



Summer 2026

THE ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PATH NEWSLETTER

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How Riding an Electric Trike Improved My Life

Three years ago, when I left rehab after my stroke, I was in a wheelchair because of the problems I had with walking. I was later diagnosed with cancer, and chemotherapy added to my walking and balance issues. Even walking to the end of my driveway was exhausting. I spent my days sitting around the house, afraid to go outside for fear of injury.

Then, one day, I saw an ad for an electric bike company and read about electric tricycles. I bought one the same day and rode it 12 miles home from the bike shop using the Geneva spur. In the months that followed, I rode several hundred miles. I met many new people, always stopping to talk to every baby I rode past and to scratch the ears of every dog. Meeting new people and talking with them became the favorite part of my rides. The rides transformed my life. I am no longer depressed or afraid to leave my house. I found out that if you can sit in a chair, you can ride an electric trike.

I am always aware of my responsibility to others on the paths and to not ride in a reckless manner, which might harm others. I started riding the Prairie Path in the early 1970s in my younger days when I was able to ride a non-



Frank Zibera on
his e-bike

Cont. on page 2

Bike Illinois Summary of E-Bike Legislation

"Senate Bill (SB) 3484
Passes"

AdvocacyLegislation – State
Jun 1, 2026

Written By Ride Illinois

SB 3484 – The bill sponsored by State Senator Ram Villivalam, Representative Barbara Hernandez, Illinois Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias – and championed by Ride Illinois – passed both the House and Senate. As of this newsletter's publication date, the bill is still waiting for Governor Pritzker's final signature. Bike Illinois noted, "We gratefully acknowledge the members of the General Assembly who voted in favor of this sensible legislation."

* Note: SB 3336 was the original bill. Due to a procedural matter, SB 3484 was used to cast the final vote in the House and Senate. **The legislation takes effect in Illinois on January 1, 2027.**

The Facts

- Lack of clarity in the Illinois Vehicle Code resulted in a flurry of inconsistent, confusing, restrictive municipal ordinances
- High-speed e-motos (aka Motor Driven Cycles) have sharply increased in popularity – especially with boys under age 16 – and have wreaked chaos in Illinois communities
- Greedy manufacturers and retailers are preying on the public's lack of knowledge to sell unsafe devices
- E-bikes, e-scooters, and micro-mobility devices are popular as they offer an inexpensive, environmentally-friendly, enjoyable mode of travel for recreation, transportation, and everyday trips

SB 3484 integrates micro-mobility devices into state law, establishes age restrictions, and implements

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Cont. from *How Riding an Electric Trike Improved My Life* on page 1

electric road bike. Now, due to my health issues, to get out on the trails again, I need to have the battery assist to aid my pedaling. I ride a trike due to balance issues, but still enjoy the path as much as before.

In the past 5 months, I have ridden over 2500 miles, the majority on the Illinois Prairie Path system. I am on the path regardless of the weather. I rode all through the winter snow and ice and the spring rains. I enjoy seeing how the trail changes with the seasons.

In the winter, when the vegetation along the trail dies back, you can find many artifacts left from the Aurora and Elgin trolley system, which adds interest to my rides. I have learned where many of the trolley stations were and have started a collection of trolley tickets and timetables for the stations in my area. I have learned that the trolley system supplied electric power for many of the local towns' streetlights. The paths we use today provided much more than a nice place to walk and get back to nature. They were a major part of daily life and a source of growth for our area.

-Frank Ziberna, long-term IPP bike rider

* IPPc note: E-bikes and electric wheelchairs are allowed on the Prairie Path. All other electric devices (e-motos, scooters, skateboards, unicycles, hoverboards, etc.) are prohibited. 15 mph is the speed limit for everyone.

Cont. from *Bike Illinois Summary of E-Bike Legislation* on page 1

sensible regulations for the use of high-speed devices, like e-motos. This bill also allows the state, municipalities, and law enforcement to embrace new mobility modes while retaining a focus on public safety.

