



DUPAGE
COUNTY
TRAILS
PLAN

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE UPDATE
2023 DRAFT PLAN OVERVIEW

October 3, 2023

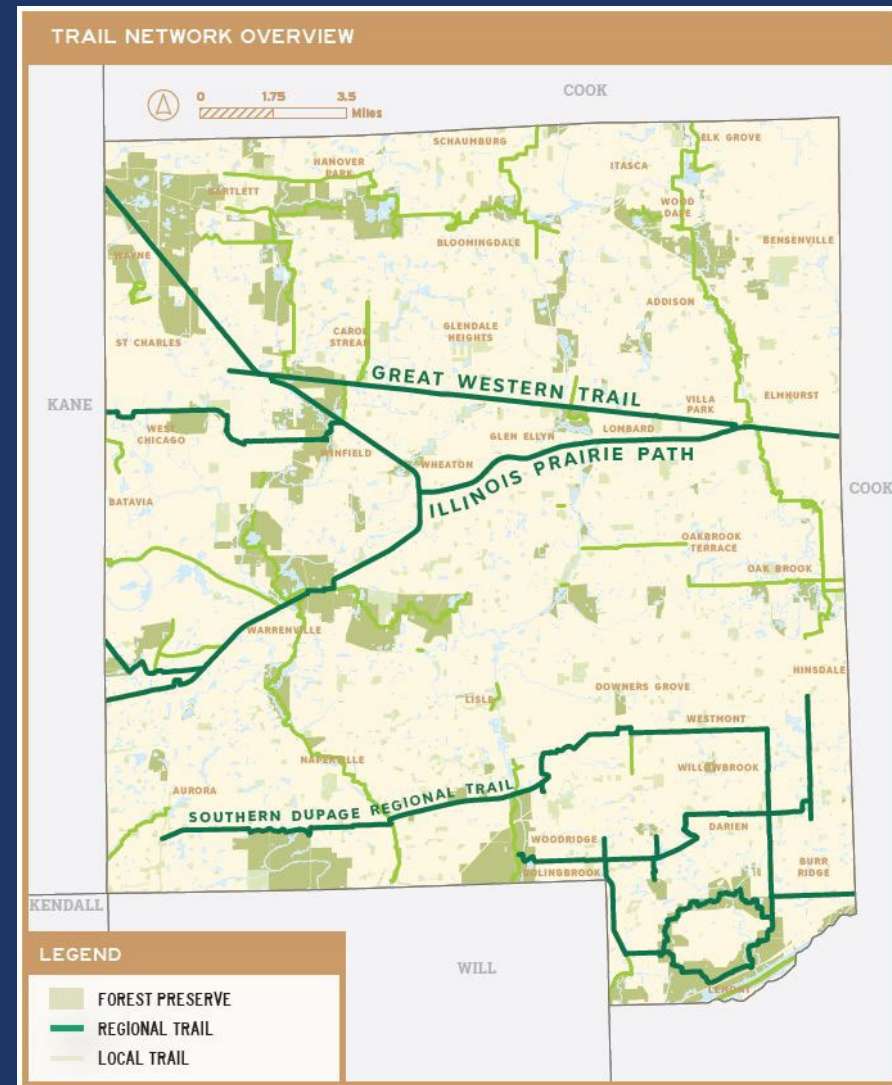
Project Timeline



Background

DuPage Trails Plan

- » What is the Trails Plan?
 - » *A plan for maintenance and operations of the existing trail network under DuPage County's responsibility.*
 - » *Establishes a framework for both current and future work.*
- » Which trails?
 - » *Illinois Prairie Path, Great Western Trail, and the Southern DuPage Regional Trail*
- » Prior Work
 - » *2003 Trails Maintenance Policy*
 - » *2008 DuPage County Bike Plan*
 - » *Work in partnership with municipalities*
- » **Today:** Discuss Draft Recommendations
 - » *Seeking Transportation Committee input*



Draft Plan

Chapters

1. Introduction
2. Characteristics of Trails
3. Trail Crossings
4. Signage & Wayfinding
5. Partnerships
6. Healthy Trails
7. Trail User Experience
8. Trail Maintenance



