



DuPage County

Trail Maintenance Policy



DuPage County Department of Economic Development and Planning
DuPage County Department of Operations, Division of Transportation

October, 2003

DU PAGE COUNTY

TRAIL MAINTENANCE POLICY

Prepared by
DuPage County Department of Economic
Development and Planning
for
DuPage County Department of Operations
Division of Transportation

October 28, 2003

Policy Approved by the DuPage County Board Environmental Committee on October 21, 2003 and by the DuPage County Board Transportation Committee on October 28, 2003

Cover Photo Credits: DuPage County Department of Economic Development and Planning, Martha Glas, David Tate, and Dave Watts, Illinois Prairie Path not-for-profit corporation

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DU PAGE COUNTY

TRAIL MAINTENANCE POLICY TASK FORCE

Chairman, Brook McDonald
President/CEO, The Conservation Foundation

Kris Bachtell
Director of Collections and Grounds, Morton Arboretum

Curt Barrett
Assistant Village Manager, Village of Glen Ellyn

Ed Barsotti
Executive Director, League of Illinois Bicyclists

John Coakley
City Administrator, City of Warrenville

Tom Cuculich
Director, Economic Development and Planning, DuPage County

Sylvia Kellogg
Chairperson, Bikeable Roads and Trails Supporters
(formerly Trails Project of The Conservation Foundation)

Paul Mooring
Director, The Illinois Prairie Path not-for-profit corporation

John Oldenburg
Manager of Grounds and Resources, Forest Preserve District of DuPage County

Debra Olson
DuPage County Board, District 4

Carl Schweizer
Manager of Highway Operations, DuPage County Division of Transportation

Charles Tokarski
County Engineer, DuPage County Division of Transportation

Staff: Donna Pindel, DuPage County State's Attorney's Office; Deborah Jan Fagan, Chief Planner and County Trail System Coordinator

BACKGROUND

In March, 2003, County Board Chairman Robert Schillerstrom announced the formation of an ad hoc task force to develop trail maintenance and management goals and recommendations for the DuPage County Trail System. The County Trail System includes 40 miles of the Illinois Prairie Path (IPP) and 11 miles of the Great Western Trail (GWT) in DuPage (see map in Appendix A which shows the entire system). Since the County assumed maintenance of the trail system in 1985, the County has expended a total of \$7,800,000 on capital improvements and estimates it spends approximately \$500,000 on annual maintenance including equipment, personnel, insurance, materials, etc.

The task force was formed in response to citizen concerns regarding tree trimming along various segments of the trail system particularly in the Glen Ellyn and Lombard areas. The purpose of the task force, according to Chairman Schillerstrom, was to develop broad maintenance goals for the trails which will include vegetation management, pruning, and safety.

In late March, Chairman Schillerstrom extended invitations to a broad cross-section of interests to serve on the task force. All of the members accepted and a list of the participants is included in the introductory pages of this report. They represent a variety of trail user and advocacy groups, County staff and officials, organizations with special expertise in this area, and municipal representatives.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The task force met monthly between April and July to discuss and develop a draft report. The process began with identification of problems, issues and concerns regarding maintenance and the trail system. The role of the trail system in maintaining the high quality of life enjoyed in DuPage County was central to this discussion. The task force recognized the positive impact the trail system has on surrounding property values and the County, in turn, acknowledged its desire to be a good neighbor to surrounding property owners.

The group then moved to development of goals, prioritizing goals, and specific recommendations to carry out the goals. Given that there was a great deal of overlap in the recommendations to carry out the various goals, recommendations were combined to include a specific list of actions which the County can implement in the near term and over the next several years.

POLICY APPROVAL PROCESS

The task force prepared a draft report in August, 2003 of its goals and recommendations for public review and comment during August and September. A public hearing was held on September 24, 2003 (7:00 p.m., Jack T. Knuepfer Administration Center, County Board Room, 421 N. County Farm Road, Wheaton) to receive official public input and close the public comment period.

County staff also met individually with several key trail user groups during the comment period and undertook various actions to make sure the public was informed of the opportunity to comment on the draft policy and attend the public hearing. These actions included:

- The draft policy report was mailed to all communities (mayors, managers and planners) and park districts along the trail system and other public agencies who have expressed an interest in trail issues or this issue in particular (e.g., Villa Park Environmental Commission, Glen Ellyn Environmental Commission)
- The draft policy report was mailed and/or emailed to trail advocacy and interest organizations and information was submitted for various environmental or trail newsletters and publications
- Draft reports were emailed to interested citizens and any citizens who emailed the County earlier in the year regarding trail maintenance
- The draft report was posted on the County website at www.dupageco.org/bikeways
- Information was submitted for municipal websites and upcoming village newsletters (where timing allows)
- Flyers were made for posting at trailhead kiosks and distributed to the Illinois Prairie Path corporation, Village of Lombard and City of Warrenville for posting
- The draft report was distributed to the media and press information was provided as requested
- Staff attended meetings of the Elmhurst Bicycle Club, Bikeable Roads and Trails (with County Board member Tom Bennington), Schaumburg Bicycle Club, the Illinois Prairie Path not-for-profit corporation, Trail Riders of DuPage (TROP) and the Village of Lombard Trails Committee to inform them of the draft policy and encourage their comments.
- A public hearing notice was published in the Daily Herald and a public hearing was held on Wednesday, September 24, 2003 with 19 people attending and 10 people presenting statements (a transcript of this hearing is available for public review by contacting the DuPage County Department of Economic Development and Planning).

The task force considered the public input and prepared its final recommendations in early October. A summary of all public comments is presented in Appendix C.

