SANGAMON COUNTY GREENSPACES

Lost Opportunities or Corridors to the Future?

A Greenways & Trails Plan for Springfield & Sangamon County

SANGAMON COUNTY GREENSPACES

Lost Opportunities or Corridors to the Future?

A Greenways & Trails Plan for Springfield & Sangamon County

Prepared by:
Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission

September, 1997

Done/a

To the Citizens of Springfield and Sangamon County:

The Sangamon Valley Greenways and Trails Advisory Committee is pleased to present the Greenways and Trails Plan for Springfield and Sangamon County. This document is the result of the concerted efforts of the Planning Commission staff, interested individuals and a host of volunteers from various agencies and organizations. The report presents the public benefits of trails and greenways and discusses the existing and potential corridors in our area. The Planning Commission should be commended for the excellent work they have done on this document - it provides a vision for greenway adoption and trail development for the next decade in the region.

We encourage the Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission to incorporate the elements of this plan in the overall blueprint for the city and county, so that as decisions are made throughout the area, those decisions consider open space and corridor development in the equation. Further, we encourage the various county and municipal departments to review the report and consider how their future projects can be enhanced by the concepts presented within this document.

The committee asks the citizens of Springfield and Sangamon County to review the Greenways and Trails Plan with an eye toward recognizing and reserving valuable resources, and then implementing these worthwhile projects as land and funds become available. It is important to note that the adoption of this document by the city and county is an important key in any effort to secure funding from state and federal sources.

We would especially like to thank the Illinois Department of Natural Resources for their foresight and vision in creating the Illinois Greenways Program and for encouraging the various metropolitan planning organizations around the state to seriously consider the benefits of greenways and trails in their respective regions. Finally, we thank the City of Springfield and Sangamon County for providing the matching funds and encouragement to make this plan a reality.

Sincerely,

Craig Williams

Craig Williams
Chair, SVGTAC

SANGAMON VALLEY GREENWAYS AND TRAILS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Craig Williams, Chairman

Salmon Danmole

Bill Donels

Sue Eubanks

Mike Eymann

Laura Farson

Cindi Fleischli

Stan Gralnick

Gloria Heggy

Mike Luepke

Russ Militello

Leon Miner

Kim Rosendahl

Mike Schneider

Bruce Strom

Mike Ulm

Paul Wappel

John Werthwein

Eric Wesel

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

FOREWORD 1

INTRODUCTION 2

PLANNING INFORMATION 6

SANGAMON COUNTY GREENWAY RESOURCES 9

- Water Resources 9
  - Groundwater & Aquifers 9
  - Surface Water 10
    - Lakes & Ponds 10
    - Streams 11
    - Floodplain 14
- Forest Resources 19
- Stormwater Resources 22

GOALS, POLICIES & OBJECTIVES 24

- Greenway / Trail Acquisition 24
- Government Policies & Regulations 25
- Recreation 26
- Resource Management 26
- Economic Development 27
- Transportation Coordination 28

GREENWAY RECOMMENDATIONS 30

TRAIL RECOMMENDATIONS 34

- Corridor Rating System 34
- High Priority Trail Corridors 39
- Medium Priority Trail Corridors 40
- Low Priority Trail Corridors 42
- Other Corridors 44

IMPLEMENTATION 47

- Acquisition & Preservation 47
- Funding Sources 51
- Who Will Implement the Plan 56
  - Government 56
  - Private Landowners 56
  - Civic Organizations 56
  - Citizen and User Groups 58

TABLE OF CONTENTS (cont.)

Page

MAPS

Map 1 Sand & Gravel Aquifers 10

Map 2 Streams & Rivers 15

Map 3 Floodplain - Springfield Area 16

Map 4 Floodplain - Sangamon County 17

Map 5 Forested Areas - Springfield Area 20

Map 6 Forested Areas - Sangamon County 21

Map 7 Priority Greenways - Springfield Area 32

Map 8 Priority Greenways - Sangamon County 33

Map 9 Potential Trail Corridors - Springfield Area 37

Map 10 Potential Trail Corridors - Sangamon County 38

Map 11 Priority Trail Corridors - Springfield Area 45

Map 12 Priority Trail Corridors - Sangamon County 46

TABLES

Table 1 Corridor Rating System for Trail Use 35

Table 2 Corridor Rating System for Trail Use 36

Table 3A Summary of Acquisition & Preservation Strategies for Greenways - Fee Simple Acquisition 48

Table 3B Summary of Acquisition & Preservation Strategies for Greenways - Acquisition of Partial Interest 49

Table 3C Summary of Acquisition & Preservation Strategies for Greenways - Regulatory Control 50

Table 4 Natural Resource Management Incentives 52

Table 5 Comparative Ownership Strategies 53

Table 6 Federal & State Funding Sources 55

Table 7 Private Sector Funding Sources 57

FOREWORD

What is a Greenways & Trails Plan?

A plan is a guide or framework used to accomplish certain goals. The Sangamon Valley Greenways & Trails Plan is a guide to help local governments and other groups work together to provide a quality, connected greenways & trails system in Sangamon County. The plan identifies corridors for preservation and acquisition and suggests in what manner these should be developed.

Why do we need a Plan?

Although greenways and trails are not a new concept, it has only been within the last five years that efforts to develop trails in the Sangamon County area have begun. Some trails in the Springfield area are constructed and others are planned. Several of the smaller communities are working on trails. However, there is no overall plan to interconnect these trails. This plan will provide that type of guidance. The plan will also encourage communication between the groups providing trails.

There are currently many funding sources giving priority to projects which are designated in the area's plan. A plan also helps these funding agencies allocate their dollars in the best way possible.

How was the plan developed?

The greenways and trails plan was developed by the Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission. The plan was funded by a grant from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources matched with monies from the City of Springfield and Sangamon County. The Sangamon Valley Greenways & Trails Advisory Committee (SVGTAC) was formed to act in an advisory capacity to the Regional Planning Commission staff.

Two public information meetings were held in the spring and summer of 1996. In addition to the general citizenry, civic, environmental and user groups, as well as elected officials, were invited to these meetings. Additional members were added to the SVGTAC as result of these meetings.

INTRODUCTION

What is a greenway?

A greenway is a corridor of open land and can be thought of as linear open space. As the name implies, vegetation is also an important characteristic of greenways. Greenways perform environmental and/or recreational functions which provide a variety of benefits. Some people think of a greenway as a long, linear park. Greenways can be land-based or water-based and often follow waterways, abandoned railroads, wetlands or urban streets.

What is the difference between a trail and a greenway?

A greenway may or may not include a trail. Some greenways remain in a natural state to provide environmental benefits, while others may include a trail to provide outdoor recreation or a non-motorized transportation route. A trail provides a designated path or travel surface within a greenway corridor. Depending upon the trail's intended use, a trail can accommodate a variety of users including walkers, runners, bicyclists, horseback riders, cross country skiers, or roller bladers.

Bicycling, walking & roller-blading on Constitution Trail in Bloomington.

Why do we need greenways now?

Sangamon County's steady population increase since pioneer days has placed many pressures on and caused many changes to the natural environment. Today, none of Sangamon County's original prairie grass areas remain. Over 80% of Sangamon County's forested areas have been lost. Development has altered natural drainage ways and removed buffers along streams and waterways. As development pressures continue, the need for greenways becomes more important.

Some opportunities for greenway/trail development, such as railroad abandonments, are currently available. These opportunities are very likely to be lost if the corridors are not preserved now.

What are the benefits of greenways & trails?

Greenways provide a variety of benefits and usually serve multiple purposes. Greenways provide habitat for birds, fish and mammals. In addition to benefitting the wildlife community by providing additional land area for habitat, the linear nature of greenways serves a vital function. It provides migration routes and connections to other habitat areas.

Greenways also help preserve natural resources. A greenway buffer along a water body improves water quality by filtering pollutants. A greenway system around the tributaries of Lake Springfield would help delay the need for dredging in the future by trapping sediment and would improve water quality by filtering agricultural and chemical pollutants. Improved water quality benefits both humans and animals who depend on surface water resources for drinking water. Improved water quality also benefits the county's aesthetics and tourism potential.

Greenways aid in storm water management by slowing and filtering runoff. This is true in both man-made and natural drainage ways. An increased use of natural systems in storm water design in new development would have lasting benefits in terms of reduced maintenance costs to residents and/or government and increased open space in urban areas.

Greenways also provide flood control. Designating flood areas as permanent open spaces reduces loss of life and property in the future as well as eliminates the need for government assistance for residents of flood areas. Sangamon County currently has a project underway to convert a residential area subject to flooding to permanent open space. Known as the Driftwood Acres project, it is an example of government and private cooperation.

Greenways also shape urban growth patterns. The South Fork and the Sangamon River are natural boundaries to Springfield's expansion on the north and east. These water bodies help direct growth into a more cohesive area that can be served effectively with municipal services.

Trails provide unique outdoor recreation experiences. They provide convenient and inexpensive recreation close to home and are accessible to many more people than a typical park because of their linear nature.

Trails provide an enjoyment of the landscape leading to greater environmental awareness. Trails offer the opportunity for people to experience the peacefulness and beauty of our natural environment. Experiencing nature first-hand can lead to a life

long environmental commitment.

Trails provide opportunities for exercise and fitness. A walk on a trail results in the same amount of exercise as a similar walk along an urban sidewalk or on a treadmill. However, most people agree that trails provide a more stimulating and recreational experience.

Trails offer alternative routes for non-motorized travel. Safe pedestrian and bicycle access between home, school, shopping, work and parks promotes use of alternative methods of transportation. Not using the car reduces traffic congestion and pollution, reduces personal travel costs, promotes fitness and health and provides a sense of personal satisfaction.

Greenways and trails have economic benefits as well as recreational and environmental benefits. New businesses result from trail related enterprises. New bike rentals and concession stands are not uncommon. Scenic or destination oriented trails with high use can generate new restaurants and even bed & breakfasts.

Trails provide new opportunities for tourism. While none of the trails planned in Sangamon County are now seen as a tourist destination on their own, these trails can encourage Springfield's thousands of visitors to the Lincoln sites to stay an extra day. The Convention and Visitors Bureau reports many inquiries about trail opportunities in the area.

Trails are a positive quality of life indicator in corporate location decisions. Corporations have moved away from monetary incentives to quality of life factors in a community when choosing business locations. Trails indicate a community that cares about its citizens. Quality of life for employees was the third most important factor in locating a business according to a 1989 survey of CEOs.

Greenways and trails enhance property values. Studies have shown that houses in close proximity to a trail or open space sell quicker and for slightly more than houses further away. Desirability and acceptance of trails are shown in Illinois communities where real estate ads point out locations near trails and "For Sale" signs are in the back yard along the trail in addition to the front yard.

As with any construction projects, trails create new jobs for trail design and construction.

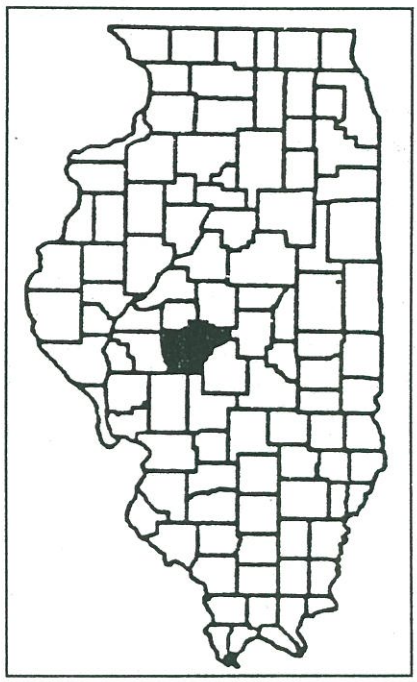
In summary, greenways provide multiple environmental, recreational, aesthetic and economic benefits. In general terms, greenways and trails:

- improve the quality of life in a community;
- increase the aesthetic and natural appeal of a neighborhood;
- conserve and protect natural resources;

- promote environmental awareness; and
- encourage stewardship of natural and cultural resources.

Hiking along proposed trail.

PLANNING INFORMATION



Sangamon County is located in central Illinois and is the 10th largest county in Illinois. Springfield, the state capital, is located in Sangamon County and is the 4th largest city in Illinois. (1996 Census Bureau estimate)

The first settler in the county, Elisha Kelley came in 1790. Before that time, the Pottawatomie and Kickapoo Indians and French explorers and trappers roamed the area. Settlement was rapid because of the abundance of clean water, timber and fertile soil. Springfield became the county seat in 1825 and the state capital in 1837.

Several incidents encouraged the growth of Springfield. The first event was the transfer of the state capital from Vandalia to Springfield in 1837. From 1835-1840, the town's population increased from 1,419 to 2,574 people. Rapid growth occurred again in the 1850's when railroads made Springfield a major stop. In the 1890's, several manufacturing firms opened and provided a number of jobs. By 1890, the city's population was 24,963. Coal mining provided the next impetus for growth in the early 1900's. By 1918, the population had reached 59,000. During this period, 1900-1920, large numbers of immigrants also arrived in Springfield. The Springfield Pleasure Driveway and Park District was created in 1900. Washington, Lincoln, Bunn and Bergen Parks were all acquired by 1912.

