

KANKAKEE COUNTY GREENWAYS AND TRAILS PLAN 2009

DEVELOPED BY KANKAKEE COUNTY PLANNING
DEPARTMENT WITH FUNDING BY ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
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INTRODUCTION

IN JANUARY OF 2009, the Kankakee County Planning Department received a grant from the Illinois Department of Transportation for the purpose of updating its Greenways and Trails Plan. The Planning Department formed a Citizens Advisory Committee that was tasked with this endeavor. The Committee reviewed the 1999 Plan and the accomplishments that had been created, as well as new trail technologies, new construction techniques, and new development practices. This information was then used to examine each of the proposed greenways and trails to determine if modifications were appropriate. The Committee also looked at the continuity of the system to determine if the proposed greenways and trails were still viable and if additional routes were necessary.

After completion of this review, the Committee formulated the 2009 Greenways and Trails Plan which was adopted by the Kankakee County Board on August 11, 2009. This brochure summarizes that Plan and provides a map of all existing and proposed greenways and trails.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE 1999

RIVERFRONT TRAIL

Phase 1 of this trail is the 1999 Plan's greatest success story, due mainly to the continuous involvement of the Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley. This trail travels from the Splash Valley Aquatic Center south of River Road Park in Kankakee to the existing trail system located in the Kankakee River State Park. It is divided into four (4) Phases. The progress and status of each Phase is as follows:

PHASE 1—This segment of the Trail, which travels from the Splash Valley Aquatic Center to the Schuyler Avenue Bridge, has been designed and is scheduled for construction in July 2009 through the receipt of a Federal Grant in the amount of \$400,000.

PHASE 2—This Phase is currently in the planning stages and possible routes are still being investigated. Phase 2 travels from the Schuyler Avenue Bridge to LeVassuer Park just west of the YMCA. Funding for this Phase has been proposed.

PHASE 3—Phase 3 is complete due to the fact that it consists of the existing trail system in the Perry Farm and the Kankakee River Metropolitan Agency (KRMA) Facility, plus connections in park areas of Bourbonnais, Bradley, and Kankakee.

PHASE 4—This Phase connects the existing trail system in the Village of Bourbonnais and the Perry Farm Park to the existing trail system in the Kankakee River State Park. Alternative routes for this Phase are still being discussed.

RIVERFRONT TRAIL COMMITTEE

This committee was established in 2004 to facilitate the progression of the Riverfront Trail Project. It has twelve (12) governmental members that represent various jurisdictions and interests along the trail's route.

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF KANKAKEE RIVER VALLEY

The Foundation is a non-profit organization with the purpose of enhancing the quality of life for the citizens of Kankakee County. This organization has been instrumental in promoting the 1999 Greenways and Trails Plan, as well as, keeping open space needs in the forefront of local discussions.

SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE

In December 2008, the Kankakee County Board adopted new Subdivision Regulations that included recommendations from the 1999 Greenways and Trails Plan for the inclusion and management of open space within new subdivisions.

CONSERVATION DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE

The 2008 Subdivision Regulations included a new section that provides for the development of conservation style subdivisions.

TRIM CREEK GREENWAY STUDY

In 2005, the Campaign for Sensible Growth, the Metropolitan Planning Council, and Openlands partnered to develop a management plan for Trim Creek located in northeastern Kankakee County and southwestern Will County. This plan focuses on protecting the Creek's natural beauty and resources while offering preservation strategies and best management practices. [*Reclaiming Trim Creek, Metropolitan Planning Council, 2005*]

WHISPERING WILLOWS PARK

This Bourbonnais Township Park District (BTPD) park covers seventy (70) acres in rural Bourbonnais Township. It contains a pond, walking trails, and a barn that was moved to the site and converted to a community center using green technologies.

NEW 66 ACRE PARK IN MANTENO

The Village is in the process of developing a 66 acre park along Interstate 57 north of Manteno Lake Road with the assistance of a \$400,000 grant from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR). This park will contain sports fields, a pond, and an extensive system of multi-purpose paths that will connect to the Village's trail system.

SOLDIER CREEK TRAIL IN BRADLEY

The Village of Bradley has taken steps to create a multi-purpose trail along Soldier Creek north of North Street. Currently a segment of this trail has been built along the Creek behind Edge Brook Subdivision.

LARRY POWER ROAD TRAIL IN BRADLEY

A segment of the Larry Power Road Trail has been built along the frontage of Summerfield and Pheasant Run Subdivisions in Bradley.

CAREER CENTER TRAIL IN BOURBONNAIS

The Village of Bourbonnais has been protecting the ComEd easement east of Career Center Road from developers as new subdivisions are constructed. Once the entire right-of-way is acquired. The Village intends to build a segment of Career Center Road Trail within the corridor.

SPLASH VALLEY AQUATIC PARK

Built in 2004, this facility provides swimming and water recreation to residents of Kankakee County. It is located along River Road near the southern trailhead of Riverfront Trail Phase 1.