As directed by Chairman Schillerstrom, the final report of the task force was presented to the County Board Environmental and Transportation Committee in October and unanimously approved by both committees.

It is expected that implementation of the report will begin immediately under the direction of the DuPage County Division of Transportation and the DuPage County Department of Economic Development and Planning.

In order to understand the goals and recommendations which follow and the scope of their coverage along the trail system, it is important to understand the areas under County maintenance and how specific areas along the trail system will be identified.

SCOPE OF COUNTY MAINTENANCE ALONG THE TRAIL SYSTEM

Not all of the approximately 51 miles of the Illinois Prairie Path and Great Western Trail in DuPage County are maintained by the DuPage County Division of Transportation. There are several areas where intergovernmental agreements or permits have been issued which give other agencies and organizations approval to manage and maintain vegetation and provide various improvements along the County Trail System (see map in Appendix A). The current agreements or permits which involve vegetation or trail surfacing include:

IPP Main Stem, Cook County Line to Illinois Route 83, Elmhurst
Elmhurst Park District (landscaping including prairie preservation work, parking, amenities, buildings and improvements)

IPP Main Stem, Summit Avenue. to Villa Avenue, Villa Park
Village of Villa Park (trees and other plantings)

IPP Main Stem at Westmore, Lombard
Village of Lombard (landscape plantings)

IPP Main Stem entire length, Lombard
Village of Lombard (watermain/fountains, paving, signage, information kiosks, landscape planters at selected intersections)

GWT entire length, Lombard
Village of Lombard (watermain/fountains, paving, signage, information kiosks, landscape planters at selected intersections)

IPP Main Stem, Park Boulevard to Main Street, Glen Ellyn
Village of Glen Ellyn (landscaping and irrigation system)

IPP Main Stem at Prospect, Glen Ellyn
Village of Glen Ellyn (decorative fencing and paved trail)

IPP Main Stem, Montclair Avenue to Main Street, Glen Ellyn
Village of Glen Ellyn (commuter parking, trail, landscaping)

IPP Main Stem, Liberty Square Park, Wheaton
City of Wheaton (landscaping)

IPP Main Stem, West Street to Wheaton Avenue, Founders Park, Wheaton
City of Wheaton (sidewalk, landscape plantings)

IPP Main Stem, Main Street Wheaton to Cross Street, Wheaton
City of Wheaton (commuter parking, trail, landscaping)

IPP Aurora Branch, downtown at Batavia Road, Warrenville
City of Warrenville (landscape plantings)

IPP Main Stem, President Street (west and east at Hoffman Park) and Carlton; and IPP Elgin Branch at GWT West Intersection and Nagel Court

The Illinois Prairie Path, Not-for-Profit Corporation (prairie restoration)

(The Illinois Prairie Path Corporation has also received separate permits for and maintains a variety of improvements and amenities along the trail system such as water fountains, mile markers, restrooms, trash containers, planting boxes, signs, fences, benches, information kiosks, etc. These amenities have been installed over the last few decades and are solely maintained by volunteers with this organization)

Second, the Geneva Spur of the Illinois Prairie Path through West Chicago follows a route along City of West Chicago property and streets. These segments from Prince Crossing Road west to Reed-Keppler Park are not maintained by DuPage County but are maintained by the City of West Chicago.

Third, Commonwealth Edison owns property adjacent to the County Trail System which it maintains according to industry standards and State of Illinois regulations. The County has no regulatory authority over Commonwealth Edison regarding their maintenance practices but does expect their cooperation in respecting the natural values of the trail system. County staff coordinates closely with the company on matters that impact the County Trail System and has instituted a notification system regarding upcoming maintenance work. Although it may appear to trail users that this property is part of the County Trail System, in fact, it is not.

In addition, Commonwealth Edison holds a perpetual easement for maintenance of facilities over all the Illinois Prairie Path and over parts of the Great Western Trail. Again, the County does not regulate Commonwealth Edison's work within these easements. County staff estimates that approximately 37 miles of the trail system include Commonwealth Edison property or easements adjacent to the trails.

Nicor Gas Company also has allowed the Illinois Prairie Path Batavia Spur to be located on their easement north of Interstate 88. Similarly, this property is maintained by the utility company.

For questions concerning maintenance by the utilities along the trail system, see Appendix B for appropriate contact information.

Lastly, the policy recognizes that not all remaining areas along the trail system will be covered under this policy. Special maintenance arrangements will be allowed for varied landscape treatments in selected areas. These special management areas including the following:

- Municipal downtowns
- Commercial business districts
- Wetland and marsh restoration areas
- Prairie restoration areas

Interested citizens may contact the DuPage County Department of Economic Development and Planning for the boundaries of these special management areas.

DEFINITION OF THE TRAIL ZONES

The recommendations regarding trail maintenance and vegetation are focused on four distinct zones along the trail system (see Diagram A). The first is the actual *trail* itself which is generally 10 feet in width and is composed of crushed limestone screenings for the vast majority of the system. The second area is the *trail buffer* which is a zone 6 feet in width immediately adjacent to each side of the trail. The third zone is the *tree protection zone* which is the 6 foot area immediately adjacent to the trail buffer on both sides of the trail. The fourth and final area is the balance of the *trail right-of-way* which is the remainder of County-owned property along the trail system. The County's trail right-of-way varies greatly in width across the entire system but typically averages approximately 66 feet.

In regards to the recommendations, careful review will reveal that some recommendations apply to all of these zones while some apply to selected zones only. Diagram A should be useful in helping to understand the scope of the recommended actions.