The development of Sangamon County since the early 1800's to the present has left only remnants of the area's natural heritage. Early settlers cut down timber for shelter and fuel and to clear land for farm ground. With the advent of plows to cut through the sod, the prairies were tilled for agricultural uses. As agriculture spread, marshy areas were drained. The loss of timbered areas, plowing the prairie and draining wet areas, all resulted in an eventual loss of plant and animal species in the county.

As the economy made a transition away from agriculture, the county became more and more populated with people living in incorporated areas, mainly Springfield. Pre-war development in the 1900's was not sensitive to natural resource protection. However, development was compact and contiguous and lots were small by today's

standards.

Post-war development patterns also proved detrimental to the natural landscape. Lot sizes increased and subdivisions were scattered where land was available. Little attention has been paid to retaining natural features. Limited interest has been shown in alternative conservation design which retains natural features.

Development in the floodplain has been regulated, although not entirely prohibited. The acquisition of Carpenter and Gurgens Parks along the north side of the Sangamon River, which have been designated an Illinois Nature Preserve, was a major accomplishment. In general, however, park acquisition has not kept up with population growth.

The loss of Sangamon County's natural landscape did not happen overnight. The loss has been the result of decades of viewing natural resources and features as products to be used, not saved. Increasing population and development pressures are now making the loss more apparent than it has been in the past. Ignorance of natural systems was an excuse 100 years ago, however citizens now know the importance of preserving our natural features.

Current Trail Status

At the start of this planning project, there were no major trails in Sangamon County designed specifically for that use. Walking and biking opportunities are available in the city parks as well as along city streets and sidewalks. Carpenter, Gurgens and Riverside Parks along the Sangamon River contain several miles of hiking trails. Lincoln Memorial Garden adjacent to Lake Springfield also has several hiking trails. SangChris Lake State Park in southeastern Sangamon County has hiking opportunities. A one-mile trail connects the University of Illinois at Springfield and Lincoln Land Community College campuses. Generally speaking, however, there were no safe, easily accessible areas for recreational trail use activities.

The Lost Bridge Trail between Springfield and Rochester was opened in the summer of 1997. Its acceptance in the community is assured based on the steadily increasing number of users before and after the trail was opened.

Ground-breaking for Rochester Trail where it intersects the Lost Bridge Trail.

Construction of a second trail along the Interurban line between Springfield and Chatham is scheduled to start in the spring, 1998.

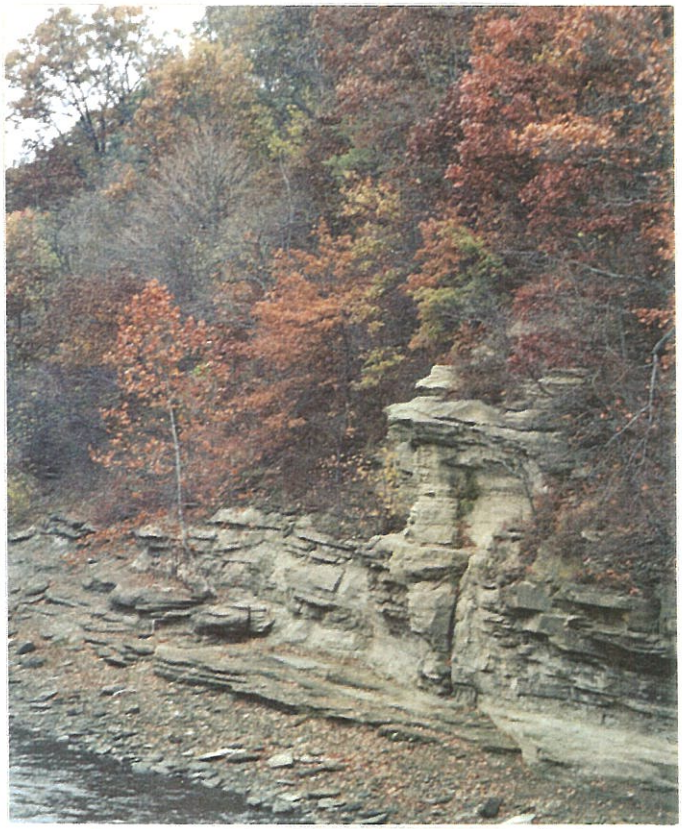
The City of Springfield has received a grant for a trail from Parkway Pointe northeast between Westchester and Sherwood Subdivisions.

Some of the other incorporated areas have expressed interest in trails. Chatham, Rochester and Williamsville are planning a trail system.

Current Greenway Status

The largest designated greenway in the county is the parks and land owned by the City of Springfield around Lake Springfield. Its purpose is to protect the lake.

There are park areas along the Sangamon River which serve a greenway function. Carpenter, Gurgens and Riverside Parks total over 1,000 acres along the Sangamon River north of Springfield. The Sangamon County Conservation Area is 141 acres along the Sangamon River and a tributary in northern Sangamon County. It is owned by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. The Village of Riverton has some park area near the Sangamon River.



Sangamon River bluffs in Carpenter Park.

As mentioned earlier, floodplain development is regulated. However, this regulation in no way insures that the 100 year floodplain stays in a natural state.

Some landowners have worked to protect streams and slopes and have created private greenways. There is no program or mechanism to promote permanent creation or conservation of greenways in the county.

SANGAMON COUNTY'S GREENWAY RESOURCES

The idea of greenways has existed since the 1860's when Frederick Law Olmstead recognized the potential of linking parks and neighborhoods by means of open spaces. The term greenway came into more widespread use in the 1950's and 1960's when noted planner, William H. Whyte, combined the words greenbelt and parkway. The concept received another boost in 1969 when Ian McHarg published his influential book, Design With Nature, providing a theoretical and technical basis for ecology based planning and design, including that of greenways.

This section of the plan will look at resources for greenways which provide environmental benefits and are not necessarily suitable or intended for trail use.

Sangamon County is part of the Grand Prairie Division as delineated in Schwegman's Natural Divisions of Illinois. The Grand Prairie Division is a vast plain formerly occupied by tall grass prairie. The forests of the Grand Prairie Division are generally associated with stream valleys.

WATER RESOURCES

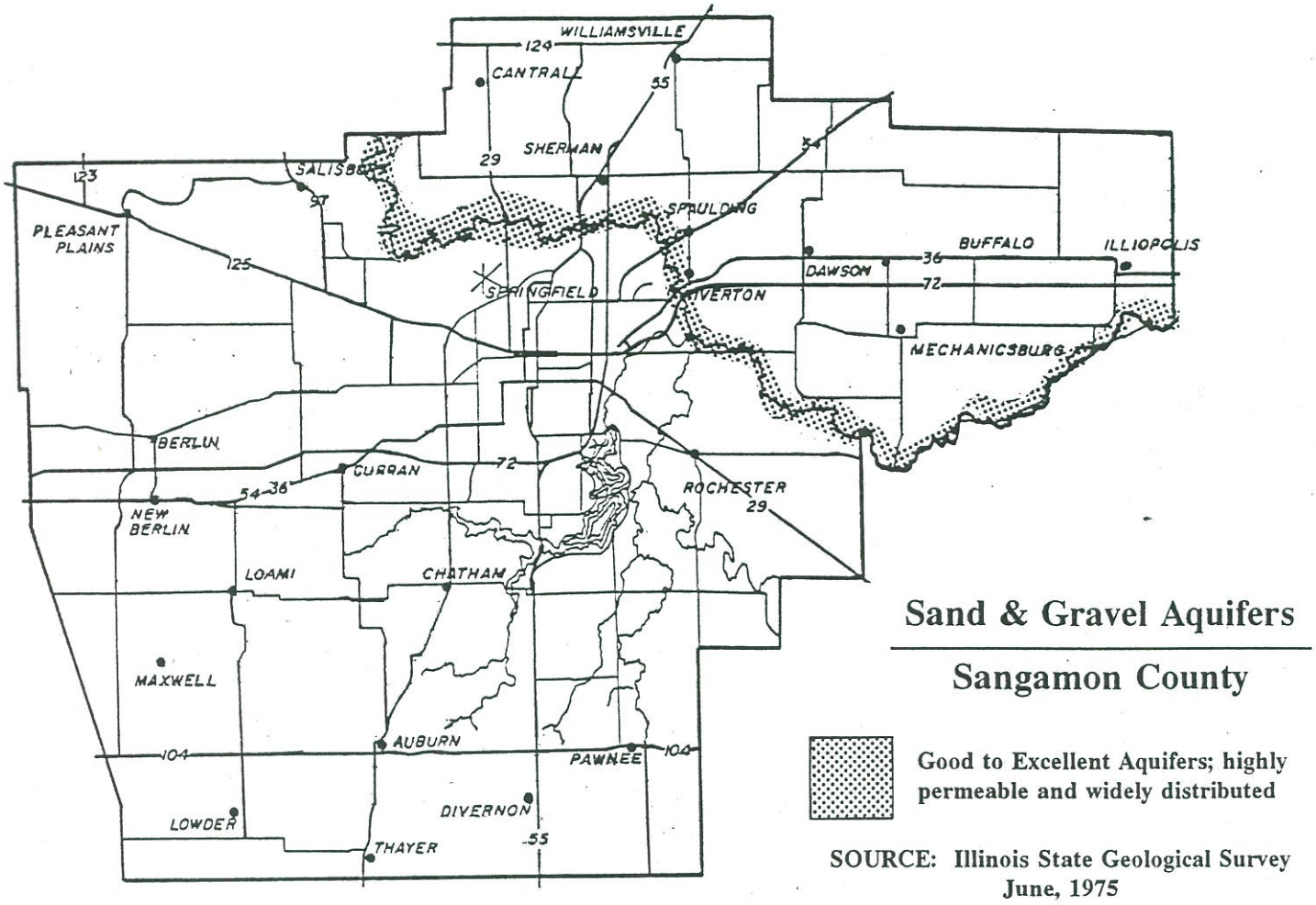
Groundwater & Aquifers

The presence, quantity and quality of groundwater depend upon the natural arrangement of earth materials beneath the surface. Groundwater is only found where the geological formations that transmit water are present. These formations are called aquifers. Because geological conditions differ considerably from place to place, groundwater occurrence varies considerably from site to site in the county.

The points of interchange between the surface and groundwater are called aquifer recharge areas. Water is added to the aquifer by precipitation and infiltration of water through soil layers to the aquifers. To prevent contamination of groundwater, these recharge areas must be carefully managed. The movement of groundwater into streams and rivers maintains minimum levels during periods of low flow.

The best aquifers in this area are along the Sangamon River (Map 1). Several communities in Sangamon County rely on aquifers to supply wells for their public water supply. Most of these wells are located near the Sangamon River or a major

Map 1



tributary. These wells supply water to an estimated 14,150 persons or 8% of the county's population. Protection of the aquifer is vital to these water supplies. A greenway provides the best protection by allowing natural systems to cleanse the water of contaminants, such as septic tank effluent or agricultural chemicals. Reducing contaminants from the recharge area reduces the risk of contamination.

Specific well-head protection ordinances are the best way to accomplish this protection.

Surface Water

Lakes and Ponds

There are hundreds of small lakes and ponds in Sangamon County. Most of these lakes and ponds were constructed and are in private ownership. These ponds provide aesthetic value as well as commercial or recreational value. However, they

are too numerous to identify for greenway purposes.

Lake Springfield is the largest lake and most important water-oriented recreational area in the county. Substantial amounts of the shoreline (28.5 miles) have been leased as residential sites. However, a large amount is still undeveloped and serves as a greenway protecting the lake. City Water, Light & Power has developed a land use/management plan for the city owned land surrounding the lake. In addition, City Water, Light & Power has been working with farmers in the watershed to reduce runoff of soil and agricultural chemicals into the lake.

Streams

There are about 250 miles of significant streams in Sangamon County (Map 2). Twelve of these streams (180 miles) are less than 20 feet in average width. The Sangamon River is the largest and averages 115 feet in width in the county. The South Fork of the Sangamon River averages 68 feet in width.

Streams provide a major greenway resource in this area. The streams' water and vegetation along the banks provide wildlife habitat. Unplowed areas allow plants a place to reestablish themselves. Even though most streams are in private ownership, they provide a pleasing view of the landscape to residents.

Brush Creek originates at the southern boundary of the county and flows northeast to Horse Creek. Stream banks are bordered by cultivated cropland, or in some cases by a thin band of trees. The stream bottom is predominantly silt. The proposed dam at Horse Creek for a second water supply would affect Brush Creek.

Buckhart Creek originates in Christian County, enters Sangamon County in the southeast and flows northwest into the Sangamon River. The watershed is in cropland and, in many places, is cultivated up to the stream bank. The stream bottom is mainly silt.

Cantrall Creek originates at the northern county boundary and flows south and west near Cantrall to the Sangamon River. The predominant bank vegetation is grasses, although trees and cultivated cropland border the stream in many places. Silt is the predominant bottom type with some sand and gravel.