Healthy Trails

Planting Guidelines

- » Ordinance ODT-036C-87: Guidelines for Plantings on County Highways & Prairie Neighbor Program
- » *Establishes recommended and prohibited plantings on the County Highway network. Prohibitions also apply to trail network.*
- » *Establishes Prairie Neighbors Program, which enables adjacent property owners to plant and manage landscaping under DOT permit.*

- » Staff Recommendation: Update Ordinance
- » *Some prohibited plantings are suitable for trail environment.*
- » *Prairie Neighbors' goal is not oriented toward fighting invasive species.*

- » Committee Action: Discussion



Healthy Trails

Adaptive Management

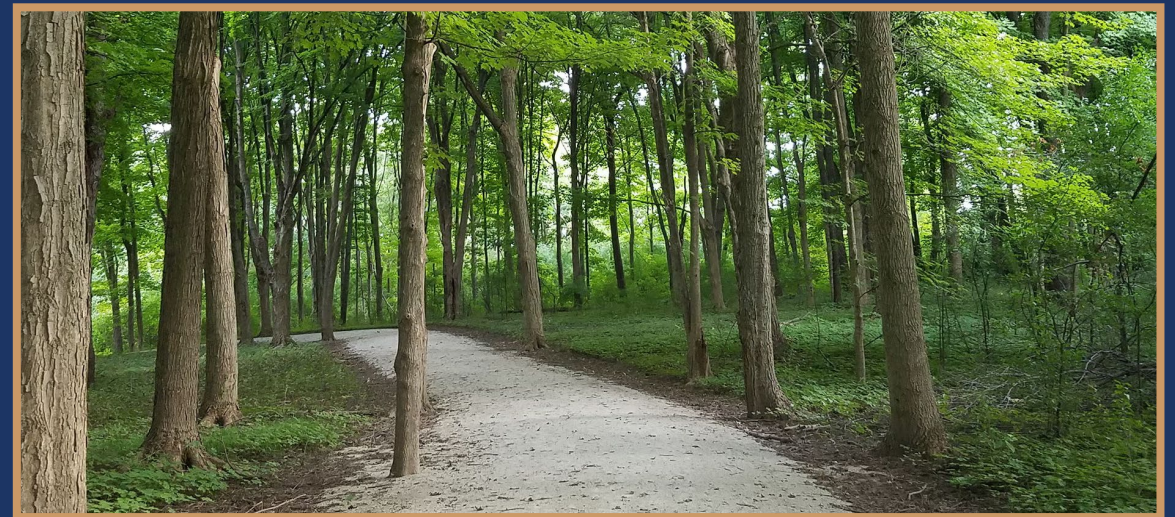
- » Invasive Plant Species
 - » *Species such as buckthorn, honeysuckle, and garlic mustard have taken over the trail environment.*
 - » *Invasives threaten the establishment of healthy trees, tree canopy, and a thriving ecosystem.*
 - » *Constituents have expressed significant interest in fighting the spread of invasive species.*
- » Staff Recommendation: Establish Adaptive Management Plan
 - » *County would apply emerging strategies to fight invasive species, and learn from the results of those efforts.*
 - » *Goal: over time, eradicate invasive plant species and replace them with native plantings.*
- » Committee Action: Discussion



Healthy Trails

Tree Replacement

- » Tree Removals
 - » *Emerging diseases and pests such as Dutch Elm and Emerald Ash Borer have killed many trees. Their removals have thinned the tree canopy.*
 - » *Survey respondents indicated they prefer shade and native plantings.*
- » Staff Recommendation: Establish process for replacing removed trees
 - » *Work with qualified professionals to locate, plant, and manage tree replacements on an annual basis.*
 - » *Coordinate with adaptive management plan to ensure new plantings thrive and reach maturity.*
- » Committee Action: Discussion



Trail User Experience

Mode Restrictions

- » Ordinance ODT-13-93: Prohibition of Motorized Vehicles on the DuPage County Trail System
 - » *Prohibits the use of unauthorized motor vehicles on the trail network.*
 - » *Amendments make exceptions for people with disabilities who use personal mobility devices.*
- » Staff Recommendation: Update Ordinance
 - » *Update language to reflect evolving state laws governing the use of e-bikes and micromobility devices.*
 - » *Restrict the use of e-bikes and micromobility devices that could be a safety concern.*
- » Committee Action: Discussion



