users with determining their location and destination. Signage such as mile markers should be spaced no further than one-half mile apart. Signs should not be so frequent as to be a distraction or cause confusion.
- Sign Content - Signage should present only pertinent information in as clear a manner as possible. Items to consider when determining sign content include:
    - Graphics - Sign graphics should be clear, visible at a distance and able to be interpreted at the speed of trail users. When possible, universal symbols should be utilized.
    - Language - The language used on trail signage should be easily understood by the variety of trail users. Language barriers can be overcome by using the universal symbols in place of text.
    - Target Age Groups - Signs should have graphics and language that are understood by the variety of age groups using the trail.

Mile marker on the Gilman Trail

- Sign Placement - The *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)* has placement guidelines for trail signage. Basic guidelines for trail signage placement include:
    - Placing way-finding signage 25-75 feet before and after intersections to give trail users adequate decision making distances.
    - Signs should be placed a minimum 3 feet and a maximum 6 feet from the trail edge as to be close enough for easy visibility and far enough away as to be a hazard.
    - The bottom edge of trail signs should be 5 feet above the trail surface. Secondary signs placed on the same post underneath a primary sign should be at least 4 feet above the trail surface.
    - The bottom of overhead signs should be a minimum of 8' above the trail surface.
    - A dashed 4-6 inch single yellow line should be used to denote where passing is permissible. Dashes should be 3 feet long with a 9-foot space between dashes. A solid 4-6 inch yellow line should be used to denote where passing is prohibited.
    - A regulatory stop sign should be installed at all trail-roadway intersections.
    - Pavement markings should be used when trails cross roadways to clearly identify the crossing for trail users and motorists.



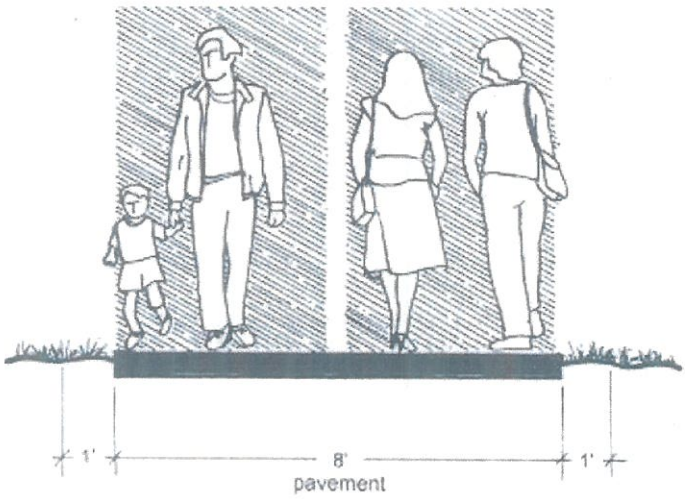
Signage and pavement markings help to make this road crossing in Oswego safe

Section 5 - Trail Design Guide

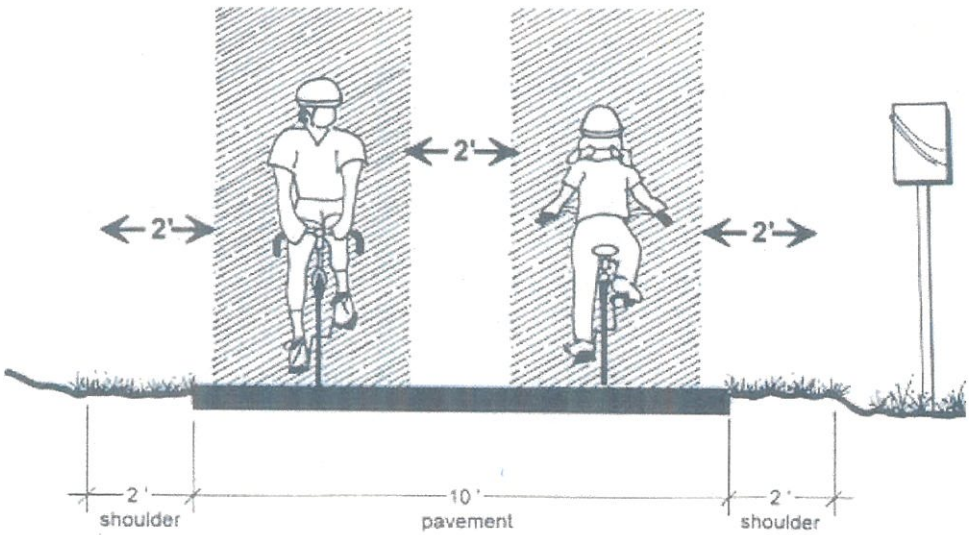
Trails must be designed to be safe, attractive, easy to use and easy to maintain. A trail system that meets these criteria will be an excellent recreational asset that will add to the quality of life in Kendall County.