Griffith Creek originates near Mechanicsburg and flows west into Clear Creek and the Sangamon River. The banks are bordered by a thin intermittent band of trees or cropland. The stream bottom is predominantly silt. The watershed is farmland.

Horse Creek originates in Montgomery County and flows northward into Sangamon County and the Sangamon River. The creek runs through Pawnee. A band of timber follows the stream, but the watershed is primarily farmland. The bottom is predominantly silt, although there are some sand bars. Brush, undercut banks and

overhanging trees are common. Horse Creek is proposed to be dammed for a second water supply (Hunter Lake) for the City of Springfield.

Horse Creek

Lick Creek originates in western Sangamon County and flows eastward south of Loami to empty into Lake Springfield. A band of timber follows the stream, although the watershed is cropland. The bottom is silt type. Brush piles, overhanging trees and undercut banks are common, and cows have access to the stream in some areas.

Prairie Creek originates at the western boundary and flows northeast to the Sangamon River. The bottom type is silt. A thin band of trees or cropland borders the stream. The watershed is primarily cropland. During heavy rains, the stream often overflows its banks.

Richland Creek originates in the northwest and flows east through Pleasant Plains to Prairie Creek. The stream bottom is silt. The watershed is cropland which often extends up to the bank. A thin band of trees also follow the stream. Undercut banks and brush piles are common. During heavy rainstorms, flooding occurs frequently.

Sangamon River

Sangamon River originates in McLean County and enters Sangamon County southeast of Illiopolis. The river flows northwest passing through Riverton and north of Springfield to leave the county northeast of Salisbury. The river banks are lined with trees, but the watershed is mostly cropland. The bottom type is sand, but silt, gravel and rubble are present. Brush piles, sand and gravel bars and undercut banks are common. Extensive flooding occurs after periods of much rain.

South Fork originates in Christian County and enters Sangamon County in the southeast. It flows northward and empties into the Sangamon River. The stream banks are lined with timber. The bottom is predominantly silt with some sand, gravel and rubble. Brush piles and sand and gravel bars are present in the stream. The river floods after heavy rains. The watershed is mostly cropland.

Spring Creek originates near the western county boundary and flows northeast to the Sangamon River. Its floodplains form a boundary to Springfield's city limits in some places. There is a thin band of trees along the banks and brush piles and log jams are numerous. The bottom is silt with some occurrences of sand and gravel. Cropland extends up to the stream banks in places.

Sugar Creek enters Sangamon County in the south and flows northeast near Thayer and Auburn to the Sangamon River. This creek has been dammed to form Lake Springfield. The bottom is predominantly silt with some sand and gravel. A thin band of timber follows the banks and brush piles are numerous. The watershed is primarily cropland.

Wolf Creek enters Sangamon County in the north and flows south near Williamsville to the Sangamon River. There is a thin band of trees along the banks with many brush piles and overhanging trees. Cropland is next to the stream bank in some places and cattle have access in several locations. The watershed is primarily cropland, and agricultural pollution is present.

Other smaller streams shown on the map but for which little data have been collected include:

Fancy Creek which enters the county in the north and flows southeast into the Sangamon River.

Little Wolf Creek, a tributary of Wolf Creek.

Clear Creek and the North Fork of Clear Creek which join Griffith Creek west of Mechanicsburg.

Henkle Branch of Horse Creek which flows through Pawnee.

West Branch of Horse Creek.

Panther Creek and Little Panther Creek which flow northeast into Sugar Creek south of Lake Springfield.

Polecat Creek which flows northeast through Chatham into Lake Springfield.

John's Creek which is a tributary of the South Fork of Lick Creek which flows into Lick Creek southwest of Loami.

Little Spring Creek which originates south of Berlin and flows northeast into Spring Creek.

Archer Creek also a tributary of Spring Creek.

Black Branch of the South Fork which flows north through Rochester into the South Fork of the Sangamon River.

The majority of streams or stream banks in the county are in private ownership. Education programs are needed to inform landowners of streambank care to prevent erosion and encourage fish and wildlife. Although totally private, these greenways still provide benefits to the entire county.

Floodplain

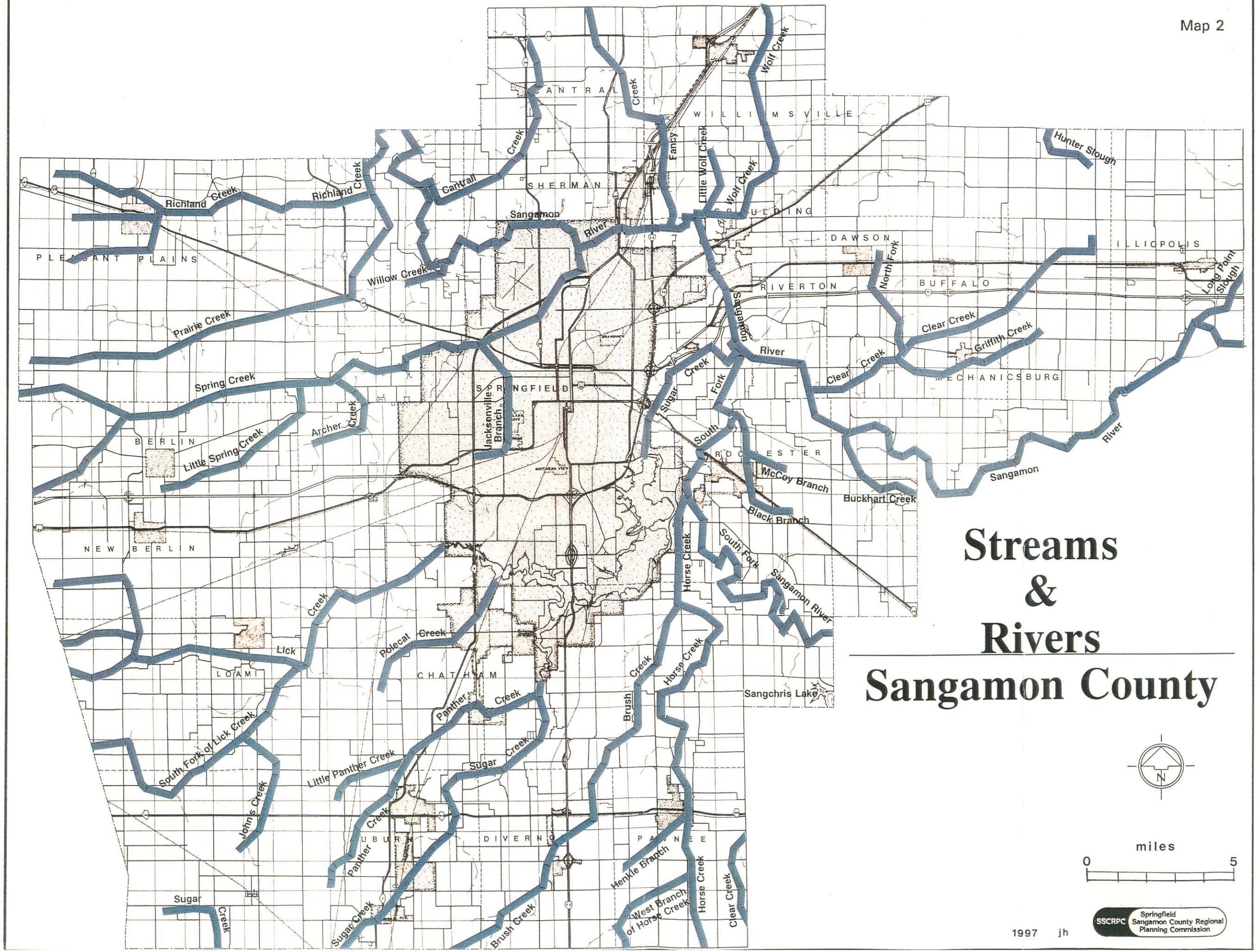
Floodplain is the land adjacent to a body of water which is covered by excess water during flooding. In the past, Americans have thought of floodplains as just another engineering problem that could be easily corrected by building a levee or some other engineering work in order to "protect" the land and maximize its commercial value. Little regard was paid to the value of floodplains in their natural states. However, attitudes are starting to change. Floodplains are recognized as nature's method of controlling floods, replenishing the land, recharging groundwater and providing wildlife habitat. Channelization, levees and other flood control projects reduce the risk of floods in the area of the project, but the more rapid movement of water will increase flood problems in non-protected areas, have adverse effects on the wildlife and vegetation in the area, lower the water table, increase erosion and decrease water quality. As evidenced in recent flooding along the Mississippi River, breaches in these man-made controls can have devastating effects on areas they are meant to protect.

The 100 year floodplain is that land which has a 1% chance of flooding each year, not land that floods once every 100 years. Since the early 1980's Springfield and Sangamon County have controlled development in the 100-year floodplain, including any filling or altering of grade. Floodplain in the non-urbanized area is generally in agricultural use or is forested. Floodplain for major streams has been designated on the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The Sangamon River and South Fork floodplains are quite extensive (Maps 3 & 4).

Floodplains create natural greenways, following the linear pattern of rivers and streams. Often there are wildlife habitat areas located along these waterways. The best use of floodplain areas, both to maintain balance in the natural environment and to minimize property damage from flooding, is to remain undisturbed. The presence of trees and natural vegetation prevents erosion, improves water quality, preserves wildlife habitat, and is aesthetically pleasing.

Map 2

Streams & Rivers Sangamon County



1997 jh

SSCRPC Springfield Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission

Floodplain
Springfield Area

Map 3

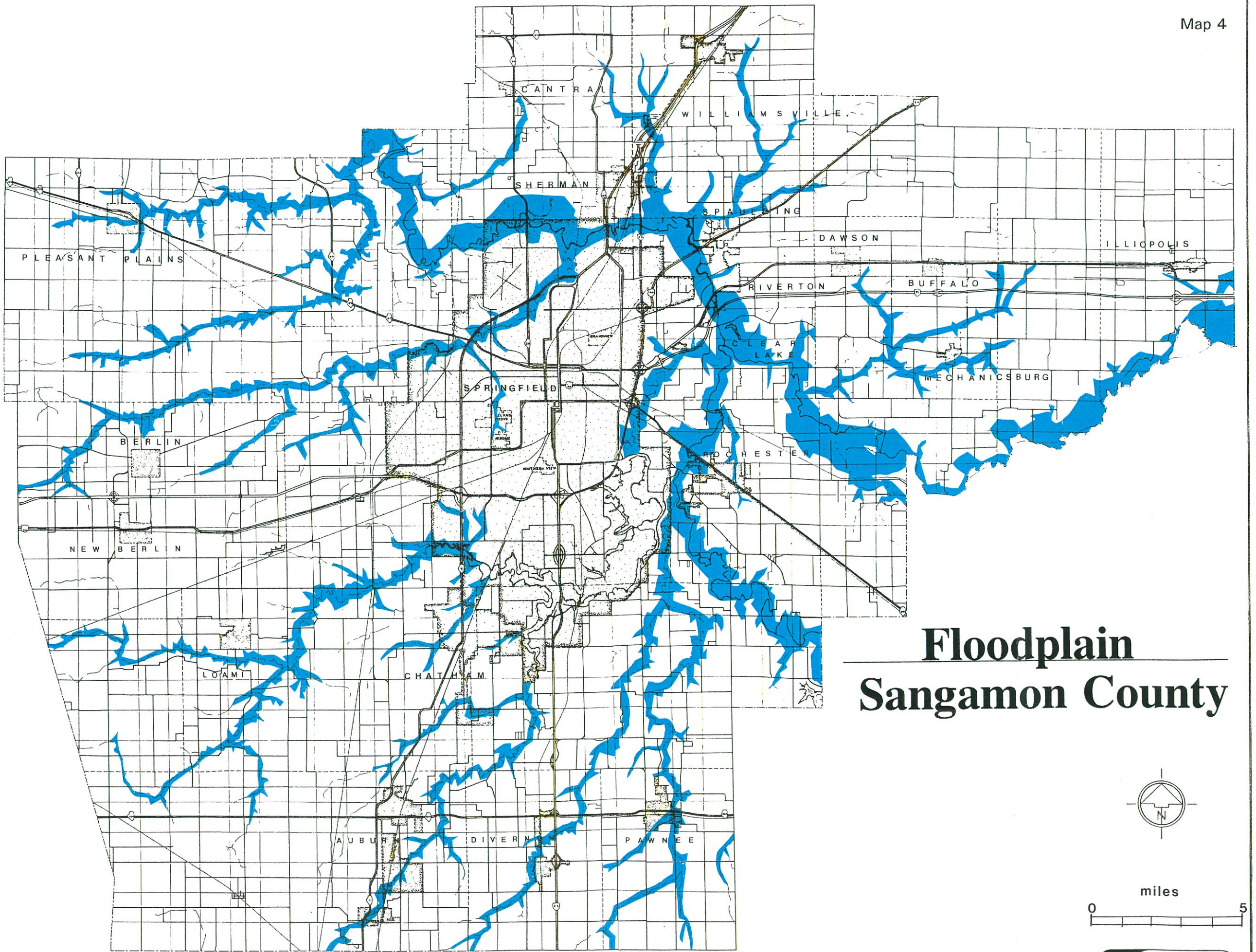
miles

0 1 2

1997 jh

Springfield Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission

Map 4



Floodplain
Sangamon County

1997 jh

SSCRPC Springfield Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission

South Fork Floodplain

Administration and enforcement of local flood control ordinances regulate construction and grade alteration in the 100-year floodplain. These regulations provide local control (although mandated by the National Flood Insurance Program) over development in the floodplain to minimize damage. In and near the urbanized area in particular, development has ignored the "green" aspect of floodplains and of areas contiguous to streams where floodplains have not been determined. These areas are often stripped of vegetation, filled and graded or paved. Provisions should be incorporated into the subdivision ordinances to protect these natural greenways during development.

