

CMAP Process for addressing Developments of Regional Importance

Assessing the impacts and providing planning guidance on Developments of Regional Importance (DRIs) is a new element to the work program of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP). The preceding regional planning agencies had occasional involvement in regionally significant land use or economic development proposals in addition to including major capital transportation improvements in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). But CMAP's DRI process provides a new opportunity for regional partners to more comprehensively assess the regional implications of large-scale development proposals, reconcile regional priorities associated with these proposals and coordinate independent actions in support of regional goals.

A systematic process for examining DRIs is useful to those seeking to improve intergovernmental coordination; often seen as key to successful regional planning. Conversely, an entirely "automatic" process risks irrelevance by generating too much information outside the legitimate regional interests at stake. With these considerations, CMAP and its partners and stakeholders are developing a meaningful review process for examining DRIs.

In developing a CMAP process for addressing DRIs, the enabling legislation and content of CMAP's Strategic Report should be considered. In addition, the relationship between DRIs and the major policy, operational and capital recommendations that will appear in the GO TO 2040 Plan, the region's comprehensive plan currently under development, should be coordinated.

Background

The value of assessing and evaluating major land use and transportation proposals at the regional level is well recognized. Large-scale development proposals have the possibility of introducing widespread primary and secondary impacts to the daily activities of significant numbers of people. Examining these impacts at the regional level offers the potential to help improve a proposal through coordinated actions among affected jurisdictions.

Legislation

The Illinois Legislature specifically enabled¹ CMAP's function in this area:

Sec. 47. Developments of Regional Importance. The Board shall consider the regional and intergovernmental impacts of proposed major developments, infrastructure investments and major policies and actions by public and private entities on natural resources, neighboring communities, and residents. The Board shall:

¹ Illinois General Assembly, Public Act 095-0677.

(a) Define the Scope of Developments of Regional Importance (DRI) and create an efficient process for reviewing them.

(b) Require any DRI project sponsor, which can be either a public or private entity, to submit information about the proposed DRI to CMAP and neighboring communities, counties, and regional planning and transportation agencies for review.

(c) Review and comment on a proposed DRI regarding consistency with regional plans and intergovernmental and regional impacts.

Strategic Report

The CMAP Board, in its first year of operation, established a Strategic Report for the agency that included six areas of planning inquiry:

- Land Use
- Transportation
- Economic and Community Development
- Environment and Natural Resources
- Housing
- Human Services

These topics establish the parameters within which CMAP will conduct its DRI evaluations.

Relationship to Regional Comprehensive Plan recommendations

CMAP is preparing GO TO 2040, the region's first comprehensive plan, scheduled for adoption in 2010. A significant part of the plan development work involves identifying, analyzing and evaluating proposals for large-scale land use development and public infrastructure investment. These proposals are evaluated in the context of thematic regional scenarios that couple the proposals with strategies that define the coordinated policy actions needed to ensure desired regional outcomes and efficient investment of public capital resources.

There is a significant overlap between a proposed DRI and the proposals being considered for inclusion in the comprehensive plan. Efficiencies may be gained by establishing the DRI evaluation process as the entry point for inclusion in the RCP.

Identifying a potential DRI

The criteria and thresholds for identifying DRIs and determining what constitutes a regional scale has been the focus of a number of meetings, however no consensus has

been achieved. Staff suggests that this should be revisited when the larger Task Force is convened.

DRI Screening

Three successive decision tiers are proposed by which CMAP can efficiently evaluate and advise on a potential DRI. This screening process occurs when the CMAP Board (or designated Coordinating Committee) considers the question of a proposed development's regional importance and whether CMAP's involvement is appropriate.

Tier 1: Is the proposed development subject to a planning process that permits formal multi-jurisdictional coordination and public involvement?

CMAP seeks to ensure that planning for large-scale regional developments include an opportunity for the formal involvement by all affected jurisdictions.

If Yes: Then this is a Tier 1 DRI. No further stand-alone DRI evaluation needs to be conducted. CMAP may ask for formal inclusion as a partner in the relevant planning process. CMAP may also recommend formal planning collaboration between jurisdictions likely to be affected by the proposed development.