Spatial Requirements for Trail Users

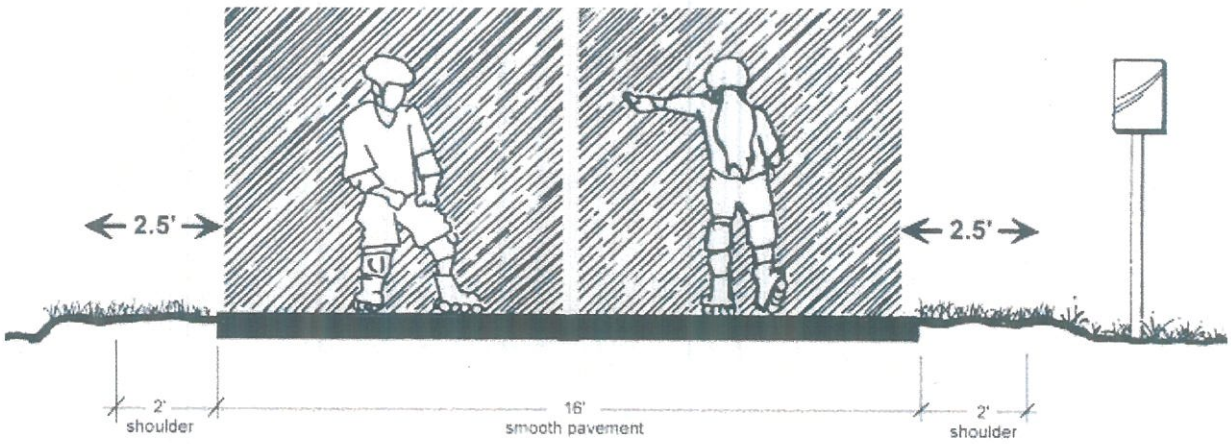
- Pedestrian Uses - Eight feet of space is required for two pair of pedestrians to pass each other comfortably.



- Bicycle Uses - Bicycles require approximately 3.5-feet of operating space with a 2-foot shy distance from opposing traffic and lateral obstructions adjacent to the trail.



- In-line Skating Uses - It is preferred that skaters have 6-feet of operating space with a 2.5-feet fall zone free of obstructions adjacent to the trail.

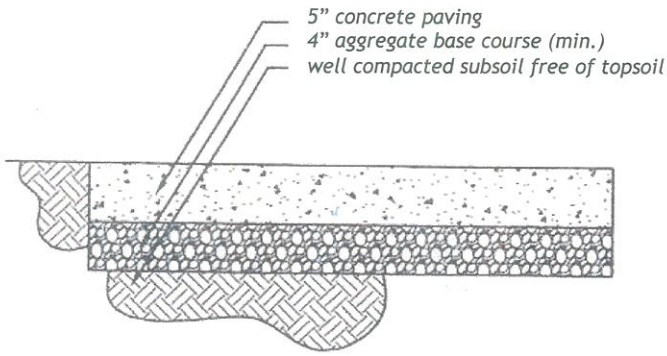


Design Recommendations

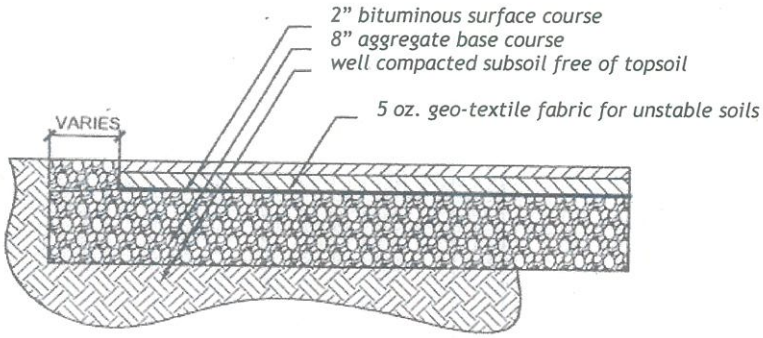
The 1999 American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities covers design and development of trails in detail. When possible, trails should be designed to meet these standards. However, each trail has its own set of environmental issues, intended uses, and community factors that will determine specific construction details.