Flooded houses in floodplain.

Sangamon County is the recipient of a Hazard Mitigation Grant (funding provided by FEMA) for the purchase of a flood-prone area located at the confluence of Sugar Creek and the South Fork of the Sangamon River. The purpose of the grant program is to remove structures from the floodplain to prevent repeated flood damage and to preserve the land as open space forever. After the removal of approximately forty structures, associated utilities, and debris, the acreage will be converted to wetlands/upland forest. Additional properties could be evaluated for participation in this grant program.

FOREST RESOURCES

Forested areas and woodlands provide many important functions. A forested watershed protects the quality of water in the stream or river. Trees and associated growth provide ground cover and rooting which prevent erosion and thus siltation of the water body. The forest canopy also breaks the force and speed of the raindrop as it falls, lessening its impact on the ground and reducing erosion. By slowing down the flow of rain, more water can be absorbed, and the amount of surface runoff is lessened and groundwater recharged.

Trees serve as a buffer to noise. Although a forest does not eliminate sounds, it does diminish them somewhat.

Trees along with all green plants cleanse the air and replenish oxygen.

Forested areas and their edges provide food and shelter for many wild animals and birds, including game species. Trees also shade the water, reducing maximum temperature which is good for fisheries.

Many outdoor recreation activities are either dependent on or enhanced by the presence of forested areas.

Forested areas, particularly in the flat cropland of Sangamon County, provide a variation in scenery and are visually pleasing.

Forested areas have steadily decreased since pioneer days. Today only 5% of the county is forested compared to 29% almost 200 years ago. None of the existing forests are virgin timber. They have been re-established through natural processes or through planting programs.

Most of the existing trees are found along streams and rivers with the largest, most continuous lengths of trees along the Sangamon River and South Fork (Maps 5 & 6).

ACRES OF FOREST IN SANGAMON COUNTY		
Year	# of Acres	% County
1800	163,328	29%
1924	110,558	20%
1967	37,195	7%
1992	27,129	5%

Forested Areas
Springfield Area

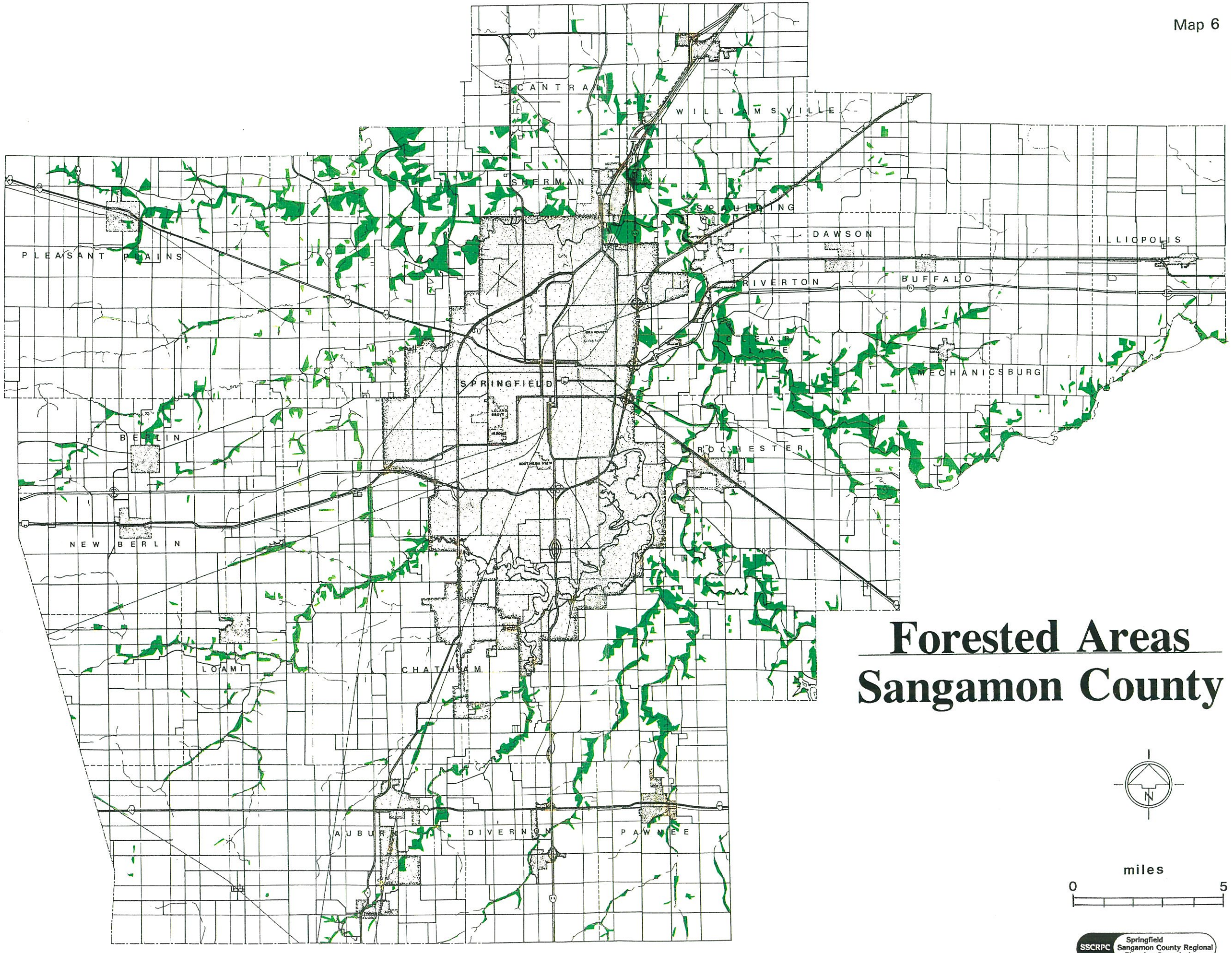
Map 5

miles
0 1 2

1997 jh

SSCRPC Springfield Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission

Map 6



Forested Areas
Sangamon County

In the urban area, public parks provide much of the forest cover. The city's Comprehensive Plan designates additional forested areas as potential parks.

There are no existing regulatory mechanisms to protect trees on private property in any of the county's governmental jurisdictions. Residential development has resulted in the destruction of some forested areas. Conservation planning and cluster design in subdivisions could alleviate the problem by allowing new houses while saving most of the trees. The design of many subdivisions include significant areas of open space for retention, detention and private parks. Tree planting in these areas should be encouraged to provide wildlife and aesthetic benefits. New forested areas can be created in communities.

STORMWATER RESOURCES

Greenways can also be created. Stormwater management systems using retention and detention ponds should be viewed as a greenway resource. Subdivisions throughout the city individually provide their own stormwater management. Frequently, detention areas are placed in out-of-the-way, unusable portions of the subdivision. There is no regional plan and drainage areas are not connected.

The city needs an approach to stormwater management that goes beyond peak flow control. Clustering and combining stormwater areas along with existing floodplain, streams or wetlands can result in a connected greenway system between subdivisions. A regional stormwater plan is needed along with a stormwater management ordinance. The ordinance should set standards for not only peak flow, but for infiltration rates, pollution and sediment control and vegetation.

This man-made greenway in Hyde Park Subdivision provides stormwater control, recreation and a buffer from nearby houses.

These created greenways will provide flood and sediment control as they do now. Additional benefits of a broader approach to stormwater control include:

(1) additional open space;

(2) scenic residential or commercial settings;

(3) natural areas for wildlife; and

(4) screening/privacy from other uses.

GOALS, POLICIES & OBJECTIVES

The development of a network of greenways & trails depends on more than an acquisition program. All levels of government need to realize the importance of greenways (with or without trails) and incorporate greenway preservation and conservation, as well as acquisition, in daily activities. The private sector and citizens also need to recognize their responsibilities and opportunities in greenway establishment and preservation. The following goals & objectives provide direction to local governments, civic groups and citizens.

GREENWAY/TRAIL ACQUISITION

GOAL ------- ACQUIRE GREENWAYS/TRAILS IN ACCORD WITH THE ADOPTED PLAN.

Objective - Budget trail acquisition and development money in the city's Capital Improvement Plan.

Objective - Budget trail acquisition and development money in Sangamon County's Capital Improvement Plan.

Objective - Budget trail acquisition and development money in the Park District's Capital Improvement Plan.

Policy ------- Explore alternatives to fee simple acquisition for the preservation of greenways.

Objective - Use conservation easements to preserve floodplain and forested areas where public access is not necessary or desired.

Objective - Amend Arterial Roadway Network Plan and Official Map to include trail corridors.

GOAL ------- CREATE A COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY TO ACQUIRE AND MAINTAIN GREENWAYS & TRAILS.

Objective - Establish a county park or conservation department.

GOVERNMENT POLICIES & REGULATIONS

GOAL ------- MODIFY REGULATORY ORDINANCES TO ENCOURAGE GREENWAY DEVELOPMENT.

Policy ------- Review and amend land use regulatory ordinances to insure that identified greenways are preserved.

Objective - Allow cluster development.

Objective - Include trail acquisition and development costs in the city's infrastructure plan.

Objective - Include trail acquisition and development costs in the county's infrastructure plan.

Policy ------- Use stormwater management practices to create greenways.

Objective - Update stormwater management requirements.

Objective - Develop a regional drainage plan for the Springfield area that provides interconnected greenways with the Lake Springfield watershed a priority.

Policy ------- Include trails and greenways in new development in Springfield and Sangamon County.

Objective - Amend the city and county subdivision ordinances to promote a connected greenway and trail system.

Objective - Require trail connections from new subdivisions to existing and proposed trails.

Objective - Connect green spaces between subdivisions.

Objective - Preserve identified greenways in new development.

GOAL ------- ESTABLISH A RECREATION AUTHORITY IN UNINCORPORATED SANGAMON COUNTY TO ACQUIRE AND MAINTAIN GREENWAYS & TRAILS.

Objective - Create a county park or conservation department.

GOAL ------- USE THE GREENWAYS & TRAILS PLAN.

Objective - Review and update the greenways & trails plan every three years.

RECREATION

GOAL ------- PROVIDE A MULTI-USE TRAIL SYSTEM THROUGHOUT SPRINGFIELD AND SANGAMON COUNTY.

Policy ------- Encourage intergovernmental cooperation in acquisition and management of trails throughout the area.

Objective - Use abandoned railroad and utility rights-of-way as trail corridors.

Objective - Use trails to connect parks and other major destination points.

Objective - Provide scenic trail opportunities.

Policy ------- Explore the feasibility of the Sangamon River for a water-based trail.

Policy ------- Establish uniform design and maintenance standards on multi-jurisdictional trails.

Policy ------- Consider the use of on-street connections where feasible.

GOAL ------- PROVIDE A MULTI-USE TRAIL AROUND LAKE SPRINGFIELD.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

GOAL ------- PROTECT ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS THROUGH THE USE OF GREENWAYS.

Objective - Identify and conserve wildlife habitat and migration routes.

Objective - Provide greenway buffers along rivers, streams & tributaries to reduce runoff pollutant load.

Objective - Preserve the 100 year floodplain as a natural area.

Objective - Preserve wetlands.

Policy ------- Encourage preservation of greenways through voluntary efforts.

Objective - Private landowners should take advantage of forestry and fishery programs to create greenways, including the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP).

Policy ------- Explore alternatives to fee simple acquisition for the preservation of greenways.

Objective - Use conservation easements to preserve floodplain and forested areas where public access is not necessary or desired.

Objective - Educate landowners about tax advantages and personal benefits of greenway preservation.

Policy ------- Protect aquifers which provide water for public water supplies.

Objective - Develop wellhead protection overlay districts as part of the zoning ordinance.

GOAL ------- USE GREENWAYS' NATURAL PROCESSES TO REDUCE GOVERNMENTAL COSTS OF RESOURCE MANAGEMENT.

Policy ------- Use greenways to improve water quality.

Objective - Provide a 50' grassway or other vegetative cover along all streams and water bodies.

Policy ------- Use greenways to provide storm water management.

Policy ------- Preserve the floodplain to aid in flood control.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOAL ------- RECOGNIZE GREENWAYS AND TRAILS AS A VITAL PART OF THE AREA'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.

Policy ------- Maximize the economic benefits of trails.

Policy ------- Recognize trails as an important contribution to the area's quality of life.

Policy ------- Encourage trail related businesses.

Objective - Educate the business community about the positive economic development aspects of trails.