SB 3484 Will

- Maintain three classes of legal, low-speed e-bikes, consistent with 46 other states
- Clearly distinguish between low-speed e-bikes and motor driven cycles (e-motos)
- Establish consistent rules across Illinois for e-bikes, e-scooters, e-motos, and micro-mobility devices
- Require license, registration, and insurance for e-motos and other high-speed devices
- Rein in retailers who falsely advertise e-motos as e-bikes
- Set a minimum age of 15 to use Class 1 and 2 low-speed e-bikes
- Reduce the minimum age from 18 to 16 to use low-speed e-scooters
- Balance access to micro-mobility and public safety

Advocacy Matters

We appreciate the Illinois residents who contacted their state elected officials via our action alerts. Stay tuned for updates on SB 3484 and Ride Illinois' other legislative priorities!

Contact info@rideillinois.org with questions related to SB 3484.

For a chart from the Illinois Office of the Secretary of State see: <https://www.ilsos.gov/departments/drivers/traffic-safety/micromobility-in-illinois/know-the-rules.html>

Along the trail - Wheaton Bicyclist & Pedestrian Commission

In 2011, the Wheaton Environmental Improvement Commission successfully applied for a grant to develop a Bike Plan for Wheaton. This plan proposed the formation of a sub-committee to ensure adherence, leading to the establishment of the Wheaton Bicycle Advisory Committee. The grant also funded the installation of directional signs throughout Wheaton and provided resources for additional bike racks.

The committee was tasked with overseeing the Bike Plan and educating the public on bike safety. Their community engagement efforts included organizing bike festivals, bike rodeos, and the popular Bike Valet at the Cosley Run for the Animals. In 2016, the committee initiated an annual History Ride, guiding participants to various historical sites in Wheaton by

bicycle.

By 2018, the city council elevated the sub-committee to a full City Commission. In 2022, the Commission expanded its focus to include pedestrian concerns and was renamed the Wheaton Bicyclist and Pedestrian Commission. Also, this year the commission will host its 10th annual History Bike Ride of Wheaton on September 19th at 2pm. The ride will start in the newly updated West Plaza of the Wheaton Library. It's a wonderful way to see different parts of Wheaton via bike and learn a little about the city from local historian and tribune reporter, Bob Goldsborough. The event is free. All that is required is a signed waiver, your own bike and your helmet.



County Farm Crossing Light

The DuPage County Division of Transportation announced plans June 16, 2026 to construct a pedestrian actuated traffic signal on County Farm Road at the Great Western Trail crossing in Winfield. The County has been studying this long-discussed improvement for several years, evaluating traffic volumes and vehicle speeds, as well as conducting pedestrian and bicycle counts to determine the appropriate traffic control device and how best to address the mobility needs and safety of all users at the crossing location.

“Safety of pedestrians, cyclists and motorists is always our top concern. We believe this new traffic signal will benefit residents, ensuring that people using the trail, and people driving this stretch of road, will have a greater sense of security. Traffic flow will be controlled and there will be clear indications for everyone, on the roadway, and the path, when traffic will stop and it is safe to cross,” said Mary Fitzgerald Ozog, Chair of the DuPage County Transportation Committee.

The traffic signal will provide pedestrian push-buttons and walk/don't walk indications for trail users and traditional red-yellow-green traffic signal displays for motorists. Traffic signal operations will be coordinated with the nearby signals at St. Charles Road and at IL Route 64 (North Avenue) and the proposed signal will only stop motorists when trail users push the buttons to request a walk indication.

The design of the traffic signal is nearly completed, and the County is working with its electrical contractor to begin the procurement process, coordinate power connections with ComEd, and establish the construction schedule. The work is expected to be completed in late 2026.



A familiar crossing at the Great Western Trail and County Farm Rd awaiting a new traffic signal

This news comes courtesy of DuPage County – online Home News Post.