Maintenance

Municipal Agreements

- » Snow removal damages the limestone trail surfaces
- » *Snow plowing scrapes away the trail surface. This impacts the trail user experience and becomes a maintenance issue.*
- » *Repair of trails under agreement with municipalities is a cost to the County.*

- » Staff Recommendation: Snow removal not recommended
- » *Prevent trail surface degradation due to snow removal.*

- » Staff Recommendation: Streamline trail maintenance IGA's with municipalities
- » *Establish a set of typical conditions for new trail maintenance agreements.*
- » *Examine existing IGA's to identify gaps in maintenance responsibility.*

- » Committee Action: Discussion



Signage and Wayfinding

Branding



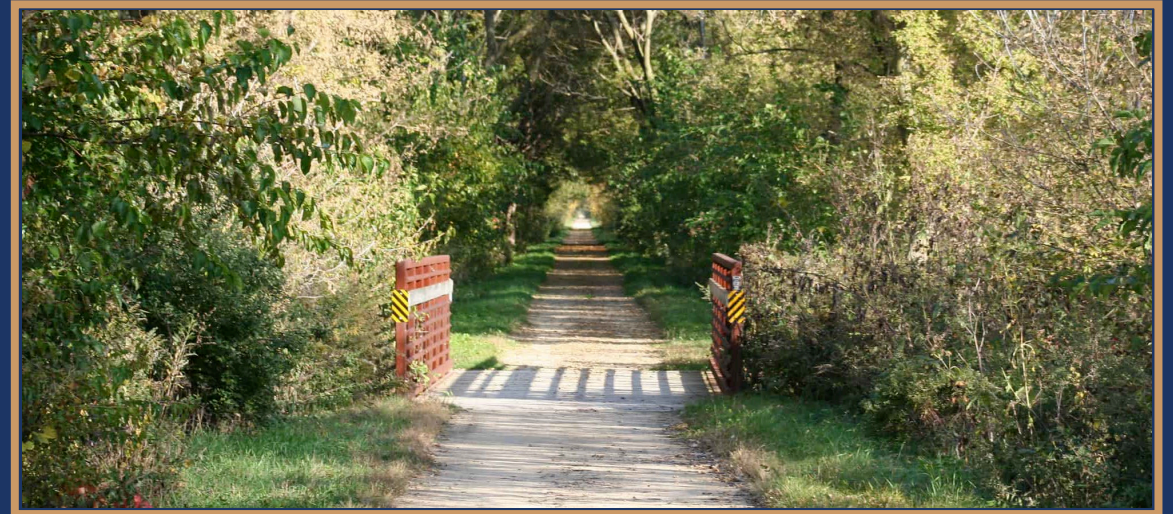
- » Trail Branding
 - » *Seeking to reflect County ownership of the trail system while respecting established symbolism tied to each regional trail.*
 - » Staff Recommendation: Streamline branding on County-owned signage
 - » *Make logos consistent shapes while reinforcing existing color schemes.*
 - » *Make Southern DuPage Regional Trail legible from the road.*
 - » Staff Recommendation: Signage and Wayfinding Plan
 - » *Determine size, type, and typical location of new signage.*
 - » *Establish standard for new trail signs.*
 - » *Determine scope of capital investment required to implement Plan.*
 - » Committee Action: Discussion



Partnerships

Encroachments

- » What is an Encroachment?
 - » *An unauthorized use or occupation of County Highway (trail) property by an adjacent land owner.*
 - » *Typical encroachments include unauthorized permanent structures, unauthorized landscaping or clearing, vehicle storage, and materials storage.*
- » Staff Recommendation: Inventory, Categorize, and Address Encroachments
 - » *Build upon previous attempts to inventory encroachments.*
 - » *Establish a process for removal, replacement, or bringing up to acceptable standard.*
- » Committee Action: Discussion



Next Steps

- » **October/November: Public Comment Period (October 17 – November 17, 2023)**
 - » *Contingent on Transportation Committee Approval*
- » **October: Re-engage Trails Plan stakeholder groups**
 - » *Concurrent with Public Comment Period*
- » **Winter 2023-2024: Final staff review and County Board approval**
 - » *Re-engage Transportation Committee and County Board*