Objective - Develop and measure key indicators of economic contributions of trails such as: new business, increased property values, sales time of houses, trail related tourism, etc.

Policy ------- Use trails to promote increased, longer, and return visits to the Springfield area.

Objective - Develop a bike/hike corridor connecting Lincoln sites in Sangamon and Menard Counties.

Objective - Develop a bike/hike historic corridor connecting downtown Springfield, Lincoln's Tomb and other historic sites.

TRANSPORTATION COORDINATION

GOAL ------- ESTABLISH A TRAIL SYSTEM WHICH PROMOTES AND ENCOURAGES NON-AUTO TRAVEL.

Policy ------ Trails should be an important part of the area's transportation network.

Objective - Amend Arterial Roadway Network Plan to include trails with a right-of-way of 30'.

Objective - Connect trails to each other and to major destinations.

Objective - Include trail corridors in the Springfield Area Transportation Study (SATS).

Policy ------- Sidewalks enhance the trail system and increase trail accessibility.

Objective - Sidewalks shall be built on both sides of all new roads and in conjunction with major improvements.

Objective - Variances of the subdivision ordinance to eliminate sidewalks should be carefully assessed and rarely granted.

Policy ------ Use of bicycles for transportation should be encouraged.

Objective - The city should work with citizen groups to establish a safe bicycle route system to provide safe access from trails to major destinations.

Objective - Include bicycle racks in parking requirements in Springfield and Sangamon County zoning ordinances.

GREENWAY RECOMMENDATIONS

Greenways in Springfield and Sangamon County are located along streams and rivers. Greenways can be placed in one of three categories:

- Greenways to be acquired;
- Greenways for which conservation easements should be acquired; or
- Greenways to be preserved through private landowner's stewardship.

Greenways to be Acquired

Acquisition of greenways is limited because of the cost involved. However, there are a few areas which should be acquired because of their value for natural resource protection or recreation (Maps 7 & 8).

Area 1 - Expansion of the Sangamon County Conservation area along the Sangamon River.

Area 2 - Forested and floodplain area along the Sangamon River adjacent to the CNW-North proposed trail corridor.

Area 3 - Expansion of the Carpenter/Riverside Park area west along both sides of the Sangamon River to Walnut Street.

Area 4 - Expansion of the Sangamon County owned floodplain at the confluence of the Sangamon River, South Fork and Sugar Creek.

Area 5 - Floodplain/forest along Spring Creek south of Jefferson Street.

Area 6 - Jacksonville Branch through Springfield.

Greenways for which Conservation Easements should be Acquired

Area 7 - The remainder of the Sangamon River Greenway including its floodplain and associated forested areas.

Area 8 - South Fork Greenway including its floodplain and associated forested areas.

Area 9 - Lick Creek Greenway near Lake Springfield.

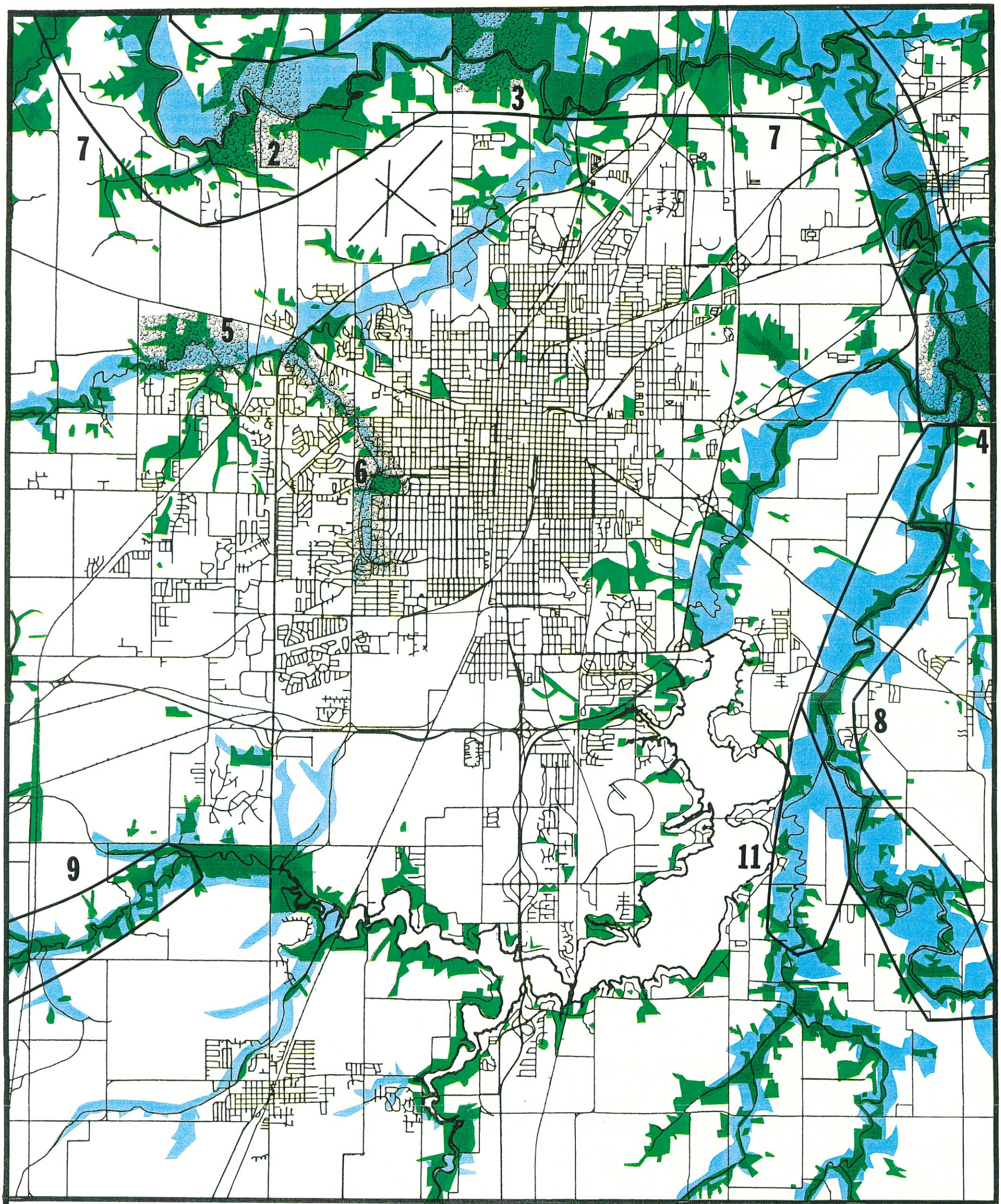
Area 10 - Sugar Creek Greenway near Lake Springfield.

Area 11 - Horse Creek Greenway near Lake Springfield.

Greenways to be Preserved Through Private Stewardship

Greenways along the remaining streams in the county.

Small, privately owned greenways are an integral part of the county's resources.



Priority Greenways

Springfield Area

Map 7

N

Priority Greenways

Forest

Floodplain

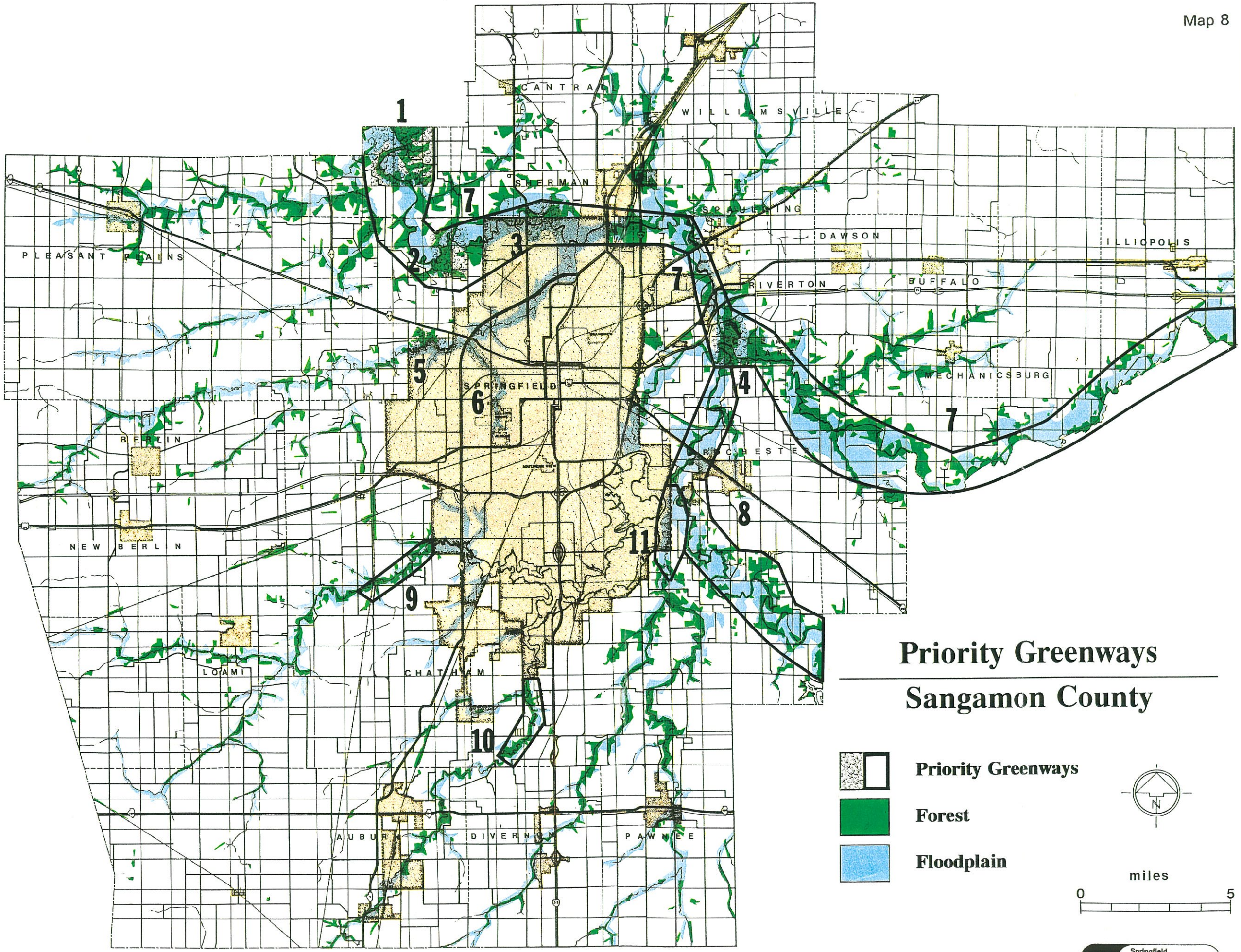
miles

0 5

1997 jh

SSCRPC Springfield Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission

Map 8


CANTRAL
WILLIAMSVILLE
SHERMAN
SPAULDING
DAWSON
ILLIOPOLIS
PLEASANT PLAINS
RIVERTON
BUFFALO
MECHANICSBURG
SPRINGFIELD
BERLIN
ROCHESTER
NEW BERLIN
LOAMI
CHATHAM
AUBURN
DIVERNON
PAWNEE
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
Priority Greenways
Sangamon County
Priority Greenways
Forest
Floodplain
N
miles
0
5
1997 jh
SSCRPC Springfield Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission

TRAIL RECOMMENDATIONS

CORRIDOR RATING SYSTEM

A point system was developed to rate corridors for priority for trail acquisition (Table 1). Although, corridors have been ranked 1, 2, 3, etc., they have been placed in a group of high priority corridors or medium or low priority. High priority corridors should all be given immediate consideration. Although the number 1 corridor is preferred over the number 2 corridor, conditions may arise which will make it preferable to acquire a lesser rated corridor. For example, matching monies, partial donations, or a reduced price may be available for one corridor and not for a higher ranked one. Thus, all corridors in the first priority group should be considered.

The corridor ratings should be reassessed periodically to reflect changes in the area and the expanding trail system (Table 2). Particular attention should be given to the possible loss of a corridor for a trail.

Points were awarded in three basic areas:

Corridor Acquisition Characteristics - Emphasis was placed on corridors that would be easy to acquire or corridors in which immediate acquisition was needed because of the potential of losing the corridor to another use.

Physical Characteristics of Corridor - Points were awarded for ease of developing a corridor into a trail, length and scenic characteristics.

Use of Corridor - Priority was given to corridors which would connect to other trails and link various community facilities.

Map 9 and Map 10 show the potential corridors and potential trail system in Springfield and Sangamon County.

Map 11 and Map 12 (pages 45 & 46) indicate the corridors rated as high, medium or low priority.