General Design Recommendations:

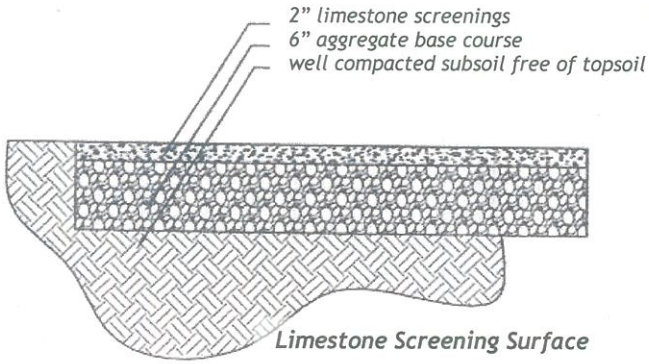
- Width - Width of trails are to be determined by anticipated levels of use and types of use. In general, regional trails should be a minimum of 10-feet wide. In areas where use may be especially high, a 12-foot width may be necessary. Local trails should be a minimum of 8-feet wide.
- Surface - All regional trails should be paved with bituminous asphalt or concrete. Local trails with heavy anticipated use should be paved with bituminous asphalt. Local trails with light anticipated use can be surfaced with compacted limestone screenings.
  Recommended trail construction cross sections:



Concrete surface



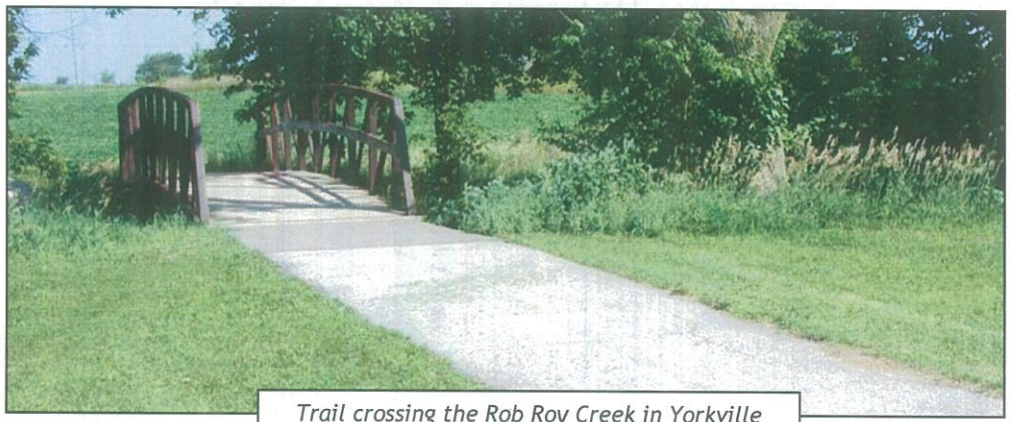
Bituminous Asphalt Surface



Limestone Screening Surface

- Shoulders - Trails should have 2-foot wide shoulders that support trail edges from damage and create lateral clearance for trail users.
- Design Speed - A design speed of 20 miles per hour should be used for all trails. In specific locations, a higher design speed may be warranted.
- Curve Radius - For trails with a 20 miles per hour design speed, a minimum curve radius of 90-100 feet is recommended.
- Grades - Grades should be kept minimal whenever possible to meet AASHTO and ADA requirements.
    - Vertical Grade - Grades should not exceed 5%, although steeper grades may be necessary where terrain and other factors dictate.
    - Horizontal Grade - Cross slopes should not exceed 2-3% to allow for adequate drainage.
- Sight Stopping Distance - Adequate sightlines should be provided to allow sufficient stopping distance at road crossings and other potential hazards. A minimum 125-foot sight stopping distance should be provided, although each location should be considered individually.
- Location Along Roads - Trails that are in or adjacent to road right-of-ways should be located on the west side of north-south roads and on the south side of east-west roads.
- Vehicular Uses - Trail cross-sections, widths and edge supports should be designed to withstand occasional use by maintenance, patrol and emergency vehicles.

- Bridges:
  - New regional trail bridges should be constructed a minimum of 10-feet wide. Existing bridges and local trail bridges should be a minimum of 8-feet wide.
  - Bridges should be designed to support live load of trail users and any anticipated vehicular uses.



Trail crossing the Rob Roy Creek in Yorkville

Trail Maintenance

Trails require maintenance to keep them safe, attractive and easy to use. Routine maintenance also minimizes liability for the local units of government that manage the trails.

General Trail Maintenance Recommendations:

- Follow applicable standards in the AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities.
- Develop cooperative multi-jurisdictional agreements to streamline maintenance and ensure that all trail sections are adequately cared for.
- Keep trails clean of debris and snow, when applicable.
- Inspect for damage to trails and surrounding vegetation following major storms and make any repairs quickly. Use warning signs and markings when needed.
- Clear vegetation to a 10-foot minimum height and 3-foot horizontal clearance on each side of the trail.
- Clear vegetation to maintain adequate sightlines at curves, intersections and other potentially hazardous locations.
- Give prompt attention to hazards and maintenance problems reported by trail users.

