



The Illinois Prairie Path Newsletter December/Winter 2018



Path's Annual Meeting speakers focus on gaps and trail development



Keynote speaker **Matt Gomez, Trail Advocacy Manager at Active Transportation Alliance (ATA)**, explained their **Trail Connect Chicago Principles**:

- Equitable** - The trail network should serve all communities equally and trail design should emphasize accessibility for all users;
- Low Stress** - Trails should be designed in a manner that ensures that all users feel safe and comfortable while using them; and
- Seamless** - Our trail network should be seamless, providing a continuous and intuitively connected experience throughout the entire system.

The four current focus areas are: Des Plaines River Trail, Lake Calumet, I&M Northern Extension, and East-West Connections in the Northern Suburbs. (See below)

ATA's Near-Term Goals (1-4 Years)

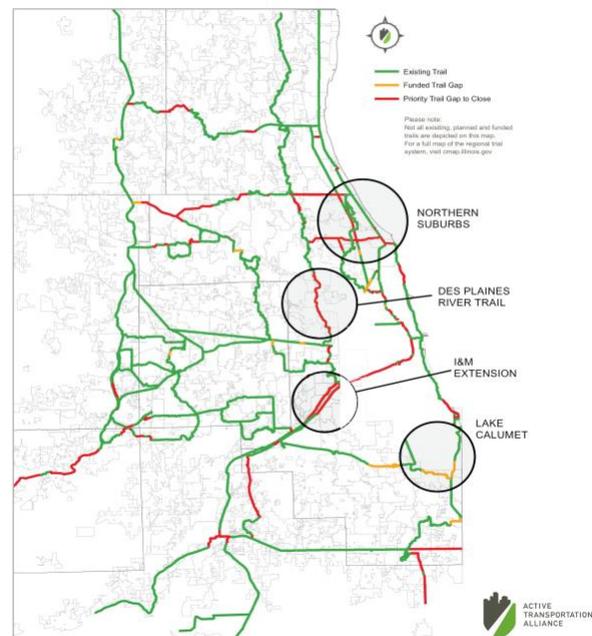
- Adoption of plans to close approximately 43 miles of targeted trail gaps
- Commitment by relevant government stakeholders to funding and construction timelines on targeted gaps
- Start construction on Des Plaines River Trail and Lake Calumet area trail gaps
- Establishment of Regional Trail Coalition to coordinate trail advocacy and best practices
- Create network of hundreds of educated and well-resourced trail advocates throughout region

How Can You Get Involved?

- Support a trail development initiative (visit www.activetrans.org)
- Help identify gaps in the network
- Work with other trail advocates on closing gaps or making other connections in the region
- Share ways the IPPC has been successful

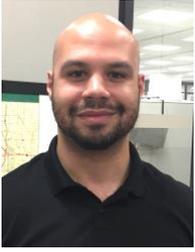
ACTIVE TRANS Trail Connect Chicagoland

Our vision for a continuous trail network in Northeastern Illinois



ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION ALLIANCE | 25 E WACKER DRIVE, SUITE 1702 | CHICAGO, IL 60601 | 312-216-0474 | WWW.ACTIVETRANS.ORG

DuPage County Trail Expansions and Future Projects



At the Path's Annual Meeting in November, **Sid Kenyon** presented information about the work of the Transportation Division.

Sid Kenyon, Senior Planner, is responsible for planning and coordination, funding source identification, public engagement, and trail policy making.

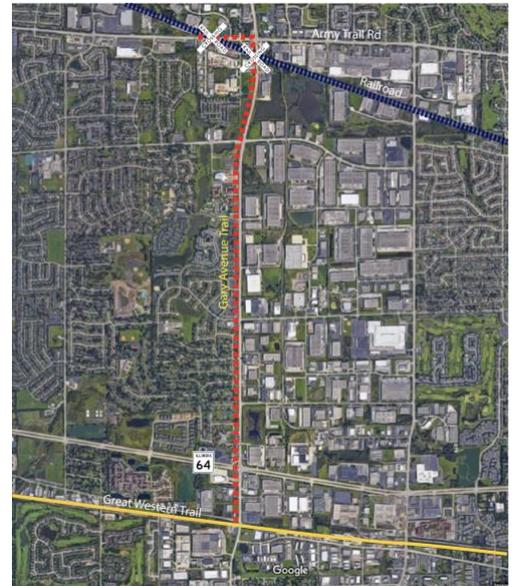
Sid provided an overview of the trail projects completed in 2018 and identified projects being considered for 2019 and 2020.