Table 1

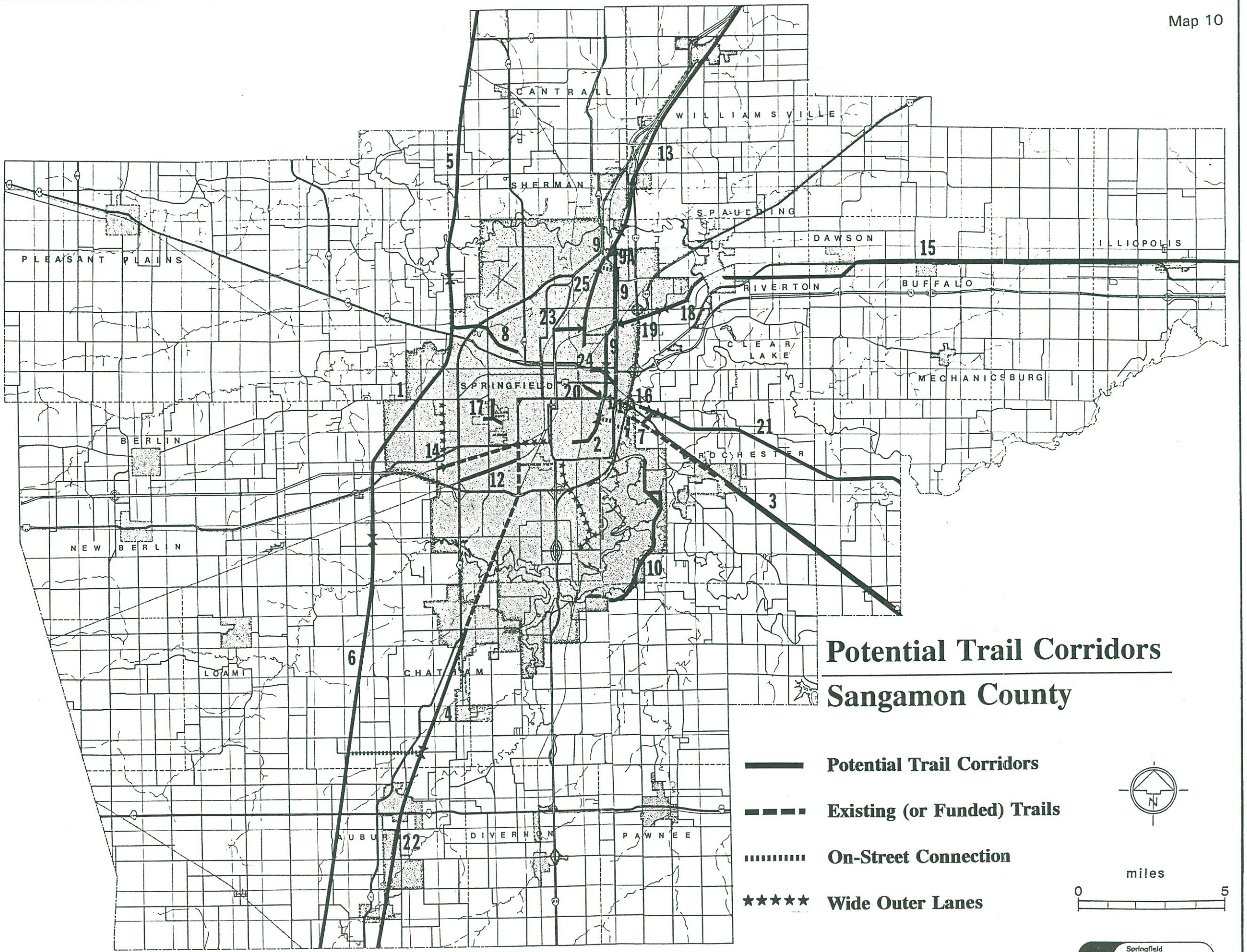
CORRIDOR RATING SYSTEM FOR TRAIL USE

POINTS	CORRIDOR ACQUISITION CHARACTERISTICS	
10	Type of Ownership	
	public	10
	semi-public	5
	private	---
10	Number of Owners	
	1 owner	10
	2-4 owners	5
	5 or more owners	---
15	Imminence of Loss	
	less than 1 year	15
	2-5 years	10
	more than 5 years	---
	PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF CORRIDOR	
10	Developability / Suitability for Trail Use	
10	Length of Corridor or Length of System	
	more than 10 miles	10
	5-10 miles	7
	1-5 miles	4
	less than 1 mile	---
5	Unique Characteristics of Corridor	
5	Ease of Accessibility to Trail / Anticipated Use	
	USE OF CORRIDOR	
5	Population Served	
	located in urban area	5
	located in rural area	---
15	Connection to Other Trails	
15	Connection to:	
	park	3
	school	3
	employment	3
	tourist destination	3
	other community facilities	3

CORRIDOR RATING SYSTEM FOR TRAIL USE

POINTS			1 CNW-urban	2 Ash to Bunn	3 Route 29	4 Chatham South	5 CNW-north	6 CNW-south	7 Lost Bridge Spur	8 Douglas to Stewart	9 Clear Lake to Sangamon River	10 Lake Springfield	11 Ash to Clear Lake	12 Westchester to Lincolnshire	13 Sangamon River north	14 Parkway Pointe	15 Riverton-east	16 Sugar Creek Spur	17 Leland Grove	18 Springfield to Riverton	19 Northeast	20 South Grand to Cook	21 Buckhart	22 Auburn	23 Lanphier	24 Bergen Park	25 North Central
	CORRIDOR ACQUISITION CHARACTERISTICS																										
10	Type of Ownership																										
	public	10																									
	semi-public	5	5	5	10	4	5	5	10	3	4	10	3	4	5	10	2	0	4	5	3	2	0	3	4	0	0
	private	0																									
10	Number of Owners																										
	1 owner	10																									
	2-4 owners	5	10	10	10	5	10	10	10	5	5	10	5	5	10	10	0	10	5	10	5	0	0	5	5	0	0
	5 or more owners	0																									
15	Imminence of Loss																										
	less than 1 year	15																									
	2-5 years	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	0	10	10	0	10	10	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	10	0
	more than 5 years	0																									
	PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF CORRIDOR																										
10	Developability / Suitability for Trail Use		10	10	10	10	10	10	10	7	5	5	8	10	10	10	10	10	7	5	10	0	5	0	0	0	4
10	Length of Corridor or Length of System																										
	more than 10 miles	10																									
	5-10 miles	7	10	4	7	4	10	10	0	4	7	7	4	4	7	0	10	0	4	4	4	0	7	7	0	0	4
	1-5 miles	4																									
	less than 1 mile	0																									
5	Unique Characteristics of Corridor		0	3	0	5	5	5	5	0	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	5	0	0	5	0	0	0	0
5	Ease of Accessibility to Trail / Anticipated Use		5	5	3	5	3	2	5	5	5	5	5	2	3	0	3	5	5	0	0	2	2	3	5	0	2
	USE OF CORRIDOR																										
5	Population Served																										
	located in urban area	5	5	5	0	3	0	0	5	5	5	5	5	5	2	3	0	5	5	0	5	5	0	0	5	5	5
	located in rural area	0																									
15	Connection to Other Trails		10	7	15	15	10	10	15	10	5	0	10	15	8	15	0	5	3	0	5	5	10	10	0	5	5
15	Connection to:																										
	park	3	3	3	0	3	0	0	0	3	0	3	3	0	3	3	3	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	3	3	0
	school	3	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	0	3	0	0	3	0	3	0	0	3	0	3
	employment	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	3	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0
	tourist destination	3	0	0	3	3	3	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	other community facilities	3	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	3	0	0	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	TOTAL		77	68	68	67	66	62	60	58	57	56	56	55	54	51	47	40	36	35	32	30	29	28	25	23	23

Map 10


CANTRALL
WILLIAMSVILLE
SHERMAN
SPAULDING
DAWSON
ILLIOPOLIS
PLEASANT PLAINS
RIVERTON
BUFFALO
CLEAR LAKE
MECHANICSBURG
SPRINGFIELD
BERLIN
ROCHESTER
NEW BERLIN
LOAMI
CHATHAM
AUBURN
DIVERNON
PAWNEE
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
9A
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
Potential Trail Corridors
Sangamon County
Potential Trail Corridors
Existing (or Funded) Trails
On-Street Connection
Wide Outer Lanes
N
miles
0
5
1997 jh
SSCRPC Springfield Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission

HIGH PRIORITY TRAIL CORRIDORS
(100-65 Points)

CNW - Urban (Corridor 1)

This trail segment is part of the former Chicago & Northwestern Railroad which traverses Sangamon County. Abandonment of the corridor as a result of the Union Pacific / Southern Pacific merger has been approved. The corridor is located on Springfield's growing west side and would be accessible from many residential areas. The corridor is the highest rated because of its long, continuous length, access from several parks including the new Park District site and usable bridges over Interstate 72 and several major streets.

IT - Ash Street to Bunn Park (Corridor 2)

This short trail segment links several parks and schools in southeast Springfield. It is viewed as a vital trail segment because of its potential for an on-street link to the Lost Bridge Trail and its connection with new construction to sidewalks and the wide outer lanes for bikes on 11th Street and Stanford Avenue. 11th Street and Stanford Avenue in turn provide connections to UIS / LLCC, Parkway Pointe / Westchester trail and the Springfield to Chatham trail.

ROUTE 29 - South from Rochester (Corridor 3)

Railroad right-of-way along Route 29.

Railroad right-of-way along Route 29 southeast from Rochester has been acquired by the State of Illinois. It is felt that both road improvements and a multi-use trail can be accommodated. The corridor extends through Sangamon County connecting to Taylorville and Pana in Christian County, creating a corridor of regional or statewide significance. This corridor would connect to the Lost Bridge Trail and into Springfield.

CILCO / CWLP RIGHT-OF-WAY - Chatham South (Corridor 4)

Most of this corridor is owned by CWLP or CILCO from Chatham south. It connects to the historically significant Irwin Park, a social center in early Sangamon County days. The corridor would be difficult to acquire south of 12.5S Road, so a

road connection on 12.5S Road west to the CNW corridor (Corridor 6) is recommended.

CNW - North (Corridor 5)

This corridor, which is an extension from the north end of Corridor 1, is one of the most scenic in Sangamon County. There is an existing historic bridge over the Sangamon River. In addition to the river, there is floodplain and forested areas making a high quality natural habitat area. This corridor is also the only one in the county going north into Menard County toward Lincoln's New Salem Historic Site.

MEDIUM PRIORITY CORRIDORS
(64-41 Points)

CNW - South (Corridor 6)

This rural segment at the south end of Corridor 1 is important because of the continuous length of trail that would be provided crossing the county from north to south. An on-road connection at 12.5S Road to the Chatham / South corridor (Corridor 4) provides a loop.

LOST BRIDGE SPUR (Corridor 7)

This spur is currently owned by the state and could easily be opened as a hiking path off of the Lost Bridge Trail. This scenic, tree-lined corridor would add variety to the existing trail and provide access to the Sugar Creek greenway if that can be arranged.

DOUGLAS TO STUART PARKS (Corridor 8)

This corridor links Douglas Park with Stuart Park and the CNW urban corridor (Corridor 1). Jane Addams School and Site Q Park are also located along the trail. Private ownership of a portion of this corridor is the reason it is rated medium priority. It would provide a trail opportunity in northwest Springfield.

CLEAR LAKE AVENUE TO SANGAMON RIVER (Corridor 9)

This long length of urban corridor could connect the north and east side of Springfield into a trail system. Some private ownership exists. An on-street connection along Mayden Street provides the best connection north to the Sangamon

River because part of the railroad corridor north of Mayden (Corridor 9A) is in private ownership.

LAKE SPRINGFIELD TRAIL (Corridor 10)

A Lake Springfield trail is one of the trail facilities most often mentioned as desired by citizens during the planning process. The trail would link many parks and natural areas. The project is ranked as medium rather than high priority only because CWLP owns the land and there is no imminence of loss factor to be considered. Gradual construction of this trail at any time would be appropriate. All road improvements in the area should accommodate bicycles and pedestrians.

ASH STREET TO CLEAR LAKE AVENUE (Corridor 11)

This segment would connect the Washington Middle School / Jaycee Park area with the proposed trail system. It would also provide access from the trail via sidewalk to a major retail area. Unfortunately, part of the corridor is in private ownership. Several at-grade street crossings exist.

WESTCHESTER / LINCOLNSHIRE (Corridor 12)

This corridor parallels the proposed trail from Parkway Pointe east. Even though the general area is served by a trail, this corridor would provide closer access to some neighborhoods and another link to the Springfield / Chatham trail.

SANGAMON RIVER TO WILLIAMSVILLE (Corridor 13)

A CILCO easement runs from the Sangamon River north to the county line. The Sangamon River area is quite scenic. This corridor passes through Sherman and Williamsville and connects into the Village of Williamsville's proposed trail system. The corridor is rated as a medium priority because of its rural population use base and no imminence of loss.

Typical utility corridor suitable for trail use.

PARKWAY POINTE WEST **(Corridor 14)**

This segment of abandoned railroad would connect the proposed trail west through the retail and industrial areas of Parkway Pointe and Southwest Plaza to Cockrell Lane. It duplicates the access to Koke Mill Road provided by sidewalks in South West Plaza.

RIVERTON - East to County Line **(Corridor 15)**

This 16 mile abandoned corridor would link Riverton, Dawson, Buffalo and Illiopolis. It has a high tourism potential because of the possibility of extension into Macon County to Decatur. Acquisition of the corridor would be difficult because approximately half of it is in private ownership.