Bicycle Parking

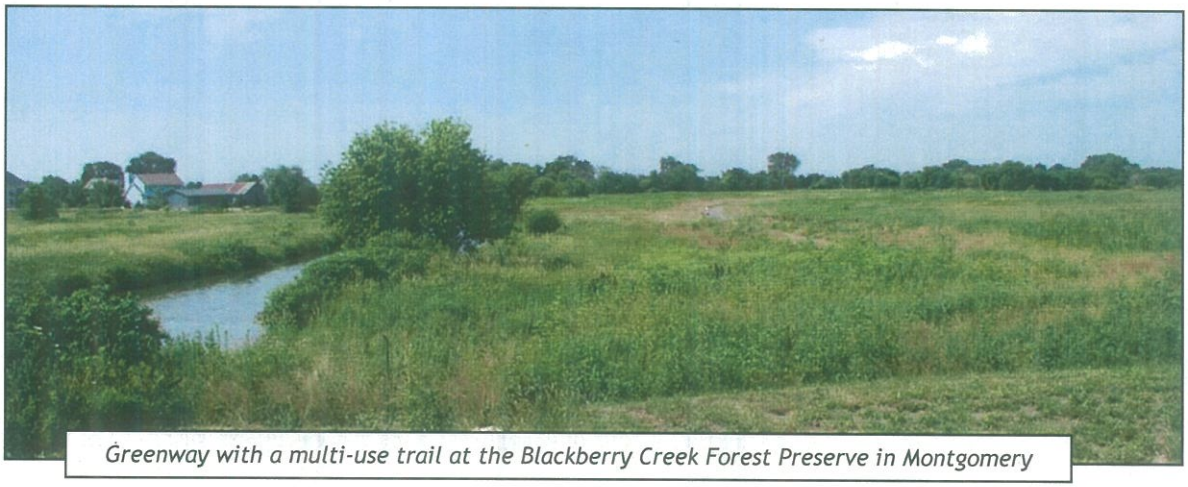
Providing adequate bicycle racks at trail destinations is an important component of a trail system. Bicycle racks reduces hazards, damage to trees and structures used for makeshift bicycle parking, and can help to encourage local shopping. Units of government and local businesses should be encouraged to provide bicycle parking. When applicable, adequate bicycle parking should be incorporated into residential, commercial, and transportation plans and ordinances.

Section 6 - Greenways

Greenways are linear open space corridors that are created for conservation and recreational purposes. Greenways many times follow the course of a river or stream, but can also be created along significant topographical features, utility corridors or unique features of the landscape. Greenways are also used to link features such as regional open space, cultural sites, historic sites, town centers and residential areas.

Trails and greenways are typically associated with each other. Many greenways include trails that connect various destinations. However, greenways can be created that do not include trails.

Greenways in public ownership are typically owned and maintained by municipalities, park districts or forest preserve districts. Greenways that contain many active recreational facilities can be owned and maintained by any of these entities, while the Kendall County Forest Preserve District will generally be looked upon to take ownership and stewardship of significant natural areas located in greenways.



Greenway with a multi-use trail at the Blackberry Creek Forest Preserve in Montgomery

Benefits of Greenways

- Recreation - Greenways, when used in conjunction with trails and other facilities provide residents with recreational opportunities.
- Tourism - Greenways help to promote tourism by providing scenic and quality recreational opportunities to visitors.
- Wildlife Corridors - Greenways are important conduits for wildlife by providing connections between regional open spaces or movement along a stream or river.
- Stream Buffer - Although greenways alone do not preserve the quality of a river or stream, they do help buffer waterways from practices that otherwise might do harm.
- Interconnections - Greenways provide residents and visitors with important connections between town centers, natural areas, recreational opportunities,

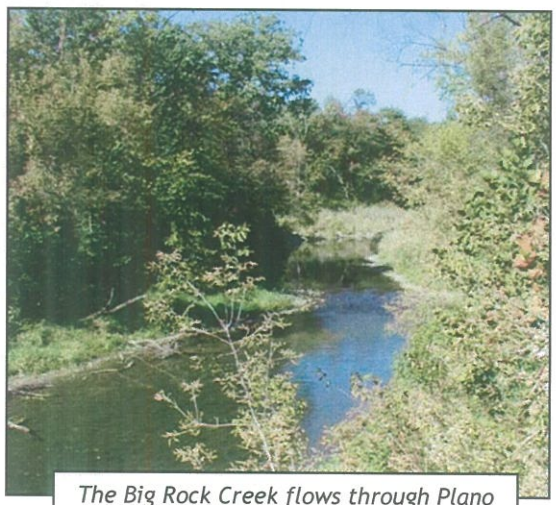
cultural sites and residential areas. Greenways provide connections inside the boundaries of a single community and also connect a community to others.