2018 - Winfield Connector



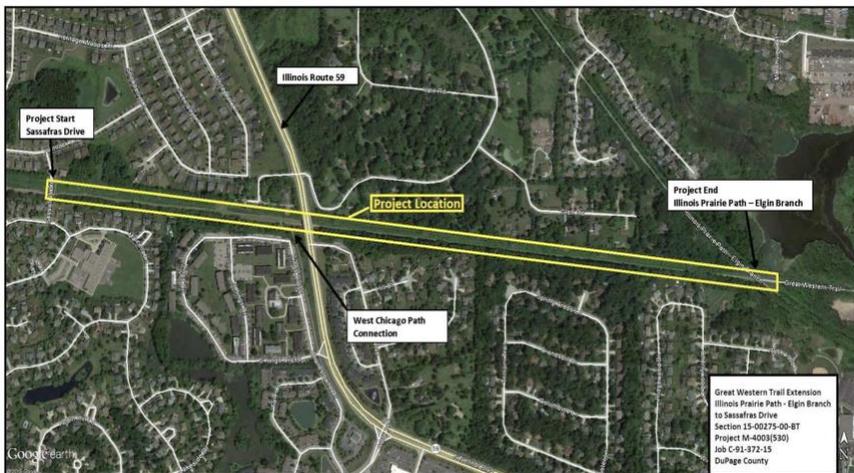
This project was completed this summer. The 4,100 foot trail connects the County Complex with Beecher Street in Winfield, and opens the complex to the Winfield Metra station. Construction cost was \$800,000.

2019 - Gary Avenue Trail



A three-mile trail will be developed on the West side of Gary Avenue. It will connect the Great Western Trail to Army Trail Road. The trail will cross two railroad crossings and multiple bus shelters. Projected costs for this project are \$1.7 million.

2018 - Great Western Trail Expansion



This one-mile extension will open Spring of 2019. It connects the IPP Elgin Branch to Sasfras Drive, and will maximize the County's right of way. The cost is under \$300,000.

Expected by 2020:

- IPP at Eola Road
- IPP at North Central DuPage River Trail
- West Branch DuPage River Trail at Roosevelt Road
- East Branch DuPage River Trail - Feasibility Study

IPPC Treasurer's Report Fiscal Year 2018

Cash Balance, November 1, 2017

Checking - Chase	19,777.34
High Yield Savings	50,182.91
Office Manager's Account	\$-
Petty Cash	\$-
Community Bank	30,466.16
Pomerance Trust - Principal \$63020.24	66,715.28
TOTAL	\$167,141.69

Revenue

Donations, Grants, Bequests	\$12,099.59
Dues	\$21,692.00
Sales (Maps, Shirts, Patches, Guides, etc.)	\$6.00
Interest	\$92.27
Miscellaneous	\$2,663.75
TOTAL	\$36,553.61

Expenditures

Office Management	\$8,850.00
Newsletters	\$3,350.00
Maintenance and Repairs	\$318.00
Litter Removal and Port-o-let	\$2,345.45
Post Office	\$862.08
Telephone	\$111.15
Special Projects	\$-
Special Events	\$-
Prairie Restoration (Contract)	\$13,593.00
Sign Replacement	\$-
Scout Projects	\$-
Printing (including maps)	\$1,091.45
Merchandise For Sale	\$-
Donations	\$-
Travel/ Board Expenses	\$101.24
Legal and Consulting	\$7,177.96
Office Supplies, etc.	\$14.04
Dues and Subscriptions	\$-
Insurance	\$1,697.00
Web Page Maintenance	\$600.00
Government and Service Fees	\$25.00
Miscellaneous (PayPal)	\$366.42
TOTAL	\$40,502.79

Cash Balance, October 31, 2018

Checking - Chase	\$8,727.30
High Yield Savings	\$50,207.83
Office Manager's Account	\$-
Petty Cash	\$-
Community Bank	\$37,509.00
Pomerance Trust - Principal \$63020.24	\$66,748.38
TOTAL	\$163,192.51



(This is the top of the Path's anniversary cake)

The Illinois Prairie Path is in its 55th year of volunteer-based advocacy and support. Special thanks to all who attended the annual meeting, including:

- **Rob Sperl**, IPPC Treasurer, who was the Emcee
- and these Legacy Volunteers and Advocates who have been involved with the Path for decades: **Sophia and Jim Abenante, Keith Olson, Larry Sheaffer, Connie and Michael Schmidt, Susie Terwedow and Don Westlake**

Thanks for supporting the Path!

Your membership fees and donations help the Path provide the services and amenities listed in the **IPPC Treasurer's Report Fiscal Year 2018** report.

NEW MEMBERS 4th QUARTER

James & Sophia Abenante – Elmhurst
 Jeffrey Miller – Wheaton
 Jack Van Dyke – Lombard
 Robert Schubert – Naperville
 Tom Deal – Crystal Lake
 Dave & Priscilla Sims – West Chicago
 Margaret Mullins – Aspen, CO
 Kimberly Wade – Bartlett
 Valerie DeMarco - Wheaton
 Thomas Collis – Oak Park

Donors

Michael Knap
 Jacquie Fritz
 Janet Paluga

Bicycling, Nature, and Healing

by Mike Sinner



One summer day in the early 70's, a bunch of us middle school kids from our Far North Side neighborhood decided to ride our bikes (without parents!) from home to the Hancock Center via the Lakefront Path. That day was such a thrill, made even more memorable by a strong thunderstorm that swept in a few miles before reaching home.