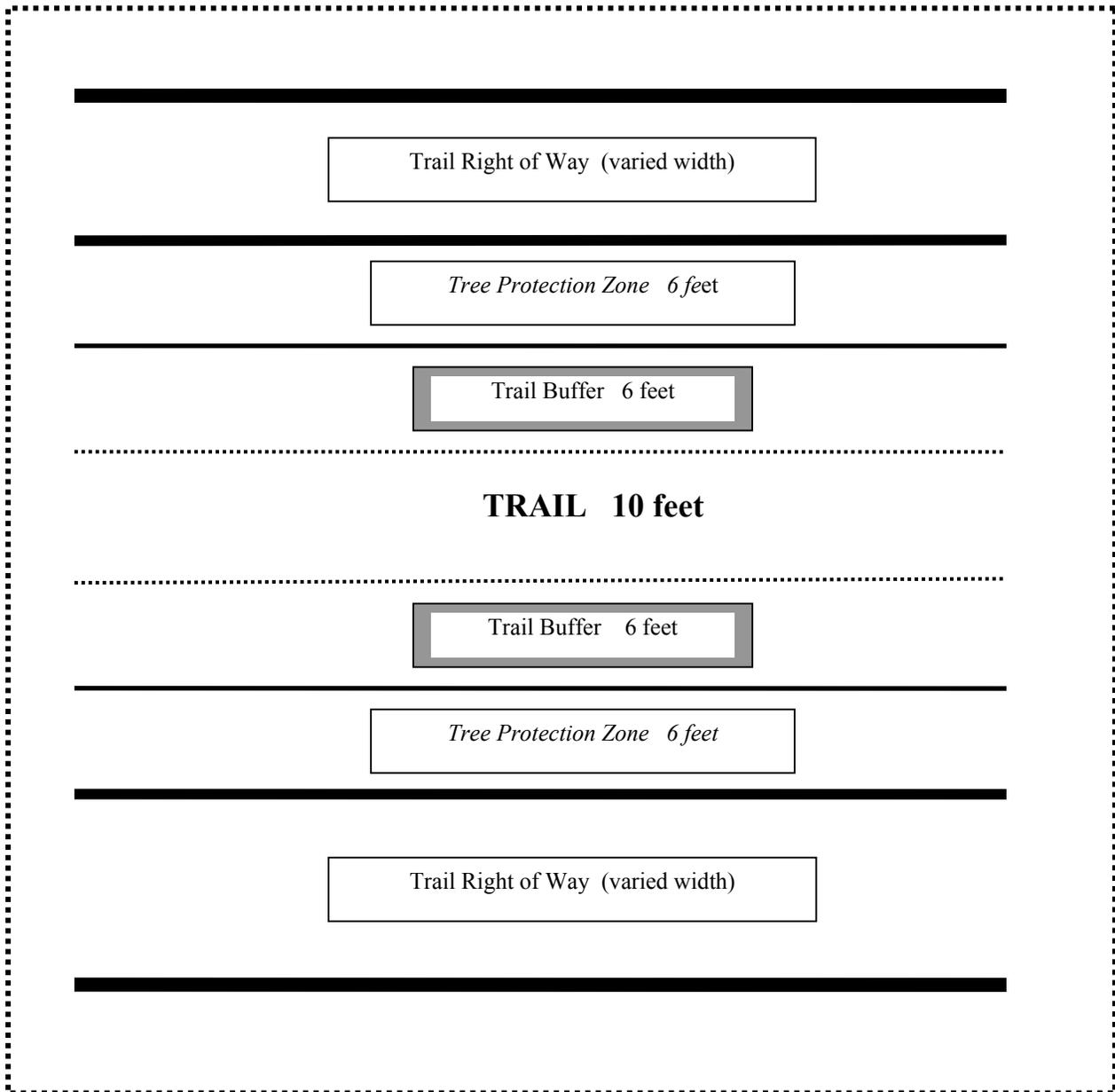


Bike to Work Day Participants at Volunteer Park, Wheaton

Diagram A

DuPage County Trail Maintenance Policy

Trail Zones



GOALS FOR TRAIL MAINTENANCE

The following goals are listed in order of priority and their importance to maintaining the trail system. Implementation of the recommendations will be carried out with this priority preference in mind.

Goal 1: Provide a Safe Trail for All Users

The purpose of this goal is to make sure that the County Trail System is safe for all trail users. The trail system is a multi-purpose pathway enjoyed by thousands of visitors annually. The mix of trail users primarily includes walkers, joggers, bicyclists, equestrians, and some skaters. While the vast majority of trail users are bicyclists (approximately 70% according to the County's 2000 survey), the primary goal of the maintenance policy is to maintain a safe trail for all users.

Important considerations in meeting this goal include

- Maintaining a safe trail surface
- Maintaining clearances at roadway intersections
- Improving roadway and railroad crossings
- Minimizing the County's liability in providing this facility
- Maintaining a trail buffer area
- Improving safety through signage and public education
- Developing a safety watch program by trail users

Goal 2: Accommodate Multiple Uses and Users along the Trail System

The purpose of this goal is to ensure that the trail system serves the multiple uses and users it has had over its history. In addition to the various users named above, the trail system serves as a greenway corridor, a drainage facility, a utility corridor and means of transportation for commuters.

Important considerations in meeting this goal include

- Providing sufficient and uniform trail width
- Providing signage educating trail users on multiple uses and users
- Maintaining the trail right-of-way for utility and drainage purposes
- Promoting use for transportation purposes

Goal 3: Provide a Pleasing Trail Experience

The purpose of this goal is to make sure that users enjoy the trail system. The goal recognizes the attraction of the trails as a way to experience a more naturalistic environment and provide connections to unique natural areas in adjacent forest preserves and local parks.