OAK ORTHOPEDIC SPORTS ARENA (ICE RINK)

Located adjacent to Kankakee Community College's (KCC) campus, this facility offers ice skating opportunities to the Kankakee River Valley's residents.

CONSERVANCY DISTRICT EXPANSION

The Kankakee River Conservancy District has been acquiring land in rural Momence Township for preservation purposes.

KANKAKEE VALLEY FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT EXPANSION

The KVFPD has added 150 acres to its inventory almost doubling its total acreage to 340 acres.

WEST SIDE TRAIL IN MANTENO

A northern portion of the Career Center Trail has been constructed through the subdivisions of Eagles Landing and Winfield Estates in western Manteno.

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OAK RIDGE MOBILE HOME PARK TRAIL IN MANTENO

The Village of Manteno received a Greenways & Trails Grant in December 2008 to construct a trail and bridge over Rock Creek to provide the residents of Oak Ridge Mobile Home Park with direct access into downtown Manteno. The amount of the grant was \$350,000.

CONSERVATION DESIGN SUBDIVISIONS

Prior to the County adopting Conservation Development Regulations, two (2) conservation style developments were approved by the County and are currently under construction.

KANKAKEE SANDS

The Nature Conservancy has established three (3) new preserves in Pembroke Township totaling nearly 1000 acres. Mskoda Trail and Pembroke Savanna are located north and east of the Village of Hopkins Park and the Carl N. Becker Preserve is located in the southeastern most corner of the County (See the Greenways and Trails Map for exact locations). Included in these preserves are 4.35 miles of trails.

This update to the 1999 Plan builds upon these accomplishments and looks to Kankakee County's future for transportation and recreational needs.

BENEFITS OF GREENWAYS AND TRAILS

Greenways, trails, and open space of all types have a beneficial effect on communities. Studies have shown that open space and recreational opportunities can produce higher property values, provide economic stimulus, and promote healthier citizens. They can also have a positive effect on the community by reducing crime, improving air and water quality, and attracting tourism revenue. Greenways and trails benefit communities by:

- Improving Air and Water Quality
- Reducing Crime
- Promoting Health
- Improving Property Values
- Providing Positive Economic Impacts
- Generating Community Pride and Appeal

MISSION STATEMENT

Greenways and recreational trails should provide the people of Kankakee County with opportunities to enjoy physical and social activities... they should provide opportunities to experience the natural, cultural, and scenic amenities of the greenway and/ or trail corridor... they should reflect landscapes typical of the County's different regions... they should be accessible to the

County's citizens... they should provide a pleasurable, non-polluting alternative to automobile travel for short trips... they should be an economic asset to communities along the trail... and they should contribute to the quality of life in the County.

These greenways and trails should be developed through partnerships among, federal, state, regional, and local units of government, stakeholder organizations, and trail users... they should link communities and their parks and extend from municipalities into the countryside... they should connect the County's diverse regions into neighboring county and state trails... and they should evolve into a network throughout the length and width of the County, easily accessible to all County residents for their use and enjoyment.

GOALS

As part of the updated Greenways and Trails Plan, the Committee reviewed the Goals of the Plan and adopted the following new/updated Goals.

- Create a network of greenways and trails to provide an alternative to motorized transportation.
- Create recreational opportunities.
- Preserve the natural and unique features of the County's landscape.
- Protect the County's natural environment.
- Improve wildlife habitat.
- Create partnerships with other governmental bodies, citizen groups, and other organizations.

THE PLAN

The planning process has provided Kankakee County with 60 proposed trails which include one equestrian trail and two water trails. These trails represent 324.75 miles of new multi-purpose trails for the County. The trails serve destinations throughout Kankakee County and its municipalities while providing both transportation and recreational opportunities. They link the County's parks with commercial districts, schools, neighborhoods, and public facilities.

Twelve natural greenways and one urban greenway have also been identified in the Plan. The twelve natural greenways follow water courses and protect them from encroachment of development, protect their water quality, provide stormwater retention, and provide habitat for wildlife. An area of downtown Kankakee has been designated an urban greenway. While this urban greenway is not necessarily a physical location on

the ground as a traditional greenway would be, it is an area in an urban setting where green technologies and infrastructure will be utilized and encouraged. This may include the use of green roofs, permeable surfaces, the addition of amenities such as park benches and planters, energy efficient buildings, alternative energy sources, or the inclusion of additional open space in development projects.

All of the greenways and trails identified in the Plan were evaluated and each was ranked based on a set of criteria to determine the priority for their construction. This priority system will assist decision makers in deciding which greenways and trails to construct and in which order.

