



Fall 2024

THE ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PATH NEWSLETTER

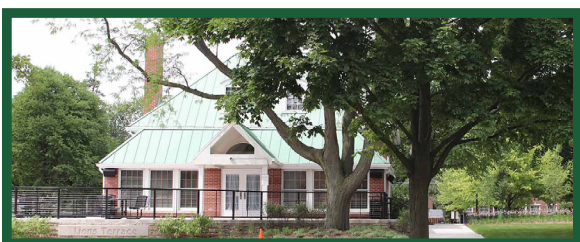
North America's first successful rails-to-trails conversion. Founded 1963.
 Stay Connected: www.ipp.org, info@ipp.org, 630-752-0120 or [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/ipp)

Illinois Prairie Path Annual Meeting

SAVE THE DATE

11	03	24	2-4 P.M.
MONTH	DAY	YEAR	TIME

The Illinois Prairie Path not-for-profit corporation is pleased to announce its annual meeting, once again, at the iconic Mary Lubko Center in Wheaton. Originally built as a coach house in 1888, this beautiful facility features wood paneled rooms, stone fireplaces, and great views.



Annual Meeting Topics & Speakers

DuPage Forest Preserve Trails Update

Connecting people to nature through trails. Kevin will discuss the District's current trail planning goals, 2024 trail accomplishments and what is coming in 2025 that will impact the District's and DuPage County Trail System.



*Kevin Horsfall
 Director of Planning and Development
 Forest Preserve District of DuPage County*

DuPage County General Trails Update

Melisa will give a DuPage County Trail System update, which will include 2024 highlights & lessons learned, including the adoption of the Trails Plan & the Oak Ecosystems Project. She will discuss upcoming DuPage County plans.



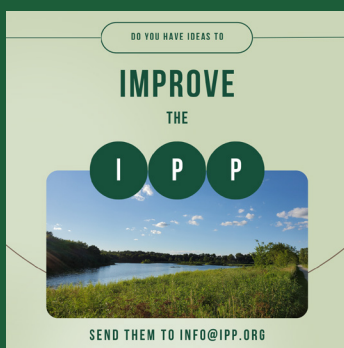
*Melisa Ribikawskis
 Senior Transportation Planner
 DuPage County Division of Transportation*

Illinois Prairie Path in Cook County Update

Ralph will provide a detailed overview of significant changes and plans being made on the Cook County side of the Illinois Prairie Path. The villages of Maywood and Bellwood have really stepped up to make improvements to the Path. This presentation will highlight the changes primarily in Maywood and Bellwood and plans for the IPPc extension.



*Ralph DiFebo
 IPPc Board Member*



Mayor Makes the Move – with the Illinois Prairie Path

The mayor of Maywood, Nathaniel George Booker, and his staff have been working feverishly with the Illinois Prairie Path these last several months. In a meeting earlier this summer, Mayor Booker expressed his desire to make the Prairie Path in Maywood as nice as it is in other villages. The Village is off to an incredible start towards accomplishing the mayor's objectives. The following are just a few of the highlights of the Village's accomplishments over these past several months in concert with the Illinois Prairie Path (c).

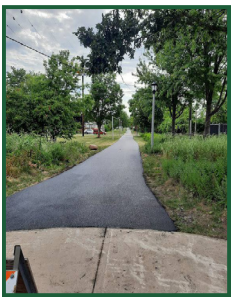
First Avenue IPPc Trailhead restoration has included:

- Restored prairie.
- Updated Trailhead Kiosk and map.
- A prairie landscaper, hired by the IPPc, restored the prairie gardens at the Trailhead.
- A new boulder donated by Tameling Industries has been placed near First Ave. between the trailhead's obelisks.
- Trailhead walls and obelisk lighting have been restored.
- Two IPPc donated memorial benches will be installed and the existing benches will be moved elsewhere on the Path.
- The Trailhead has a new drinking fountain provided by the IPPc and installed by the Village.
- Sidewalks at the Trailhead were replaced along First Ave.
- The wire fencing along First Ave will be removed.

Other improvements supporting Mayor Booker's Prairie Path plans though his village include:

- The entire path from First Ave to 25th Ave has been repaved. Plus, all crosswalks have been constructed to be ADA compliant and have been repainted.
- All razor wire on the fencing running along the path has been removed.
- Trees have been planted while removing invasive vegetation.
- The IPPc will supply missing mile markers posts.

Keep on Moving, Mayor Booker!