Important considerations in meeting this goal include

- Maintaining a clean, well kept and comfortable trail (litter-free, vandalism-free, with rest stops and amenities)

- Maintaining a mix of viewsapes that provide color and variety
- Encouraging stewardship efforts to increase clean-up, planting and beautification projects

Goal 4: Protect and Enhance the Natural Environment

The purpose of this goal is to recognize, protect and promote the function of the trail system and County right-of-way as a greenway corridor. This includes providing ways to improve wildlife habitat and the biodiversity of plant species. While not the primary purpose of the trail system, this goal is intended to recognize the role the trail system has in improving the natural environment. At the same time, efforts to achieve this goal need to include a public education component that informs trail users of work activities and management projects designed to meet this end and ensures that the County is a good neighbor to surrounding property owners.

Important considerations in this effort include

- Removing diseased trees and shrubs that may be hazardous or infect other plants
- Maintaining a naturalistic look and prairie, wetland, and woodland remnants along the trail system
- Removing species of European Buckthorn (an invasive species listed as an Illinois Exotic Weed that restricts biodiversity) and similarly invasive species in selected areas where impact on residential areas is minimal
- Targeting areas for expanded vegetation management (for example, removing invasive non-native species to allow room for native species to grow) where impact on residential areas is minimal
- Implementing recommendations in a cost-effective manner

RECOMMENDATIONS TO ACHIEVE MAINTENANCE GOALS

Since the task force recommendations often work towards achieving more than one goal, the recommendations have been grouped by topic area. The four topic areas are listed in order of priority so as to best achieve the highest priority goals. All 31 recommendations are expected to be implemented in a cost-effective manner if funding is available and in ways that protect the County from liability exposure. In addition, it is recognized that implementation of the recommendations requires some flexibility in interpretation by County staff who are undertaking this work and as such, the recommendations provide general guidelines for implementation.

Trail Maintenance and Vegetation Clearing Recommendations

- Maintain a safe surface for trail users including a sufficient and uniform width and proper drainage. The trail width will be maintained at the current 10' standard
- Maintain a litter-free and vandalism-free trail (e.g., establish an Adopt-a-Trail Program)
- Request support from trail communities in adding recyclable collection containers along the system in appropriate areas
- Remove diseased trees to eliminate hazards and keep disease from spreading to other vegetation

- Maintain a trail buffer zone along the trail edges of 3' to a maximum of 6' to allow an area for trail users to run off if there are conflicts (equestrians, pedestrians, bicyclists) and allow room for people to stop if they need to for repairs, etc. (see Diagram A). The width of the buffer zone will vary depending on existing conditions along the trail (slope of shoulder, drainage ways) and existing mature healthy trees in the buffer zone. The width of the trail buffer zone at any specific location will be based on the judgment of the County maintenance staff but will not exceed a maximum of 6'.

The trail buffer zone will be a mowed sidepath in areas where equestrian usage is highest and this improvement is feasible. The trail buffer zone will be mowed monthly but will include larger, signature healthy trees that will be trimmed only. Monthly mowing was recommended by the task force in order to accommodate equestrians who often ride along the side of the trail and provide a buffer area adequate for public safety (clear sight lines along the trail edges). Limitations in County mowing equipment also do not make it feasible to reduce the width of the buffer area beyond the recommended 3' to 6' width.

Dead and hazardous trees will be removed from the trail buffer zone.

Trees will be allowed to grow over the trail system to create a tree canopy but will be trimmed to a height of 12 feet above the ground in order to allow maintenance vehicles to access the pathway and resurface the system, emergency vehicles to reach trail users when necessary, utility vehicles to access the system to repair storm damage, and equestrians to have safe clearance on the trails.

- Maintain a tree protection zone of 6 feet in width adjacent to the trail buffer zone (see Diagram A). Maintenance in this area will include trimming of trees, tree branches and shrubs that are or will grow over the trail, are or will be within 12 feet above the ground, or will grow into the trail buffer area within in the next two years. A 6' width was recommended because of the annual rate of growth of trees and large shrubs found along the trails make this trimming width necessary to ensure safe passage on the trail.

Trees in the tree protection zone will be allowed to grow over the trail system to create a tree canopy but will be trimmed to a height of 12 feet above the ground in order to allow maintenance vehicles to access the pathway and resurface the system, emergency vehicles to reach trail users when necessary, utility vehicles to access the system to repair storm damage, and equestrians to have safe clearance on the trails.

Trees that are considered hazardous will be removed but all other trees, including dead or fallen trees, will remain and will be trimmed only as needed for safety of the trail users. Shrubs and brush will remain except in those areas targeted for European Buckthorn or other invasive species removal (see recommendation below under Habitat and Screening Improvement).

- Maintain the trail right-of-way so that it is free from hazardous or diseased trees (see Diagram A). Dead or fallen trees will remain and will be trimmed only as needed for safety of the trail users. Shrubs and brush will remain except in those areas targeted for

European Buckthorn or other invasive species removal (see recommendation below under Habitat and Screening Improvement)

- Recognize that multi-purpose use of the trail system includes drainage and utility purposes
- Provide annual training by a certified arborist to County maintenance personnel on species identification and tree and shrub disease detection (particularly common diseases such as Dutch Elm)
- Consider adding rest stops or improving connections to existing facilities adjacent to the trail system
- Provide a regular inspection program for trail bridges to make sure bridges are safe and can adequately handle trail traffic especially equestrians
- Maintain close communication with Commonwealth Edison on upcoming maintenance work and inform trail users of planned maintenance activities by utility companies
- Encourage reporting of maintenance problems by trail users to appropriate agencies and remedy problems within a reasonable time
- Mark culvert crossings within the trail buffer where equestrians frequently use the system