No Motor Vehicles – A Clarification DuPage County - Illinois Prairie Path

You've probably seen signs on the Path stating “no motor vehicles”. Although it may seem counterintuitive, LOW-SPEED E-BIKES (class 1, 2 and 3 e-bikes) ARE ALLOWED on DuPage County trails including the Prairie Path, and many other area trails. In Illinois, low-speed e-bikes (with fully operable pedals and motors under 750 watts) are not considered motor vehicles. DuPage County agrees. All other electric devices (e-motos, scooters, skateboards, unicycles, hoverboards, etc) are not allowed.*

The most important message on these signs is the 15 mph speed limit. The IPPc couldn't agree more. Enforcement of these rules is a challenge. The IPPc requests everyone's compliance for Path users' safety and enjoyment. The IPPc will continue dialogue with DuPage Co, Kane Co, Ride Illinois, Active Transportation Alliance, municipalities and others to identify and implement effective strategies to get path users to slow down.

It all starts with communicating expectations.

- No electric devices allowed besides class 1, 2 and 3 e-bikes.*
- 15 mph speed limit for everyone.

Thank you to everyone in compliance.

If you know of successful speed controls on other trails, please reach out to us at info@ipp.org, or (630) 752-0120. Please share concerns, questions or suggestions.

*Exception: Electric wheelchairs and mobility scooters are allowed for individuals with limited mobility.



Healthy West Chicago – Wayfinding Signs

Two Illinois Prairie Path Board Members, Bill Kovacs and Erik Spande, President, attended a Healthy West Chicago (HWC) meeting in June. It was a great meeting! HWC is looking for a ‘quick win’, meaning a substantial project they can take credit for within the year.

Unfortunately, as was explained at the meeting by the City of West Chicago, DuPage County Forest Preserve, West Chicago Park District, and Winfield Township governments have strict procurement procedures, and they budget years in advance. So, while significant money may be available, it won’t be available within 2 or more years. So, a ‘quick win’ was

effectively off the table. According the West Chicago Public Works director that was in attendance, each wayfinding sign costs approximately \$500.

However, the Illinois Prairie Path not-for-profit organizations (IPPC) volunteered to help fill the gap, and allow HWC achieve a ‘quick win’. In July, the IPPC Board approved a proposal to fund the HWC sign project to help with approximately 4 wayfinding signs within the West Chicago boundaries. The proposed signs are to clarify the sometimes confusing Prairie Path (street) route through West Chicago. We are looking forward to making path riding more convenient for all.

Glen Ellyn “Prairie Path Park”

At its May 19, 2026, meeting, the Park Board of Commissioners approved *Prairie Path Park* as the official name of the new Downtown Community Park located at Forest Avenue and the Illinois Prairie Path in downtown Glen Ellyn.

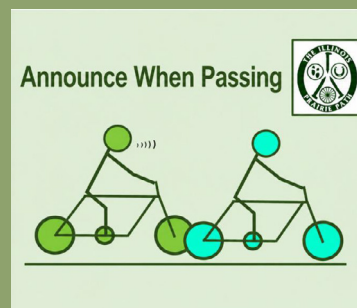
In doing so, the Board recognized the strong connection residents already have to Prairie Path Park and the surrounding area. Retaining the name preserves the park’s established identity, honors

its history, and reflects its location along the Illinois Prairie Path. As the site continues to evolve, the name will serve as a bridge between the park’s legacy and its future role in the community.

As improvements take shape, Prairie Path Park will continue to bring people together, enhance the downtown experience, and serve as a vibrant gathering place for years to come.

Signs of the Times

The IPPC is advocating for improved signage for users’ safety and enjoyment. You may soon see new signs in Cook County and some IPPC municipalities. Based on users’ feedback, top concerns are excessive speeds and poor communication when passing. Please help spread these messages.



Rails to Trails Conservancy Annual meeting with the IPPc

The Illinois Prairie Path not-for-profit corporation (IPPc) was honored to be the special guest of the Rails to Trails Conservancy's (RTC) Annual Meeting reception on June 2, 2026. The reception was held in Chicago, immediately adjacent to the famous Chicago Riverwalk trail.