Means of Preserving Greenways

- Fee Simple Purchase - The Kendall County Forest Preserve District, park districts and municipalities can purchase property to be included in the greenway system.
- Development Process - Areas identified as part of a greenway can be protected through the development process. The county and municipalities can require developers to preserve such areas as open space.
- Conservation Easements - Private landowners can place conservation easements on their property that ensure it remains as open space in perpetuity. Conservation easements can be written to allow or not allow public access.
- Grant Funding - Several grant programs are available to fund greenway development and open space preservation. Please see Section 8 for a detailed list of these programs.

Greenways in Kendall County

- Fox River - The Fox River is the best-known natural resource in Kendall County and has many affiliated recreational uses. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) has rated sections of the river as Class A and it also contains an endangered fish species. Biking, hiking, fishing, recreational watercraft use, camping and bird watching can all be directly attributed to the Fox River. Ensuring that the Fox River remains a prime natural and recreational resource is a goal shared by all.
- Aux Sable Creek - The Aux Sable Creek is a tributary of the Illinois River whose watershed covers approximately 40% of Kendall County. Sections of the Aux Sable Creek have been rated Class A by the IDNR and the creek contains an endangered fish species and a diverse mussel population. The Aux Sable Creek has a watershed plan that identifies watershed concerns and recommends various practices that should be implemented to preserve and enhance the creek and its greenway.
- Big Rock Creek & Little Rock Creek - These creeks are tributaries of the Fox River whose watershed covers parts of DeKalb, Kane and Kendall counties. The Big Rock and Little Rock Creeks have a watershed plan that identifies watershed concerns and recommends various practices that should be implemented to preserve and enhance the creeks and their greenways.



The Big Rock Creek flows through Plano

- Blackberry Creek - The Blackberry Creek is a tributary of the Fox River that covers portions of Kane and Kendall counties. Blackberry Creek has a watershed plan that identifies watershed concerns and recommends various practices that should be implemented to preserve and enhance the creek and its greenway.
- Morgan Creek - Morgan Creek is a small tributary of the Fox River that is located entirely in the northeast corner of Kendall County.
- Rob Roy Creek - The Rob Roy Creek is a tributary of the Fox River whose watershed covers portions of Kendall and Kane counties.
- Waubonsie Creek - The Waubonsie Creek is a tributary of the Fox River whose watershed covers portions of Kendall, Kane and DuPage counties. The Waubonsie Creek has a watershed plan that identifies watershed concerns and recommends various practices that should be implemented to preserve and enhance the creek and its greenway.

Wetland restoration as a stormwater filter along the Waubonsie Creek in Oswego

Recommendations for Greenways

- Greenways along streams and rivers should, at a minimum, include all of the 500-year floodplain as identified on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Maps. Natural areas adjacent to the 500-year floodplain should also be included in greenways.
- Greenways along streams that do not have floodplains identified on the FEMA maps should be a minimum of 150 feet wide on each side of the stream and should include any adjacent natural areas.
- Greenways should be considered to connect regional open spaces, cultural sites, town centers and residential areas even in the absence of a stream corridor. These greenways should be a minimum of 50 feet wide and should increase in width to include any natural areas located in the greenway corridor.
- Greenways, streams and associated natural areas should be protected from negative impacts of adjoining properties by utilizing best management practices in agricultural and growth areas. Such practices should control erosion, decrease the quantity of stormwater discharges, increase the water quality of stormwater discharges, and limit impacts on aquatic resources.
- Trails and other recreational facilities constructed in greenways should be designed and constructed in a manner sensitive to natural areas.
- Natural areas associated with greenways should be managed in order to maintain and/or improve their quality.