Roadway Crossing Safety Recommendations

- Provide additional and aggressive clearing at roadway intersections to maintain safe sight lines for both motorists and trail users and ensure that traffic control signage is visible.
- Consider crossing improvements at major roadway and railroad crossings including the construction of refuge islands, bridges, underpasses at heavily traveled roadways without traffic signals.
- During construction projects, provide signage about construction alternative routes and detours marked with appropriate signage if feasible

Signage and Public Education Recommendations

- Add signage educating users on multi-use trail rules (e.g., yielding, keeping right, trail etiquette, etc.) and safety
- Add signage identifying trail and site locations and adjacent facilities (e.g., mile markers, municipal boundaries, trail parking locations, local parks, etc.)
- Promote use of the trail system for commuters (e.g., mass transit centers, employment centers)

- Develop a citizen safety watch program
- Install signage to inform the public about vegetation removal and control efforts (e.g., “Be Back Soon” signage including posting plan details and website addresses for more information)

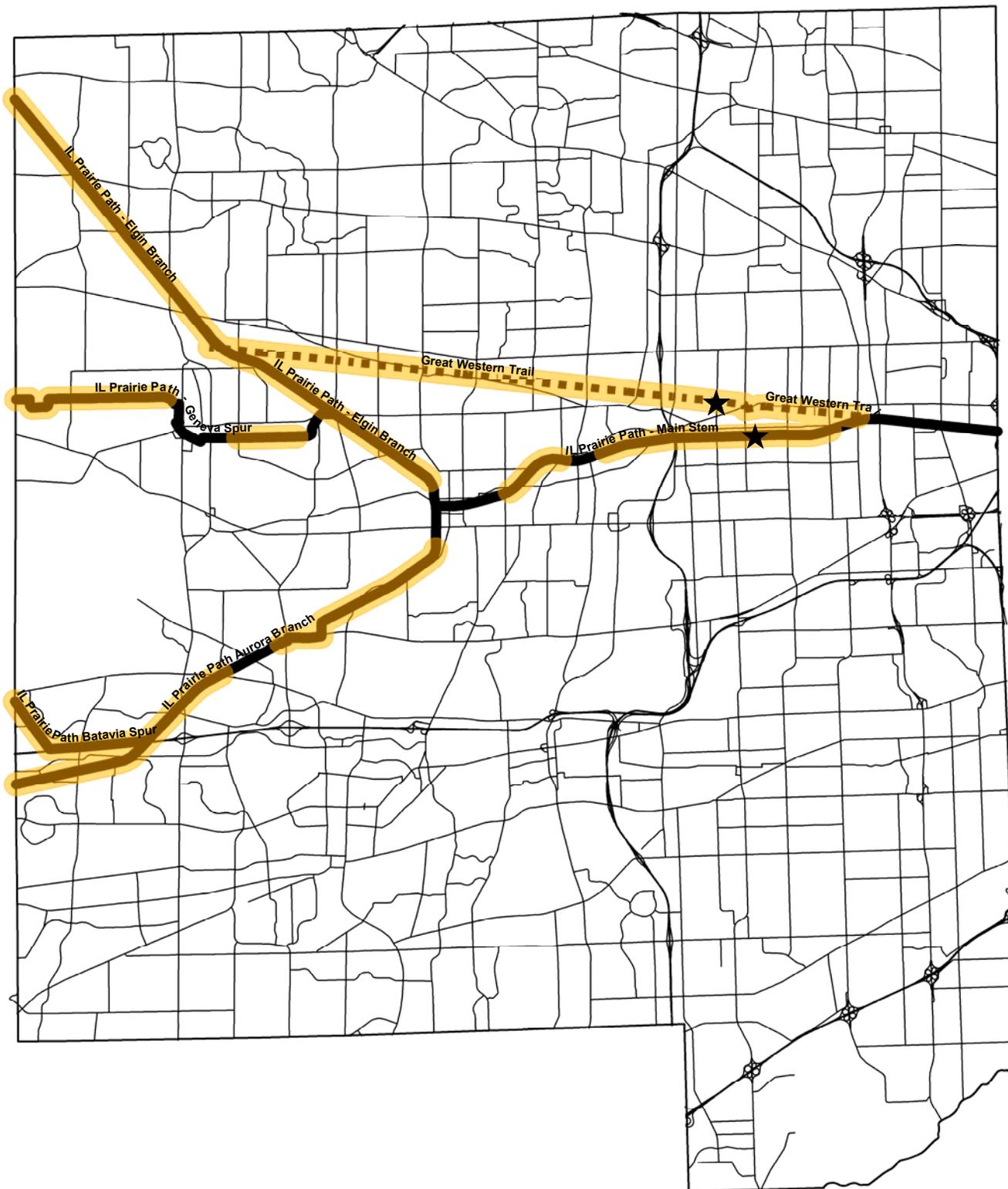
Habitat and Screening Improvement Recommendations

- Preserve a naturalistic look to the trail system providing a variety of viewsapes by maintaining vegetation that is colorful and variegated, screens adjacent land uses, provides wildlife habitat, and contains prairie, wetland and woodland remnants.
- Encourage volunteer efforts to provide for vegetation and tree replacement and replanting from a recommended plant list for replacement plantings that will have structure and form compatible with surrounding area needs
- Identify target areas where removal of European Buckthorn and other similarly invasive species like Garlic Mustard can be undertaken with little impact on residential areas
- Maintain a positive working relationship with Commonwealth Edison and work with them to survey areas for appropriate tree removal and replacement and explore options for vegetation management agreements
- Explore establishing a cost-share program for screening non-residential areas from trail view including information on grant programs and funding sources that could help private landowners install plantings
- Develop partnerships and encourage donations for beautification and trail improvements bearing in mind the need to follow the recommended plant list for plantings, spatially sequence new plantings, factor in plant loss when estimating the number of plantings needed, and varying the type of plants for increased biodiversity and interest.
- Identify areas along the trail system with quality native plants
- Encourage private property owners along the trail system to extend natural areas onto their private property through increased public education and distribution of informational materials to assist property owners with such efforts
- Working with community groups and volunteers, create an environmental education program to involve citizens in more meaningful ways in prairie restoration activities, public service opportunities, and environmental education