*The recently paved path
in Maywood*



Refurbished Maywood trailhead medallion



Updated Trailhead Kiosk and map



*New boulder on First Avenue in
Maywood*

Memorial Benches

Five memorial benches have been installed in DuPage County this year! On behalf of all Prairie Path users, the IPPc thanks the donors and DuPage County for installing them! The benches are in Elmhurst (1), Glen Ellyn (3), and West Chicago (1). In addition, two new benches will be installed in Maywood later this year.



Memorial Bench in Glen Ellyn

Notes from the Maywood Trailhead Prairie Wyatt Widmer & Ralph DiFebo

Ralph DiFebo, Prairie Path Board member, has been working extensively on the Cook County side of the Illinois Prairie Path. The following relatively informal update was prepared by Wyatt Widmer, but provides excellent detail of the work and the local communities' contributions to beautifying OUR Prairie Path.

The prairie gardens were replanted in late spring on 1st Avenue. Everything is coming in except that the lack of mulch caused two of the stepple bushes to dry out. I clipped them down to the ground, and they will and already are resprouting.

I have been keeping up with weeds throughout those front gardens. The south one is definitely growing better than the north one.

We have also transplanted many plants into the gardens behind the entrance walls. Throughout the two prairie gardens along the path, there were many high-quality native species already present. They were only suppressed by the overabundance of grass.

A combination of deadheading the grasses in certain spots, and spraying them with a grass-specific herbicide in others, has opened up ample opportunities and there are many flowers coming up that would not have otherwise. This includes some unexpected and beautiful species like royal catchfly and wild quinine. Along the path itself I have sprayed a 3-ft margin to kill the lawn grass so that it need not be maintained, especially because a very convenient and hardy native ground cover was present in that grass (wild petunia). Spraying with the grass herbicide has allowed it to proliferate. There has also been a very noticeable increase in native insects like bees and grasshoppers. The mosquitoes are minimal!

The primary invasive species that we have been controlling include quack grass, crabgrass, barnyard grass, English rye, Tree of Heaven, and bindweed. We have been able to use minimal herbicide, and the herbicides I am using are safe around the public.

I have also kept up with trimming the bushes and pruning dead or dying branches.

Note: We have received lots of good praise and feedback from locals using the path and the benches. So far there have been seven Maywood residents in my past three visits alone who have said that they enjoy and use the space because of its natural feel and that they enjoy the wildflowers and appreciate all that the village has done.

Thank you, Wyatt, Ralph and our Cook County Illinois Prairie Path Communities!



Trailhead Prairie

Volunteer Park Upgrades

The Wheaton trailhead at Volunteer Park has received significant upgrades recently. There's a new water fountain dedicated to Helen Turner, an IPPC founder. The fountain has two basins to accommodate everyone and has a bottle filler. DuPage County installed it. The map display cases were also replaced. To minimize cost & waste, the old cases will be rebuilt by a local business. Membership dues paid for these amenities. Thank you to all our members!



*New water fountain in
Volunteer Park*



*New display case in
Volunteer Park*

Trail Etiquette

We appreciate receiving feedback from trail users via info@ipp.org or Facebook. Your top two concerns are speed and announcing-when-passing. Please follow these IPPc recommendations for everyone's safety and enjoyment.



IPPc recommendations....

15 MPH SPEED LIMIT

When passing.....

- Say "On your left" or other audible warning.
- Leave at least three feet of space.



For more trail etiquette....
Contact us: info@ipp.org or (630) 752-0120



*Timber Ridge Trail
Timber Lake - Winfield*



IPP Aurora Branch - Aurora 2021



*IPP Elgin Branch
Lincoln Marsh Natural Area - Wheaton*



IPP Geneva Spur - West Chicago



*Blackwell Forest Preserve
Silver Lake - Warrenville*



IPP Main Stem - Glen Ellyn 2021




SEND IN YOUR

IPP PHOTOS

TO BE CONSIDERED IN OUR
FUTURE NEWSLETTERS!

INFO@IPP.ORG

May | June | July | August

Thank you

Your membership and donations are used to provide services and fund improvements benefiting Illinois Prairie Path members and users.

Lifetime Members

Virginia B.
Jim & Katrina K.

Donations

Hamill Family Foundation
Donna M. (Bench donation)
Brynne P.
Karen P. (Bench Donation)
Renaissance Charitable
S & E Bramsen Foundation
Pamela S. & Eric F.
Marilyn S.
Marty S.
Douglas V.

New Members

Beth B.
Brian B.
Randall B.
Patrick B.
Anthony C.
Patrick D.
Tricia D.
Jeffrey G.
Mark G.
Edward H.
Petra H.
Jacque J.

Amy K.
Lee L.
Peter N.
Steve N.
John P.
Laura S.
Mark S.
Peter S.
Carolyn S.
Robert S.
John V.
George W.
Melissa Z.