On June 3rd the IPPc and Villa Park officials hosted the RTC to "show off" our joint project. Car 321 is an original train car from the Chicago Aurora & Elgin Railroad Line that the IPP was built on. At the

site, IPP representatives showed the Rails to Trails delegates that tracks have been already laid for the train car, and outlined the proposed schedule for the train car's site delivery. The initial plan is to have a canopy shelter constructed that will house the train car with completion anticipated in early 2027! Rails to Trails representatives were very impressed with our progress, and it was reported that after the event that RTC officials "were buzzing" on the bus ride back to Chicago.

Surprise, Surprise on the Salt Creek Trail

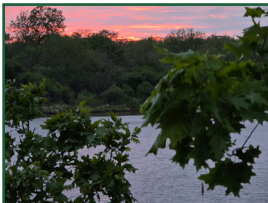


Completed New Salt Creek Trail underpass at I-294 in the distance on the left

Riders were thrilled to discover that the Salt Creek Trail underpass at the Tri-State Tollway was reopened in July after being closed for a few years. The trail is paved. Decorative greetings welcome riders as they enter the underpass.

Who considers the trail a "mess overall"? The response to the news of this reopening — the most read Suburban Chicago Bicycling article yet — shows how popular it is. See [more on the reopening in local news](#) and the [Salt Creek Trail](#) in the trail round-up.

This news comes courtesy of Neil Holdway's Suburban Chicago Bicycling, at suburbanchicagobicycling.com.



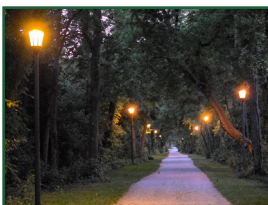
Timber Ridge at sunset



Lythrum salicaria



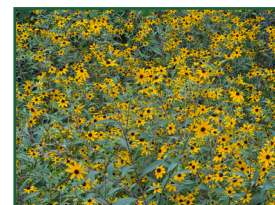
Great Blue Heron



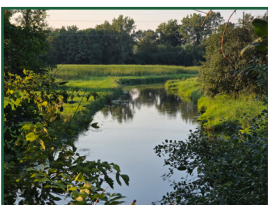
IPP Lombard



Warrenville trailhead



Black Eyed Susans



Klein Creek



Lincoln Marsh



St James Forest Preserve

IPPC Participating at Bike Rodeos

The IPPc participated in Bike Rodeos in the Warrenville, Geneva and Glen Ellyn. The 100+ participants mastered bike safety skills, zoomed through fun drills, rocked the road and showcased their pedaling power!

The IPPc enjoyed talking to residents about our projects, advocacy, membership, volunteer opportunities, and the Path itself!! We reminded path users that the speed limit is 15 MPH and that bike riders should always announce when passing and wear a helmet.



Geneva Bike Rodeo



Glen Ellyn Bike Rodeo



*Erik Spande at the
Warrenville Bike Rodeo*

IPPC Website Updates

Whether we're organizing trail cleanups, partnering with local communities to enhance the Path experience, advocating for improved trail access, or developing exciting new projects like a trail car destination for families to enjoy (more on that soon!), we're continually working to make the Illinois Prairie Path an even better place for everyone.

As we continue improving the path, we're also enhancing your membership experience. We're in the process of updating our website (ipp.org) to simplify joining and renewing memberships, and we're aligning our online and paper membership options for greater consistency.

In addition, our website is getting a refresh. We're updating the navigation, organizing resources, and making it easier to find the information you're looking for. While these improvements take time, we're confident they'll create a better experience for both current and future members.

As always, our members are at the heart of everything we do. Your ideas, suggestions, and support help guide our work and strengthen the programs that preserve and enhance the Illinois Prairie Path.

Thank you for your continued membership—and for helping build the vibrant community that makes the Path such a treasured resource.

May | June | July

Thank you

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

Donations

James B.

Elizabeth B.

Lester C.

Robert C.

Tom C.

Lynn C.

Danielle D.

Cheryl G.

Darrell & Therese H.

Lisa K.

Sarah M.

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Donors in Memory of Eric
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Kristina & Gary J.

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