LOW PRIORITY CORRIDORS
(40-0 Points)

SUGAR CREEK SPUR **(Corridor 16)**

Although totally in private ownership, the segment is in the floodplain and does not have many potential uses. It would provide variety to the Lost Bridge Trail and could be maintained only as a hiking trail without a paved surface. Acquisition of the Lost Bridge Spur (Corridor 7) first is necessary for access to this segment.

LELAND GROVE TRAIL **(Corridor 17)**

This corridor would provide a link to Washington Park from a residential area.

SPRINGFIELD TO RIVERTON **(Corridor 18)**

This mainly rural corridor is very scenic, but depends on the acquisition of other trail segments (Corridors 9 and 19) before it would be useful and accessible. An on-road connection would be necessary to cross the Sangamon River to Riverton.

NORTHEAST SPRINGFIELD **(Corridor 19)**

This segment is the urban segment needed before the preceding Springfield to Riverton corridor (Corridor 18) could be developed. About half of this segment is in private ownership. The development of Corridor 9 is needed before this trail would be useful.

SOUTH GRAND AVENUE TO COOK STREET (Corridor 20)

This spur to the proposed north/south corridor (Corridor 11) would provide additional access to the trail system and to Withrow School. Its usefulness depends on the completion of the north / south corridor. Some of the corridor is in private ownership.

BUCKHART (Corridor 21)

This corridor goes through several natural areas leading southeast to the county line. Even with its connection to the Lost Bridge Trail via Corridor 7, this corridor remains a low priority because the entire corridor is in private ownership.

AUBURN (Corridor 22)

Although it would be desirable to complete a trail from Chatham to Auburn, part of the Auburn section is in private ownership and is being used commercially.

LANPHIER AREA (Corridor 23)

This segment north of Lanphier High School is abandoned and was considered in the trail system. It is not recommended at this time because it would have an at-grade crossing with an active rail line.

BERGEN PARK (Corridor 24)

This is another segment whose usefulness would be in providing increased neighborhood access to and from a proposed trail. The spur remains a low priority until the north / south trail would be completed (Corridors 9 and 11).

NORTH CENTRAL TO INDIAN HILLS (Corridor 25)

A trail through this densely populated urban area would be desirable. However, the majority of the corridor is in private ownership and a small portion has been lost to other uses.

OTHER CORRIDORS

LINCOLN SITE TRAIL (Corridor 26)

This proposal cannot be rated using the same system as the other trail corridors. City street right-of-way would be used and different funding sources. It would serve more of a tourism / economic development function by connecting historic sites than other proposed corridors do.

Priority Trail Corridors

Springfield Area

Map 11

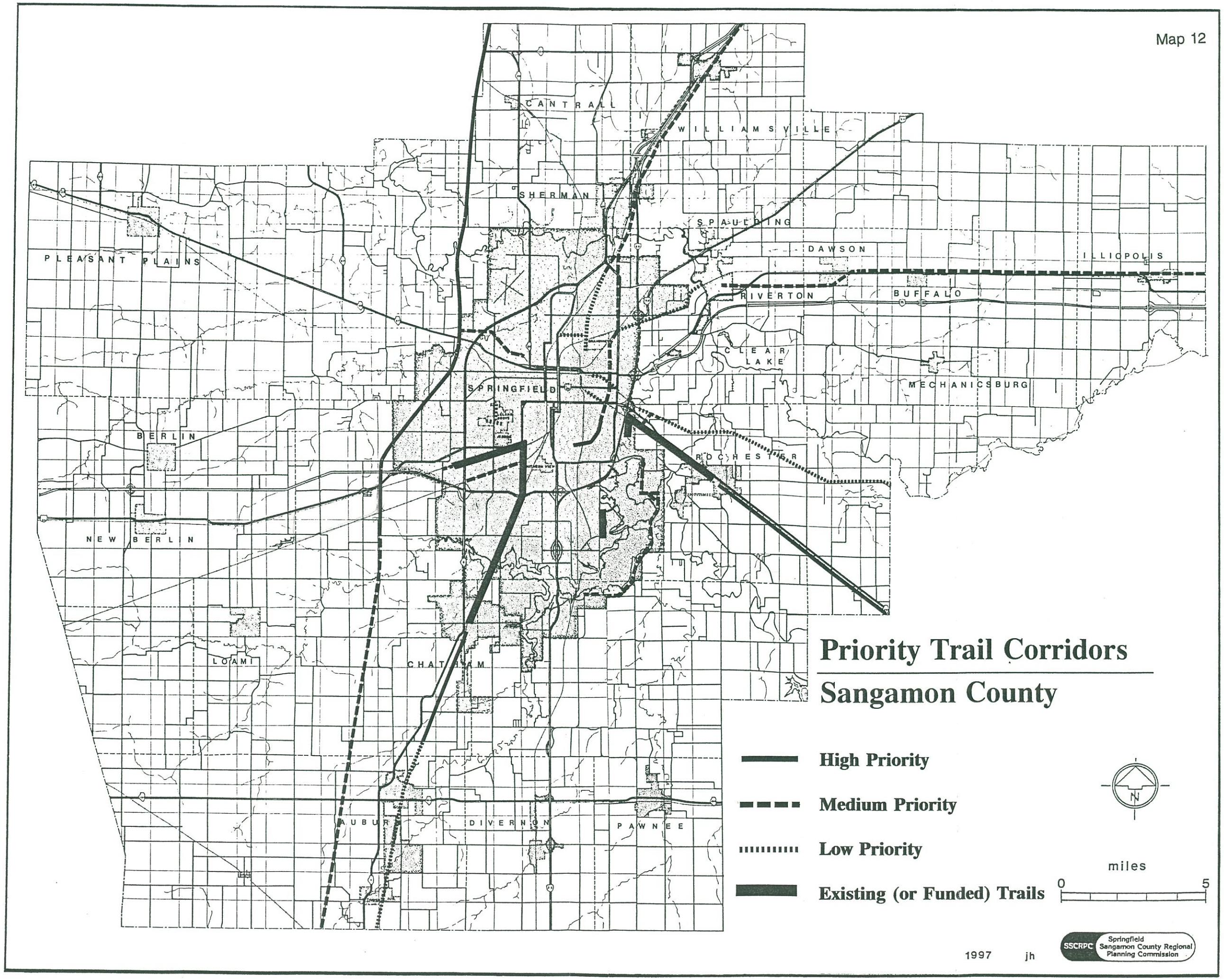
- High Priority
- Medium Priority
- Low Priority
- Existing (or Funded) Trails

miles

0 1 2

1997 jh

SSCRPC Springfield Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission


Map 12
CANTRALL
WILLIAMSVILLE
SHERMAN
SPAULDING
DAWSON
ILLIOPOLIS
PLEASANT PLAINS
RIVERTON
BUFFALO
CLEAR LAKE
MECHANICSBURG
SPRINGFIELD
BERLIN
ROCHESTER
NEW BERLIN
LOAMI
CHATHAM
AUBURN
DIVERNON
PAWNEE
Priority Trail Corridors
Sangamon County
High Priority
Medium Priority
Low Priority
Existing (or Funded) Trails
N
miles
0
5
1997 jh
SSCRPC Springfield Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the greenways & trails plan will involve a wide variety of persons, groups and methods. This section describes the major ways to implement the plan, some funding sources and who can accomplish it.

ACQUISITION AND PRESERVATION STRATEGIES

The most direct way to preserve greenways and corridors for trails is to own the property. Fee simple acquisition of land obviously has many advantages including permanent protection and the right of public access to the property. A variety of methods can be used to acquire land fee simple including:

- purchase
- donation
- condemnation
- bargain sales

Purchasing land is very expensive and often, particularly in greenway conservation, is not necessary. Donation of land and sales of land at reduced prices can provide tax benefits to sellers.

Acquisition of a partial interest in the land can often be all that is needed for preservation. In many areas, public access is not needed and a guarantee to preserve the land will accomplish the plan's goal. Conservation easements can be donated or purchased and result in keeping an area in its natural state.

Various regulatory methods can be used to promote the plan by both the city and county. Generally, regulatory ordinances should be reviewed to insure that implementation of greenway concepts are encouraged and not hindered. Subdivision and zoning ordinances are the most common land use regulations in this area. Amendments to these ordinances to encourage cluster development would be a positive step toward plan implementation. Stormwater management and better floodplain management ordinances are also recommended. The official map can be used to secure trail rights-of-way and connections after it is amended to reflect the plan. A summary of acquisition and preservation strategies is found in Tables 3A, 3B, & 3C.

SUMMARY OF ACQUISITION AND PRESERVATION STRATEGIES FOR GREENWAYS

Fee Simple Acquisition

Method	Explanation	Advantages	Disadvantages
Fee Simple Purchase	Outright purchase of full title to land and all rights associated with its use.	New landowner has full control of land. Allows for permanent protection and public access.	Cost of purchase may be outside local ability. Removes land from tax rolls.
Donations and Gifts	A donation by landowner of all or partial interest in the property.	Provides permanent protection without public expenditures. Tax benefits to donor - charitable gift.	Receiving agency must be able to accept donation and be capable of managing land.
Purchase and Lease Back	Purchase of full title, then lease back to previous owner subject to restrictions.	Essentially land banking. Income derived from lease payments. Owner is not displaced.	Lease may restrict public access. Land must be leased for appropriate uses.
Bargain Sale	Part donation/part sale because property is sold at less than fair market value.	Tax benefits to seller, difference in sale price is considered charitable gift.	Seller must be agreeable to terms of sale. Bargain price may be inflated.
Condemnation/Eminent Domain	The right of government to take private property for public purpose upon payment of just compensation. Can be exercised for recreational purposes in some states.	Provides tool for acquiring essential or endangered properties, if other techniques not workable.	Costly. Also creates a negative attitude about government and potentially the greenway concept. Only recommended as last resort.
Installment Sale	Allows buyer to pay for property over time.	If seller-financed, can lower taxes for seller, buyer can negotiate better sale terms.	Long term financial commitment (30 years). Mortgage lien.
Land Exchange	Swapping of developable land for property with high conservation value.	Relatively cost-free if trade parcel is donated. Reduces capital gains tax for original owner.	Owners must be willing to swap. Property must be of comparable value. Can be time consuming.

Source: The Conservation Fund, Greenways: A Guide to Planning, Design, and Development, 1993, p. 112
McLean County Regional Greenways Plan

Table 3A

SUMMARY OF ACQUISITION AND PRESERVATION STRATEGIES FOR GREENWAYS

Acquisition of Partial Interest

Method	Explanation	Advantages	Disadvantages
Purchase of Development Rights	Local or state government purchases the rights of more intensive land use from current landowner.	Landowner derives financial benefit from selling rights and has reduced taxes. Government pays only for the rights it needs.	Can be costly to purchase development rights.
Management Agreements	Agreements between agency and landowner for a specific purpose.	Avoid purchase and other options, gain desired rights with minimal red tape.	Only applicable with current landowner, and could be revoked at any time.
Land Leases	Short- and/or long-term rental of land.	Low cost use of land. Landowner receives income and retains property control.	Lease doesn't provide equity and affords limited control. Does not assure protection.
Right of Public Access Easements	Provides the public with the right to access and use of a parcel of land for a specified purpose, limited to defined land area.	Can avoid need to purchase land from owner, may provide right of public access and use. Excellent for greenways.	Can be time limited, usually restricts other uses, doesn't prevent owner from exercising other property rights.
Conservation Easements	A partial interest in property generally for expressed purpose of protecting natural resources. Public access is not always a component.	Inexpensive method for protection of natural resources. Landowner retains all other property rights, land remains on tax rolls.	Public access is usually restricted. Easement must be enforced. Easement may lower resale value.
Preservation Easements	Same as conservation easement, most useful for historic landscapes.	Defines protection of historic elements of landscape.	Can restrict public access. Must be enforced.
Joint Use Easements	Accommodates multiple uses within one easement type: for example, sanitary sewer routing and public access. Should be one of the preferred methods for many greenways.	Provides opportunity to combine several public interests with one agreement. Easier for landowner to understand complete request rather than several different requests.	Can be difficult for all landowners to agree to multiple uses along an entire greenway corridor. If one objects, the entire multiple use potential can be jeopardized.

Source: The Conservation Fund, Greenways: A Guide to Planning, Design, and Development, 1993, p. 112
McLean County Regional Greenways Plan

Table 3B

SUMMARY OF ACQUISITION AND PRESERVATION STRATEGIES FOR GREENWAYS

Regulatory Control

Method	Explanation	Advantages	Disadvantages
Exaction	As a condition of obtaining subdivision approval, local government requires developers to pay a fee or dedicate land to a municipal trust for open space.	New construction and development pays for its impact on open space. Good method during high growth periods.	Acquisition funds dependent on specific development. Difficult to calculate fair costs. Not effective during recessionary periods.
Transfer of Development Rights	Under legally established program, owner can transfer development rights from one property to another property designated to support increased density.	Cost of preservation absorbed by property owner who purchases rights. Allows local government to direct density and growth away from sensitive landscapes.	Difficult to implement. Very controversial. Often hard to identify areas where increased density is desirable. Must be established by legislation.
Cluster Development	Permits higher density development in parts of subdivision to protect sensitive lands.	Flexible and negotiable with landowner-developer. Can reduce construction and infrastructure costs.	Open space may not be linked.
Performance Zoning	Zoning district uses defined by permitted impacts as opposed to permitted uses.	Development occurs based on comprehensive, environmentally based strategy.	Criteria are hard to establish. Development plans more expensive to prepare.