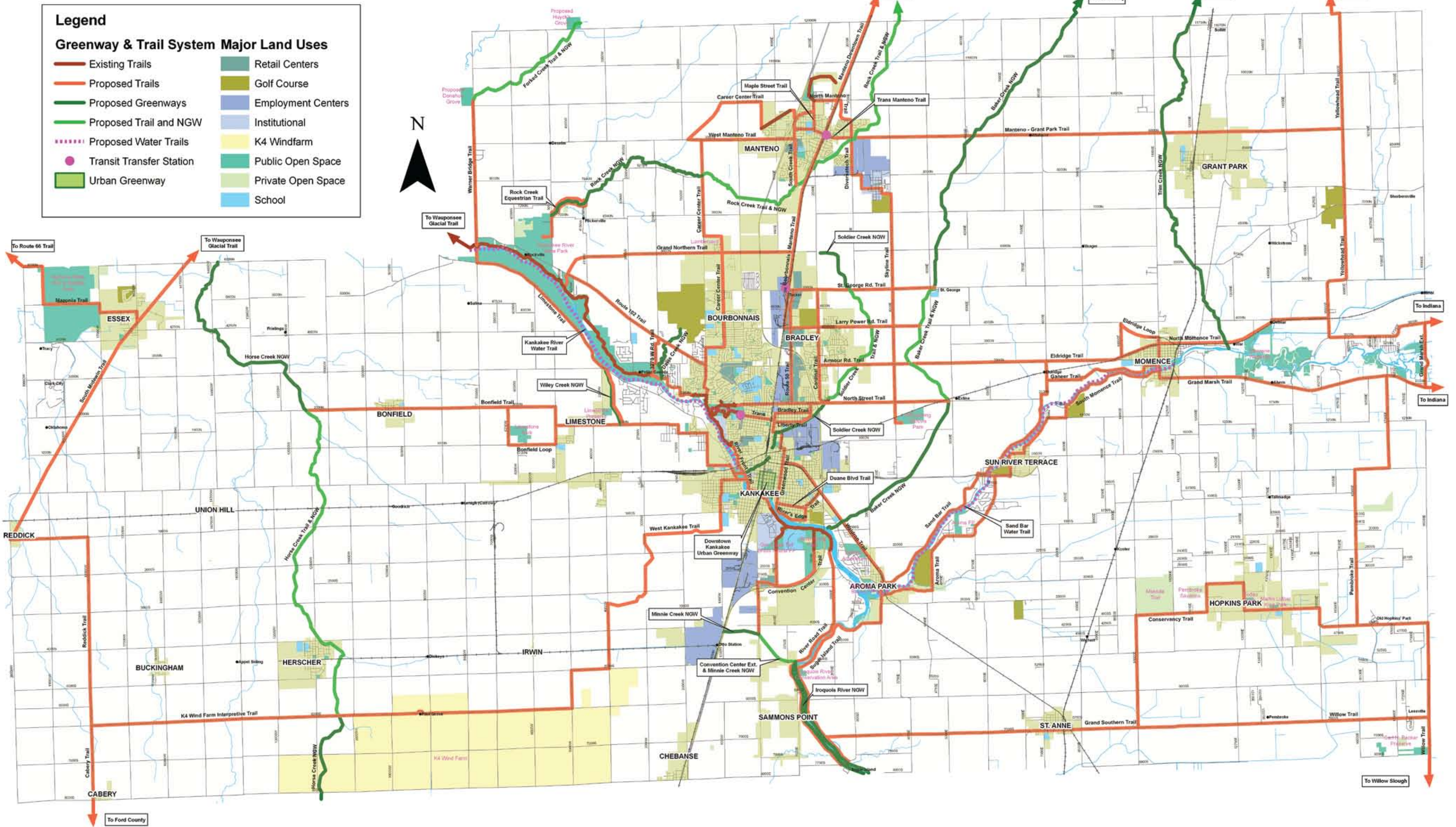
For detailed information about the specific elements of the Plan, please refer to the full text of the Kankakee County Greenways and Trails Plan—2009.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The final step in the planning process is the development of recommendations that the County can follow in the implementation of the Plan. The following recommendations were adopted by the Kankakee County Board as part of the Greenways and Trail Plan.

- Promote the creation of a county-wide authority to manage and maintain the greenways and trails system.
- Assist the City of Kankakee in the development of an urban greenway corridor in downtown Kankakee.
- Promote the urban greenway concept in the downtown areas of other municipalities.
- Assist municipal governments with establishing greenways and trails friendly development ordinances.
- Provide greenways and trails opportunities sufficient to allow every citizen within the metropolitan area of Kankakee County the ability to live within one (1) mile of a greenway and/or trail.
- Encourage road district authorities to include non-motorized vehicle and pedestrian facilities in their improvement plans.
- Take steps to acquire properties listed in the Illinois Natural Area Inventory.

KANKAKEE COUNTY ADOPTED ITS
FIRST GREENWAYS AND TRAILS PLAN
IN 1999. Since that time, the County
has witnessed many accomplishments
in the development of greenways
and trails, the establishment of new
recreational facilities, the acquisition
of additional park facilities, and the
adoption of regulations that are open
space friendly.



NOTE: THE KANKAKEE RIVER IS A DESIGNATED GREENWAY FOR ITS ENTIRE LENGTH THROUGH KANKAKEE COUNTY.



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