CONCLUSION

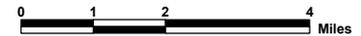
This policy is expected to be implemented upon adoption by the County. Many of the recommendations can be implemented rather quickly or implementation can begin within a short period of time. Other recommendations, for example, evaluating the need for bridges, may be implemented over many years.

Trail Areas Maintained by DuPage County



Legend

- ■ ■ ■ ■ Great Western Trail
- Illinois Prairie Path
- Areas maintained by DuPage County
- ★ Plantings maintained by Lombard at selected intersections



Map prepared by: DuPage County Information Technology Dept.
For: DuPage County Economic Development & Transportation Planning Dept.

This County Map was issued: August, 2003

APPENDIX B

For issues and concerns regarding maintenance of utility property adjacent or along the DuPage County Trail System, contact:

Commonwealth Edison
Timothy Zidek, Program Manager
1N423 Swift Road
Lombard, Illinois 60148
(630) 691-4495

Nicor Gas Company
Bruce Koppang, Systems Operations Engineer
Systems Operations Division
1111 Cottage Avenue
Shorewood, Illinois 60431
(815) 725-9481, ext. 228

APPENDIX C
SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS RECEIVED ON TRAIL MAINTENANCE POLICY
DRAFT OF AUGUST 12, 2003

Total Comments through 9-25-03: 43

Email: 32; Letter: 5; Telephone: 1

Presentations to Groups: Trail Riders of DuPage, Illinois Prairie Path corporation, Elmhurst Bicycle Club, Schaumburg Bicycle Club, Bikeable Roads and Trails Supporters, and Village of Lombard Trails Committee

Sept. 24 Public Hearing Attendees/Statements: 19/10

	Comment Requesting Revisions	Draft Document Reference	Staff Comments
1	Provide maximum trail width of 10' (5)	Page 6, Trail Maintenance (would also pertain to Page 7, bullet 7)	Task force discussion was for possible consideration along Main Stem of IPP. 10' should be sufficient for current needs but County may want to re-visit policy in future years as population and trail usage increases. Delete bullet 7, Page 7.
2	Increase/expand pick-up of garbage cans and number of containers for waste disposal (3)	General concern-Pleasing trail experience	Will contact Illinois Prairie Path corporation and communities maintaining trash receptacles along IPP. Will have DuPDOT Maintenance review any similar issues along GWT.
3	Reduce trail buffer width from 6' to 3' or reduce buffer with no specification of desired buffer width (3)	Page 7, bullet 1	AASHTO standards recommend minimum 3' graded area separating path from any obstructions (trees, posts)
4	Consider exclusion of municipal downtown areas from policy coverage or trail buffer requirement (3)	Page 6-7 primarily	Staff will work with communities to define boundaries of downtown areas and business districts for policy exclusion if tasks force accepts recommendation

5	Trail buffer mowing—mow first 3 ft. monthly and remaining 3 ft. annually (preferably in October) (3)	Page 7, bullet 1	May require purchase of new County equipment
6	Provide aggressive maintenance at roadway intersections to protect sight lines (2)	Page 7, Roadway Crossings bullet 1	Consider if bullet 1 is sufficient or needs to be strengthened
7	Annual training for maintenance personnel or supervision by certified arborist (2)	Page 7, bullet 5	Provided for in policy; some citizens want arborist supervision
8	Make provision for exceptions to policy at wetland, marsh, and prairie restoration areas (2)	Page 2, Scope of County Maintenance	Define the geographic boundaries of these areas and exclude them from coverage of this policy if they are maintained by a not-for-profit group or other governmental unit
9	Trim trees to a maximum height of 10 ft. over trails (2)	Page 7, bullet 2	Draft policy states 10-12 ft. to allow for equestrians, maintenance vehicles which resurface path with screenings, and emergency vehicles as needed.
10	Enforce regulations against encroachment of lawns and gardens by adjacent property owners and other uses (2)	General concern	Development of a comprehensive policy regarding encroachments is needed by County Board Environmental and Transportation Committees. Issues involved include documenting violations, developing process for notification and correction, developing penalties for violations, County staff requirements to enforce and administer new policy, and public relations impact on neighbors.
11	Provide for trail bridge safety inspections (especially check for weight of horses) (2)		County inspects roadway bridges every two years but not trail bridges. IPP Aurora Branch bridge will be added into next County bridge inspection contract