Section 7 - Fox River Water Trail

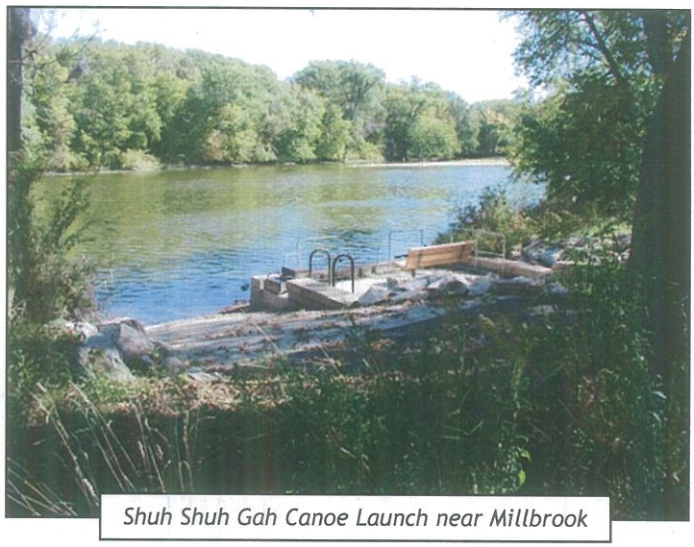
The Fox River Water Trail is a coordinated system of access points and signage designed to promote recreational canoeing and kayaking. The Fox River Water Trail is part of the Northeastern Illinois Water Trails Plan that includes ten water trails in the region. The Fox River Water Trail begins at the Wisconsin-Illinois border, flows through Lake, McHenry, Kane, Kendall and LaSalle counties before ending at the Illinois River in Ottawa.

Benefits of the Fox River Water Trail:

- Recreation - Coordinated access and signage to the Fox River will increase recreational use of the river.
- Stewardship - Providing access to the Fox River will foster an understanding and appreciation of the river as an ecological resource and promote stewardship.
- Tourism - As with other trails, the Fox River Water Trail helps to promote tourism by becoming its own destination or by combining several other destinations into a single recreational experience.

The Fox River Water Trail in Kendall County

There are six public access points on the Fox River in Kendall County. Three of these sites are owned by the Oswegoland Park District, and one each by the United City of Yorkville, Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the Kendall County Forest Preserve District. The southernmost public access point to the Fox River is in Kendall County. The only portage in Kendall County is located at the Yorkville dam.



Shuh Shuh Gah Canoe Launch near Millbrook

Currently, there is an ongoing project to improve signage on the Fox River Water Trail in Kendall and southern Kane counties. This project is being funded by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and administered by the Kendall County Forest Preserve District. The project calls for signage to be installed on Fox River bridges and trailhead signs to be created and installed at certain access points.

Recommendations for the Fox River Water Trail

- Establish additional Fox River access points at logical intervals.
- Participation in the Fox River Water Trail Committee.
- Promote the Fox River Water Trail through signage and printed materials.

Section 8 - Trails & Greenways Funding

Many trails and greenways are planned and implemented with funding assistance from the state or federal level. A variety of programs are available to assist local units of government with the development of trails and greenways. These programs differ in the amount of funding assistance, requirements of the local units of government and administration methodology.

Local units of government in Kendall County are encouraged to plan, fund and develop trails and greenways cooperatively. Partnerships strengthen grant applications and can lead to significant funding.

Many major programs are funded by the federal government through state or regional agencies. These funds are included in federal transportation bills such as the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). Although federal programs generally fund a larger percentage of project costs, rules associated with federal programs can make projects more arduous than those funded by state programs.

An Illinois Department of Natural Resources matching grant helped to fund this trail in Oswego

Trails & Greenways Development Programs

- **Bike Path Grant Program - Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)**
  - This program is for the acquisition, construction and rehabilitation of trails and associated facilities and is funded by used tire disposal taxes.
  - Eligible project costs include linear land acquisition, engineering, and construction of trails and select associated facilities.

- Local share is 50% of eligible project costs, with $200,000 engineering and construction maximum and no limit for linear land acquisition.
- Projects are evaluated on a competitive basis based on factors such as the development of trail systems, projects identified in plans, trail demand, environmental and social impact, scenic and recreational experience, and future maintenance plans.
- Applications are due March 1 of each year.
- Eligible sponsors include municipalities, park districts, forest preserve districts, conservation districts and state agencies.
- Local sponsor pays all costs and is reimbursed by IDNR.
- Contact: Illinois Bike Path Program
  Illinois Department of Natural Resources
  Division of Grant Administration
  One Natural Resources Way
  Springfield IL 62702-1271
  (217) 782-7481
  dnr.state.il.us/ocd/gaoutnew