Source: The Conservation Fund, Greenways: A Guide to Planning, Design, and Development, 1993, p. 112
McLean County Regional Greenways Plan

Table 3C

There are a variety of programs available to landowners that directly help the creation and preservation of greenways. Programs range from technical advice to the provision of trees and plant materials. Reforestation, land management, prairies, and wildlife habitat are all related areas of concern for which aid is available (Table 4).

Conservation programs encourage landowners to plant or maintain trees along drainage ways.

In Sangamon County, public acquisition of trails by a unit of local government or a not-for-profit group is recommended. The intended public use of trails necessitates their public ownership.

Greenways of major environmental or outdoor recreational benefit should be preserved through fee simple ownership. However, public ownership of all greenways would be cost-prohibitive. Fortunately, public ownership of all greenways is not necessary. Conservation easements, landowner education and use of various governmental programs can insure the preservation of greenways. Very little fee simple ownership would be needed. The advantage of various ownership strategies are summarized in Table 5.

FUNDING SOURCES

As with most major projects, outside sources of funding are frequently needed to complete trails and greenway projects. A variety of supplemental funding sources are available to local governments. Even with federal and state funding available, local governments still need to include their portion of projects in capital improvement budgeting. The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) has provided funding for hundreds of miles of trails in Illinois. Congress is considering the reauthorization of this act in the spring of 1998, which would provide an additional source of funds. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) also provides matching grants for bike paths. Piggybacking these two grant programs can result in only a 10% local share for a trail project. Table 6 summarizes the wide variety of funding programs which can be used to acquire and develop trails and to enhance greenway development and preservation.

NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT INCENTIVES APPLICABLE TO GREENWAY PRESERVATION

Program	Contact	Term	Minimum Acres	Purpose: Natural area, habitat preservation	Open space, recreation	Forestry	Wetland, water resource protection	Soil conservation	Farmland preservation
Cost Share Programs									
Ag Conservation Program	ASCS	10 years	1 acre			X		X	
Ag Loans	State Treasurer							X	
Conservation Reserve	ASCS	10-30 years	1 acre			X		X	
Forest Stewardship	IDNR	10 years	5 acres			X	X	X	
Forestry Incentive Program	ASCS	10 years	10 acres			X			
Ill. Forestry Dev. Act	IDNR	10 years	5 acres			X	X	X	
Partners for Wildlife	USFWS/IDNR	10 years	1 acre				X		
Stewardship Initiatives	IDNR	10 years	5 acres	X	X	X	X		
Trees, Shrubs, Seedlings	IDNR					X		X	
Wetland Reserve	ASCS	permanent	2 acres			X	X		
Technical Programs									
Emergency Conservation	ASCS							X	X
Forest Mgmt. Assist. Program	IDNR			X		X	X	X	
Natural Heritage Landmark	IDNR			X					
Private Land Habitat	IDNR		1 acre ●	X					
Private Waters	IDNR			X			X		
Register of Land & Water Reserves	IDNR			X					
Tax Incentives									
Assessment with Easements	SA			X					
Conservation Easements	IDNR			X					
Forestry Mgmt. Plan	IDNR	10 years	5 acres			X	X	X	
Illinois Nature Preserves	IDNR	permanent		X					
Open Space Assessment	SA		10 acres	X	X		X	X	
Preferential Assessment of Farmland	SA								X
Tax Cert. for Livestock Waste Mgmt.	IEPA						X		

Abbreviations:

ASCS	Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service
IDNR	Illinois Department of Natural Resources
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
SA	Supervisor of Assessments
IEPA	Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
●	minimum of one acre for rural areas, 1/4 acre for urban area

Source: Illinois Department of Natural Resources
McLean County Regional Greenways Plan

Table 4

COMPARATIVE OWNERSHIP STRATEGIES FOR GREENWAYS & TRAILS

Method	Explanation	Advantages	Disadvantages
Private Ownership			
Individual Landowners	Adjacent landowners retain full title to land and provide for greenways through easements.	Property owners retain title to land. Large amount of funds for land purchase not needed. Land remains on the tax rolls.	Easements can restrict certain types of greenway activities, depending on the landowner's wishes.
Land Trusts and Nonprofit Organizations	A national or regional non-profit organization can acquire and hold land until a local land trust has been established or is able to finance acquisition.	A nonprofit organization can finance an immediate acquisition and hold property until a land trust has been established or has acquired necessary funds for purchase.	If a land trust does not exist, a community must establish one. A land trust needs solid support, funding, and the ability to manage land.
Corporate Landowners	A corporation may provide for greenways as part of the development of a corporate site.	Greenway is provided at no expense to local taxpayer. Managed by corporation.	Corporation may restrict use of greenway to the public or may choose to deny access.
Public Ownership			
Local Governments	Acquisition by county or municipality.	Local government can be more flexible about the type of open space it acquires.	Limited local funds and expertise limit the number and type of acquisitions.
State Government	Acquisition by state agencies.	Statewide bond acts can provide significant funding resources for important open space acquisitions throughout a state. Provides revolving loan funds to leverage nonprofit activity.	Government may miss acquisition opportunities due to long time frame for acquisition approvals.
Federal Government	Acquisition by National Park Service, Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or Bureau of Land Management.	Acquisition is at federal level, eliminating financial obligation for locality.	Acquisitions are limited due to agencies' specific criteria for acquisition. Needs congressional authorization.

Table 5

COMPARATIVE OWNERSHIP STRATEGIES FOR GREENWAYS & TRAILS (cont.)

Method	Explanation	Advantages	Disadvantages
		Mixed Ownership	
Private-Public Ownership	A private nonprofit organization can help to implement government programs by acquiring and holding land until a public agency is able to purchase it.	A nonprofit organization can enter the real estate market more easily than government and can often sell to government at less than fair market value if property was acquired through bargain sale.	Must have public agency willing and able to buy within reasonable time frame.
Public-Public Ownership	Multi-jurisdictional partnership between local, state and federal agencies. Inter-agency projects.	Combining strengths of agencies enables greenway development to occur.	Development and management structure can be cumbersome. Partnership may not be equal.
Public-Private Ownership	Government works with private sector to implement greenway.	Private sector can realize tax benefits from participation. Cost share good for public.	Cost equity and management could be cumbersome.

Source: The Conservation Fund, Greenways: A Guide to Planning, Design, and Development, 1993, p. 113
McLean County Regional Greenways Plan

Table 5 (cont.)

FEDERAL AND STATE FUNDING SOURCES FOR TRAILS & GREENWAYS

FEDERAL PROGRAM	INTERMODAL SURFACE TRANSPORTATION EFFICIENCY ACT (1)					LAWCON	N/A	HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND
STATE ADMIN AGENCY	IDOT				IDNR			IHPA
FUNDING PROGRAMS ISTEA ENHANCEMENT CATEGORIES	ITEP Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (2)	STP Surface Transportation Program	SCENIC BYWAYS	FTA Federal Transit Act (3)	SYMMS National Recreational Trails Funds	LAWCON Land and Water Conservation Program (W/OSLAD) (4)	Illinois Bicycle Path Grant Program	Certified Local Governments Program (5)
Provision of Facilities for Pedestrians and Bicycles	80% Fed $ 20% Loc $	80% Fed $ 20% Loc $	80% Fed $ 20% Loc $	80% Fed $ 20% Loc $	100% Fed $ FFY93	50% Fed $ 50% Loc $	50% State $ 50% Loc $	
Acquisition of Scenic Easements and Scenic or Historic Sites	80% Fed $ 20% Loc $							
Scenic or Historic Highway Programs	80% Fed $ 20% Loc $		80% Fed $ 20% Loc $					
Landscaping and Other Scenic Beautification	80% Fed $ 20% Loc $							
Preservation of Abandoned Railway Corridors (Including Conversion and Use for Pedestrian or Bicycle Trails)	80% Fed $ 20% Loc $	80% Fed $ 20% Loc $			100% Fed $ FFY93	50% Fed $ 50% Loc $	50% State $ 50% Loc $	60% Fed $ 40% Loc $

(1) Reauthorization of ISTEA will be considered by Congress in Spring, 1998
(2) Excludes land acquisition
(3) Bicycle and pedestrian facilities related to transit projects only
(4) State OSLAD program follows LAWCON guidelines
(5) Program restricted to Historic Register Properties only

Table 6

There are also potential private sector funding sources that should be explored when planning a project. Several non-profit organizations provide a range of services including temporary acquisition, grants for trail amenities and technical assistance. At a local level, civic organizations can provide some financial assistance as well as community support. Trail user groups are also a good source of financial or in-kind service support for smaller projects. Table 7 summarizes many of these private sector sources of support.

WHO WILL IMPLEMENT THE PLAN?

Plan implementation cannot occur in a vacuum nor can it be accomplished by any one group. If the Springfield and Sangamon County area is to have a greenways and trail system, the coordinated efforts of the entire community are needed.

Government

Government probably has the most responsibilities in implementing any trails and greenways system. The City of Springfield and Sangamon County with a grant from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources have started the process with the preparation of this plan. In addition to planning, government plays a major role in acquisition, ownership, regulation and education. The City of Springfield and the Springfield Park District are both in the process of acquiring and constructing trails. Although both these agencies can own and maintain trails outside of their boundaries, Sangamon County needs to be involved in trail and greenway ownership for a system to be successful.

Private Landowners

Private land ownership is one of the basic tenets of the United States. Government can take a lead role in greenway conservation through the purchase of vital areas and the provision of loan and grant programs and technical assistance. Ultimately, however, the continued vitality and preservation of greenways relies on the stewardship of the private landowners. Continued education is the key to a voluntary greenway system. All landowners including farmers, owners of large lots and homeowners' associations need to know the importance of their participation and what assistance is available.

Civic Organizations

Civic organizations can provide continued support to a trail system in many ways. Some groups may have the financial resources to help with trail acquisition or construction. However, more typically, donations would be of smaller amounts to

PRIVATE SECTOR FUNDING SOURCES

Method	Explanation	Advantages	Disadvantages
Foundation Grants	Foundations, usually private or corporate, provide grant money for greenway related projects.	Variety of foundations creates a wealth of possible funding opportunities.	Foundation grants may have strict guidelines regarding use of funds and project scope.
Company Grants	Corporations provide grants of funds and resources for greenway related projects. Corporations provide financial support and often volunteer employee time as well.	Many corporations love community service projects such as greenways.	Corporate giving funds are often committed quickly, and there may be competition for funds.
Individual Donors and Memberships	Funding derived from individual fund-raising campaigns or through membership drives through nonprofit organizations which solicit members as a way to raise money and support projects.	Excellent method for raising funds and building support for a greenways organization and its projects.	Membership or nonprofit organizations may require a great deal of time and effort on the part of its members in order to succeed.
Planned Giving, Life-Income Gifts, and Bequests	Planned giving and life-income gifts allow the donor to give away some land, receive some continued use privileges and benefit financially through charitable tax write-offs.	These techniques can be useful in protecting private land that has important greenway features. In addition, these techniques can offer tax and investment advantages to the donor and recipient nonprofit organizations or land trust.	Can be complex issues. Require financial and legal expertise.
Service Clubs	Organizations that perform community service activities or sponsor projects such as greenways. Examples of service clubs include the Lions Club, Rotary Club or Kiwanis organization.	Service clubs can sponsor fundraising activities and provide volunteers and publicity.	Getting commitment from service club to help in a greenways project can be difficult.
Special Events and Fundraisers	These events are designed to raise funds through activities such as benefit dinners, races, tours and related activities.	Special events and fundraisers can be very successful in raising money and creating publicity for greenways.	These activities can require significant time and resources and may not provide a significant return.

Source: The Conservation Fund, Greenways: A Guide to Planning, Design, and Development, 1993, p. 91-94
McLean County Regional Greenways Plan

Table 7

provide trail amenities such as shelters, benches or landscaping. Civic groups can also provide a source of volunteer labor for clean-up days or minor maintenance.

Citizens and User Groups

Citizens are the driving force behind any successful governmental initiative. Judging by the response to the opening of the Lost Bridge Trail in the summer, 1997, citizen acceptance and support of trails will be high. The Sangamon Valley Trails Coalition, a citizens group organized to promote multi-use trails, already has an active membership. Citizens, as individuals, and those represented by the Sangamon County Trails Coalition or the various trail user groups, need to take a proactive stance regarding trails, letting government know that trails are appreciated, used, and are an important part of their quality of life.

SSCRPC
Springfield
Sangamon County Regional
Planning Commission

ROOM 212 ● 200 SOUTH 9TH STREET
SPRINGFIELD, IL 62701-1629