			(to be executed this fall) but there is no on-going safety inspection program
12	Add more containers for recyclable materials (2)		Very few recyclable containers are along the path system now. Provision would have to be made for pick-up and disposal of recyclables as well.
13	Create a permanent Trail Maintenance Policy Advisory Committee/provide for ongoing public involvement and participation (2)		
14	Reduce 6' tree protection zone to 3'	Page 7, bullet 2	
15	Vary width of trail path based on volume (10 ft. maximum and less)	Page 6, Trail maintenance	Staff would not recommend a width of less than 10' due to the volume of usage along the system
16	Attach an appendix describing maintenance procedures of other entities (e.g., ComEd, NIGas)	Page 2, Scope of County Maintenance	Staff could try to put something together to describe these agencies practices although it would be best for these agencies to provide this information directly to avoid mis-communication. Staff suggests including in an appendix a list of contact people for questions regarding maintenance by these entities in place of an actual description
17	Clarify that vegetation above 12 ft. vertical clearance will be allowed to grow over the trail	Page 7, bullet 2	Staff can make this change since it was clearly the intent of the task force
18	Communication from ComEd to trail users via County staff	Page 8, Habitat bullet 4	Consider additional bullet designating County staff to maintain close communication with ComEd and inform trail users of upcoming ComEd work. Staff has already implemented a system with ComEd for email notification on a weekly basis of maintenance work

19	Expand Tree Protection Zone to full width of County right-of-way	Page 7, bullet 2	Little impact on trail maintenance
20	Condemn and takeover ComEd right-of-way along trail system	Page 8, Habitat bullet 4	Staff has estimated approximately 37 miles of ComEd lines along trail system through ownership or easement. Only real solution to respond to citizens' comments would be relocation of these lines.
21	Bury power lines and restore area to authentic prairie standards	General concern	This cost of this work could be over \$195,000,000 base on an extremely rough calculation using the prices Wheaton Park District paid for burying lines in downtown Wheaton. It is doubtful the large transmission towers could be buried and doubtful ComEd would agree to such a proposal. This work would require total tree removal and replanting prairie areas. This would be very unpopular with most trail users. Ongoing maintenance of the re-planted prairie would also be needed. Currently the County does not maintain any prairie areas along the trail system.
22	Prune small tree and brush understory only when interferes with trail use (see Other Comments section)	Page 7, bullets 1-3	Provided for in trail policy except for removal of buckthorn. Consider whether removal of buckthorn should be deleted from policy.
23	Report and act on dumping along trail right-of-way	General concern	All complaints are currently handled by DuPDOT permit and maintenance personnel.
24	Require restoration of disturbed right-of-way	General concern	Already required as part of DuPDOT permit procedures

25	Training wording too vague	Page 7, bullet 5	Consider if revisions to wording are needed
26	Clarify meaning of “expanded vegetation management”	Page 6, Goal 4, considerations bullet 4	Add at end of bullet: (for example, removing invasive non-native species to allow room for native species to grow).
27	Change title of “Tree Protection Zone” to “Tree and Understory Protection Zone”	References throughout document	
28	Add to “and other similarly invasive species” to Goal 4	Page 6, Goal 4, considerations bullet 3	No problem with addition to goal but please note recommendations focus on European Buckthorn removal only in specific areas where removal will not impact residential areas
29	Encourage adjacent property owners to extend the natural area of the Prairie Path on their property	New bullet under Habitat and Screening	Since the County cannot mandate such action, a more positive approach may be to develop public educational materials which could be shared with adjacent property owners that would help them to develop such areas
30	Remove diseased trees only under the supervision of a certified arborist	Page 6, Trail Maintenance Recommendations, bullet 3	Mandates certified arborist (most likely through contractual consultant services)
31	“Do something” about garlic mustard plants along the trail (assuming this comment means within trail buffer)	Possible addition to Page 7, bullet 1	
32	Clarify Elmhurst Park District’s prairie preservation work	Page 2, Elmhurst Park District	Add prairie preservation to their permitted list
33	Clarify implementation and notification to governmental agencies and other permitted agencies	Suggested addition that can be covered in memo requesting action by County Board committees	Staff generally communicates through municipal mayors, managers, and planning directors; other staff involved in bikeway planning and

			implementation at the community level (varies but can include village engineers, public works directors, and others), park district executive directors, the Illinois Prairie Path board, and other trail groups. This can be outlined in staff's action memorandum to the County Board committees.
34	Clarify that activities allowed by other agencies under permit or an intergovernmental agreement can only be modified with approval of the County		Staff can handle independently of the draft policy with separate correspondence to agencies and groups
35	Add "Commonwealth Edison is expected to cooperate with the County in respecting the natural values of the trail system and notifying the County of upcoming maintenance activities"	Page 3, ComEd discussion	Staff has already implemented a system with ComEd for email notification on a weekly basis of maintenance work
36	Specify alternative plants to replace Buckthorn that is removed (recommends consulting nurseries and landscapers for appropriate recommendations to site)	Page 8, Habitat section, bullet 3 (addition to this bullet)	County currently does not have a planting program along the trail system. We also do not currently have staff landscape architects but could secure these services through a contractual agreement
37	Target other invasive species for control (e.g., teasel, purple loosestrife, multiflora rose, etc.)	Page 8, Habitat section, bullet 3	Previously discussed by task force. It is beyond County resources to address restoration of trail right-of-way
38	Add a goal to identify areas along the trail system with quality native plants	New goal	Suggest this as an additional recommendation under the Habitat and Screening Improvement section on Page 8 if task force chooses to accept this suggestion
39	Have ComEd consider vegetation management program under power lines on a demonstration project basis	Page 8, Habitat, bullet 4	Page 8, bullet 4 is broad enough that this could be covered under that section if ComEd is agreeable