- **Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program - Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT)**
  - This program supplies federal funds to local units of government through IDOT. These funds are to be used for non-traditional transportation enhancements such as alternate means of transportation projects.
  - Eligible project costs include land and easement acquisition, engineering, trail construction and select associated facilities. Safety, education, and rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities are also eligible.
  - Local share is 50% for trail right-of-way and easement acquisition costs and 20% of engineering and construction costs.
  - Projects are evaluated on their ability to provide alternate means of transportation.
  - Application due dates will be specified by federal transportation authorities.
  - Eligible sponsors include municipalities, park districts, forest preserve districts, conservation districts and state agencies.
  - Local sponsor pays all engineering costs and is reimbursed by IDOT for their 80% share. Construction costs are generally paid by IDOT and the local sponsor reimburses IDOT for their 20% share.
  - Contact: Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program
    Illinois Department of Transportation
    Office of Planning and Programming
    2300 South Dirksen Parkway, Room 307
    Springfield IL 62764
    (217) 782-0378

- **Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality Improvement Program - Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS)**
  - This program supplies federal funds to local units of government through CATS. These funds are to be used for projects that alleviate vehicular congestion or improve air quality.
  - Eligible project costs include engineering, construction of trails and select associated facilities.
  - Local share is 20% of eligible project costs.
  - Projects are evaluated on their ability to reduce vehicle emissions or reduce vehicle trips.
  - Applications are generally due on March 1 of each year.
  - Eligible sponsors include only local units of government in the Chicago and St. Louis areas.
  - Local sponsor pays all engineering costs and is reimbursed by IDOT for their 80% share. Construction costs are generally paid by IDOT and the local sponsor reimburses IDOT for their 20% share.
  - Contact: Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program
    Chicago Area Transportation Study
    300 West Adams, 2nd Floor
    Chicago IL 60606
    (312) 793-3474
    www.catsmpo.com/

- **STP - Urban Program & Rural Program**
  - These program supplies federal funds to local units of government through IDOT and local Council of Mayors. These programs allow communities to use portions of their STP funding for trail construction.
  - Eligible project costs include engineering, construction of trails and select associated facilities.
  - Local share is 20% of eligible project costs.
  - Projects are evaluated on their ability to improve transportation in the urban or rural area.
  - Applications are accepted throughout the year and are generally evaluated in the winter or spring.
  - Eligible sponsors include local units of government and state agencies.
  - Local sponsor pays all engineering costs and is reimbursed by IDOT for their 80% share. Construction costs are generally paid by IDOT and the local sponsor reimburses IDOT for their 20% share.

- **National Recreation Trails Program - IDNR**
  - This program supplies federal funds to local units of government through IDNR. These funds are for motorized and non-motorized recreational trails. IDNR emphasizes equestrian, hiking, cross county skiing, mountain biking and water trail project for the non-motorized trail funds, as well as Grand Illinois Trail projects.
  - Eligible project costs include engineering, trail rehabilitation and construction of trails and select associated facilities.

- Local share is 20% of eligible project costs.
- Projects are evaluated on a competitive basis based on factors such as the development of trail systems, projects identified in plans, trail demand, environmental and social impact, scenic and recreational experience, future maintenance plans, public support, and diversity of trail users.
- Applications are due March 1 of each year.
- Eligible sponsors are local units of government, state agencies, and non-profit organization.
- Local sponsor pays all costs and is reimbursed by IDNR.
- Contact: National Recreational Trails Program
  Illinois Department of Natural Resources
  Division of Grant Administration
  One Natural Resources Way
  Springfield IL 62702-1271
  (217) 782-7481
  dnr.state.il.us/ocd/gaoutnew

- **Grade Crossing Improvement - Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC)**
  - This program supplies motor fuel tax funds to local units of government through the ICC. These funds are used for signalization of trail crossings at railways and the construction of overpasses and underpasses.
  - Eligible projects costs include engineering, at-grade signalization and surface improvements, overpasses and underpasses.
  - For signalization, the local share is 10%, ICC share is 85% and the railroad share is 5% and future signal maintenance. For bridge construction, the local share is 40% and the ICC share is 60%.
  - Projects are evaluated on the Crash Predication Value of the crossing and statewide geographic distribution based on safety needs.
  - Applications are accepted year round and are evaluated in January.
  - Eligible sponsors are local units of government and state agencies.
  - Local sponsor pays all costs and is reimbursed by the ICC.
  - Contact: Illinois Commerce Commission
    527 East Capitol Avenue
    Springfield IL 62701
    (217) 557-1285
    www.icc.state.il.us/icc/rr/crossing

- **Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) - IDNR**
  - This program uses Real Estate Transfer Taxes to supply local units of government with funds for open space acquisition and development through the IDNR.
  - Eligible project costs include acquisition of open space and the development of recreational facilities, including bike paths.
  - Local share is 50% of eligible project costs. Maximum grant funding is $750,000 for acquisition projects and $400,000 for development projects.