What really turned me on to bicycling, however, were the daylong trips with high school friends along the North Branch Trail, which though still in the early stages of development, ran through forest preserves. These natural areas absolutely captivated me with their beauty and wonders. Bicycling and nature...a glorious combination I fell in love with and have never relinquished. To this day, my Dad and I (often with a handful of others in the extended family) recall very fond memories of adventures enjoyed while bicycling the "rails-to-trails" (including the Illinois Prairie Path) of Illinois and Wisconsin in years past.

I'd always find time to enjoy such outings to the tune of about 1,500 miles each year, when at age 33, I was diagnosed with Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma. After completing a 9 month long regimen of chemotherapy, surgery and finally radiation to my chest, I asked my Radiation Oncologist what I could do to help reduce the risk of recurrence, which was estimated at about 50%. He told me that aerobic exercise would help keep the lymph system strong, and he suggested that I take up running. But before I could say anything, he looked at me and said "well, you're a pretty big guy (6'3", 240 pounds) ...maybe do you like bicycling?" Without hesitation I said "Doctor, you'll never have to ask me that again."

Now it was bicycling, and nature, and healing...and this even more glorious combination became an even greater passion. Along the way it wove an environmental ethic into my soul and wonderful friends into my life, and my bicycling grew to 6,000 miles annually. It wasn't until about 10 years ago that I grew comfortable with bicycle commuting to work, and now use public transportation solely for exceptionally cold or snowy days (but I miss reading or talking with other commuters on the bus).

When a fluttering heart and related symptoms lead me to a cardiologist in 2014, I was quickly diagnosed with radiation-induced premature coronary artery disease (a then-necessary risk from the cancer treatments 20 years earlier), and, with major blockages, was scheduled for a triple bypass. At my first

visit for a 2nd opinion, the cardiologist, noticing my helmet in the exam room, was concerned enough with the fact that I had bicycled the 9 miles to her appointment that she told me to put my bike on the bus and once home, to lock it up until 6 months post-surgery. Surgery went fine, and while still in the ICU the nurse told me that my first post-op bloodwork indicated that I must be a very active guy...I'll never forget how that statement made me feel.

Although my post-operative heart function was well below the normal range, I begged my heart team to allow me back on the bike before giving my radiation-weakened (and surgically broken) breastbone time to regain full strength. With summer fading, they finally acquiesced as long as I'd promise to ride carefully. My second ride, about 13 weeks after the bypass, was a delightful 65-mile ride on the last weekend of summer...it moved me to tears. My post-surgical heart function has since improved from an ejection fraction of 35 to 56. My cardiologist strongly recommends I keep up with the bicycling. It's as great for my soul as it is for my body, and it's easy on the wallet, the environment and the infrastructure---what's not to love? Whenever Bill (my bike mechanic and friend of almost 40 years) presents me with an estimate for work needed, my stock reply is "it's in the budget..." Whether it's the fitness budget, the recreation budget, or the transportation budget (I don't own a car by choice), I'll happily spend it on the bicycles. To date I've bicycled over 145,000 miles, including a 500 mile trip in Alaska, a ride across New York State from Buffalo to Albany and then to New York City, and a journey from Pittsburgh to Washington D.C.-- and maybe the best of all, in August 2017 to see the Total Eclipse in its amazing splendor while on the KATY Trail in Missouri.

Having discovered a bicycle-friendly route from my home to the IPP (about 18 miles) in 1999, I've grown very fond of the IPP and Great Western Trail network. I keep records of all my trips, and can tell you that I've visited the IPP 342 times in these ensuing years. Twenty years, making friends--and loving the events, communities and festivals-- along the way... most memorably a day in April 2008 with an incessantly fierce headwind when I biked to West Chicago for the IPP Earth Day cleanup in the morning, and continued via the Great Western Trail in Kane and DeKalb Counties to my niece's wedding in DeKalb that afternoon (okay, I confess that my wedding clothes were brought to the chapel by relatives).

I've bicycled to the annual meeting each year since 2007. Because the trail is an important part of my life, I want to help protect it from abuse and overdevelopment, and want it to continue being a loved and protected treasure for this and future generations. Note to parents, grandparents, aunts & uncles: bring the kids along for your trail experience--I cannot think of a more wholesome way to spend a day. I've come to realize that trail users are by and large among the most thoughtful, mindful, public-minded and well-spoken people I know, and can't help but think that when a person surrounds oneself with such fine people, some of their goodness is bound to rub off.