40	Add better signage marking trail parking areas along system	Page 8, Signage section, addition of new bullet	
41	Have trail wayfinding signage mark distance to next public access point and available parking spaces at public parking areas; include same information on maps	Page 8, Signage section	This would be extensive new signage and would add significantly to sign clutter in many areas. Street crossings are already marked and additional information can be added to maps on the number of parking spaces at public parking areas. This information can also be added on to the County website
42	For public security, avoid dense shrubs and ground cover in trail buffer zone; maintain good sight lines around bridges, tunnels, intersections with other trails and road crossings; avoid narrow vegetative corridors	Page 6-7	Conflicts with some comments above
43	For public security, add “breaks” where people can escape potential trouble	Possible addition to Trail Maintenance section	Breaks exist along most parts of the system due to the number of cross streets, connections to neighborhoods and proximity to adjacent homes and businesses.
44	Spatially sequence new plantings; factor in plant loss for spacing and estimating plantings needed		Could be considered in any areas where there are new plantings by County or others however planting is not part of the current draft
45	Clear vegetation a minimum of 3 ft. from the trail edge and do selective clearing or thinning in the area from 3-10 ft. from the trail to provide additional safety which allows trail users to see areas adjacent to the path (conflicts in part with other comments above)	Page 7, bullets 2 and 3	
46	Limit vegetation removal to approved local government employees and volunteers	Page 8, Habitat	

47	Maintain minimum 12 ft. vertical clearance for equestrian traffic	Page 7, bullet 2	Draft policy states 10-12 ft. to allow for maintenance vehicles which resurface path with screenings. Also allows for emergency vehicles as needed.
48	Maintain vegetative buffer between trail and any creek or waterway of a minimum of 10 ft.	Page 6, buffer	Not especially applicable to IPP and GWT
49	Maintain distance between trail and adjacent roadway of a minimum of 10 ft. and preferably 20-30 ft.	Page 6, buffer	This recommendation differs from recommended national standards for sidepaths along roadways which require a minimum 5 ft. buffer
50	Provide a means of reporting trail problems to the appropriate agency (posting telephone numbers, website links or mail address) and provide a reasonable response time from maintenance agency to address any reported problems.	General concern	
51	Vary plantings in trail buffer area	General concern	Draft policy does not provide for plantings in the trail buffer only mowing and maintenance of larger healthy trees.
52	Add signage in muted tones to blend in with natural background		Colors of signage in most cases follow national standards for uniform traffic control
53	Introduce plantings to encourage biodiversity		Natural areas restoration is beyond County resources for maintenance of the trail right-of-way
54	Improve major roadway crossings and bridges*		
55	Maintain buffer area wide enough for equestrians to ride along and for emergency stopping area for equestrians	Page 7, bullet 1	

56	Mark culvert crossings (difficult for equestrians to see)		
57	Place benches outside the buffer zone to prevent conflicts with trail users		Can be implemented by County staff as part of permitting process
58	Remove invasive species along County right-of-way adjacent to forest preserves to prevent County land from serving as a seed source (using volunteers and Sheriff's SWAP program); FPD Commissioner Roger Kotecki comment		
59	Give "credit" to IPP not-for-profit corporation for other trail amenities and improvements	Scope of coverage section, Page 2	The list shown in the draft policy was not intended to give credit but to identify those permits and agreements that only involved vegetation and trail surfacing. Additional information can be added on trail amenities and other improvements provided by IPPc.
60	Cut down diseased Elm trees immediately	Page 6, Trail Maintenance bullet 3	Provided for in draft policy
61	Add signage identifying adjacent facilities	Page 8, Signage bullet 2	Provided for in draft policy; conforms with Sheriff's Office recommendation at task force meeting
62	Check clearance needed for ComEd repair vehicles		Have call into ComEd to verify height
63	Buffer area along trail side where possible for equestrians (Question raised by staff with TROD group) and amount that area needs to be mowed		Staff specifically solicited TROD member comments on this at the meeting attended. General consensus was that a sidepath would be nice but was not essential and probably would not be feasible in the most popular equestrian areas because of the steep grade drop-off. Monthly mowing would be sufficient for this purpose

64	Clarify that Lombard landscape responsibilities are for planters at selected intersections (Request by Mayor Mueller at Village of Lombard Trails Committee meeting)	Page 2, scope of coverage	Correction can be made
65	Consider funding tree planting along trail system (Village of Lombard Trails Committee)		
66	Install emergency phones connected to local law enforcement agencies		Sheriff has major jurisdiction over path right-of-way. This idea has been raised before and the Sheriff's staff feels more problems would occur than benefits due to nuisance calls. Sheriff's office signage has been increased and new safety information boxes were recently installed by the Sheriff's Office along the system.
67	Create a pilot environmental education program to involve citizens in more meaningful ways in prairie restoration, public service opportunities, and environmental education		Would require additional staff, additional responsibilities for other County staff, or contractual services
	Other Comments		
68	General appreciation for County's efforts/copies of policy		
69	Maintain policy of crushed limestone to accommodate most users (especially equestrians)		Current County policy
70	Supports signage for sheriff's office contacts		In place along system
71	Complaint about specific maintenance problem		Referred to DuPDOT Maintenance and corrected since complaint
72	Question about who maintains prairie plantings at Route 59 bridge along Elgin Branch		Being researched by staff
73	Add trail segment near Bluff Road, Route 83 and Sag Bridge		Staff to explore and follow up with the appropriate entities.
74	Prune small tree and brush understory only when interferes with trail use even under ComEd lines		Comment will be forwarded to ComEd for their consideration. County does not and cannot regulate ComEd work

75	Recommendations from IDNR regarding fencing		Not really applicable to this policy
76	Complaint about low hanging branches from equestrian		General comment; No location specified
77	Complaint about maintenance of plantings at Great Western Trail and Villa Avenue in Villa Park		Staff has contacted Villa Park on this complaint
78	Request for exemption from restriction on use of County property for private business purposes (Villa Park business)		Could be addressed as part of new policy regarding encroachments along the trail system

* Need to clarify locations with citizen. Both examples cited are not County trail crossings.

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