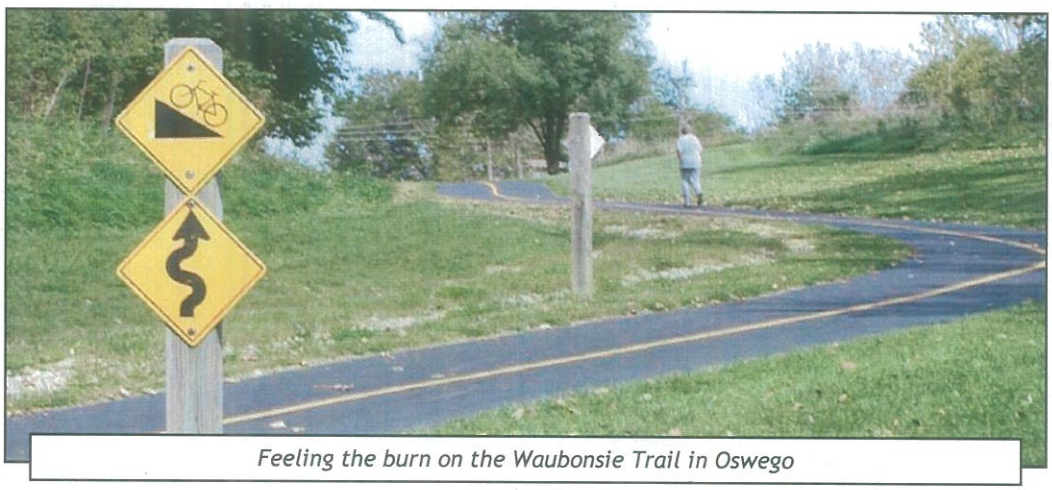
- Projects are evaluated on criteria identified in IDNR's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Education Plan.
- Applications are due July 1 of each year.
- Eligible sponsors are local units of government with statutory authority to acquire and develop open space for public park use.
- Local sponsor pays all costs and is reimbursed by the IDNR.
- Contact: Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development Program
  Illinois Department of Natural Resources
  Division of Grant Administration
  One Natural Resources Way
  Springfield IL 62702-1271
  (217) 782-7481
  dnr.state.il.us/ocd/gaoutnew

- **Boat Access Area Development (BAAD) - IDNR**
  - This program supplies local units of government with funds to develop boat and canoe access sites.
  - Eligible project costs include land acquisition, engineering and construction of boat/canoe access points and selected associated facilities.
  - Grants can fund up to 90% of land acquisition projects and up to 100% of development project. Maximum grant funding is $200,000.
  - Applications are due September 1 of each year.
  - Eligible sponsors are local units of government with statutory authority to acquire and develop open space for public park use.
  - Local sponsor pays all costs and is reimbursed by the IDNR.
  - Contact: Boat Access Area Development Program
    Illinois Department of Natural Resources
    Division of Grant Administration
    One Natural Resources Way
    Springfield IL 62702-1271
    (217) 782-7481

- **Illinois Tomorrow Corridor Planning Grant Program - IDOT**
  - This program supplies funds to local units of government with funds to produce land use and transportation plans that reduce growth of traffic congestion, reduce infrastructure costs and promote intergovernmental cooperation.
  - Eligible project costs include planning activities only.
  - Local share is 10% of eligible project costs.
  - Projects are evaluated on the ability to integrate land use plans, impact development decisions and infrastructure investments.
  - Applications are generally due in the spring.
  - Eligible sponsors include local units of government, including partnerships that include public, private and non-traditional participants.
  - Local sponsor pays all costs and is reimbursed by IDOT.

- Contact: Illinois Tomorrow Corridor Planning Grant
  Illinois Department of Transportation
  Office of Planning and Programming
  2300 South Dirksen Parkway, Room 307
  Springfield IL 62764
  (217) 782-0378
  www.dot.state.il.us/corridorplanning/program

- **Greenways & Trails Planning Assistance Program - IDNR**
  - This program supplies funds to local units of government with funds to facilitate comprehensive and coordinated planning to protect greenways and develop trails.
  - Eligible project costs include planning activities only.
  - Local share is 25-50% of project eligible project costs with a maximum of grant funds of $20,000.
  - Projects must show evidence that most local units of government are involved in the planning process and are supportive of greenway and trail planning.
  - Applications can be submitted year round.
  - Eligible sponsors include municipalities, counties and coalitions of counties.
  - Local sponsor pays all costs and is reimbursed by IDNR.
  - Contact: Illinois Department of Natural Resources
    Division of Planning
    Greenways Program
    One Natural Resources Way
    Springfield IL 62702
    (217) 782-3715
    greenway@dnrmail.state.il.us



Feeling the burn on the Waubonsie Trail in Oswego