Examples: This includes proposals currently handled through the FPA and RTP process. It also includes any proposal that is subjected to the NEPA process. Recommendations may also include the formation of a sub-regional or corridor planning council to resolve planning concerns at the appropriate scale.

If No: Then proceed to Tier 2 DRI disposition.

Tier 2: Does the proposed development include certain context-dependent development characteristics?²

CMAP seeks to influence proposals with characteristics that, by their nature, engender discussions of regional land use patterns and transportation system performance. An initial *qualitative* consideration of development characteristics will establish consensus on whether the proposal is likely to:

- a. Significantly change prevailing development density. Examples include large new developments that might place unexpected burdens on water, sewer, storm water and local road systems.
- b. Significantly affect operations on a regional transportation facility. Examples include major commercial, industrial or warehousing developments sited for convenient access to expressways and tollways.
- c. Significantly change existing land use patterns. Examples include substantial conversion between agricultural, residential, commercial and/or industrial uses.
- d. Affect the function or performance of a planned or existing public investment.

² Tier 2 is similar to the NEPA scoping process.

If No: Then this is a Tier II DRI. No further stand-alone DRI evaluation is needed. The CMAP Board may choose to take an official position on the proposed development based on this qualitative assessment. This may take the form of a board resolution on the subject or some other appropriate public comment mechanism.

If Yes: Then proceed to Tier 3 DRI disposition.

***Tier 3: Will the proposed development have measurable regional impacts?*³**

CMAP seeks to ensure that sufficient technical information exists to conduct a robust analysis and objective evaluation of the transportation and land use effects of a proposed development believed to have measurable regional impacts.

To facilitate this determination, an Outline Regional Impact Assessment (ORIA) will be drafted by CMAP staff. The ORIA will establish an organized approach to gathering, interpreting and processing quantitative information.

Each ORIA will be organized as follows:

1. A project “literature-review” documenting the proposal’s history and background, a bibliography of relevant documents and previous public decisions.
2. An assessment of the likely comprehensive planning implications that emerged from Tier 2 consideration. This assessment should clarify those anticipated outcomes that can be subjected to further quantitative measurement if needed.
3. The results of an initial search for data resources that can be systematically analyzed in order to conduct the proposed impact measurements. This step will also reveal any new data collection needed to adequately assess the proposal’s impact.

If Yes: recommend that the project sponsor **conduct a Full Regional Impact Analysis (FRIA)** with the intention of substantiating the hypothesized regional impacts appearing in the ORIA. The recommendation should include an estimate of appropriate time and resources needed to complete an analysis that would satisfy CMAP’s desire to understand the proposals regional impact.

Once the completed FRIA is reviewed, the CMAP Board will consider the proposal’s consistency with existing regional plans and if necessary, recommend appropriate additional or remedial planning steps.

If No: Conclude that the proposed development has **no significant regional impact**.

³ Tier 3 is similar to the NEPA environmental assessment (EA) process.

Appendix: Examples of existing DRIs supplied by participants

Aurora Outlet Mall

Aurora Outlet Mall in Illinois is 45 minutes west of Chicago, just off of I-88 on Farnsworth Avenue North. It's located in the northeast quadrant of the East-West Tollway and North Farnsworth Ave.



Suggested by Mark Avery

“density, land use and traffic congestion”

Physical Planning measures

- Floor: Area ratio
- Number of parking spaces

Economic and Community Development measures

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Environmental Stewardship measures

Suggested by Hugh O'Hara

“The size and scope of this project. Not only is there a massive intermodal facility there, but the tall grass prairie limits the types of transportation facilities that can be constructed in that area.”

Suggested by John Greuling

“Project included massive environmental remediation, extensive road and utility infrastructure and regional land use and transportation impacts.”

Physical Planning measures

- Total land area
- Miles of new road
- Miles of new utilities

Economic and Community Development measures

- Number of Industry Classifications

Environmental Stewardship measures

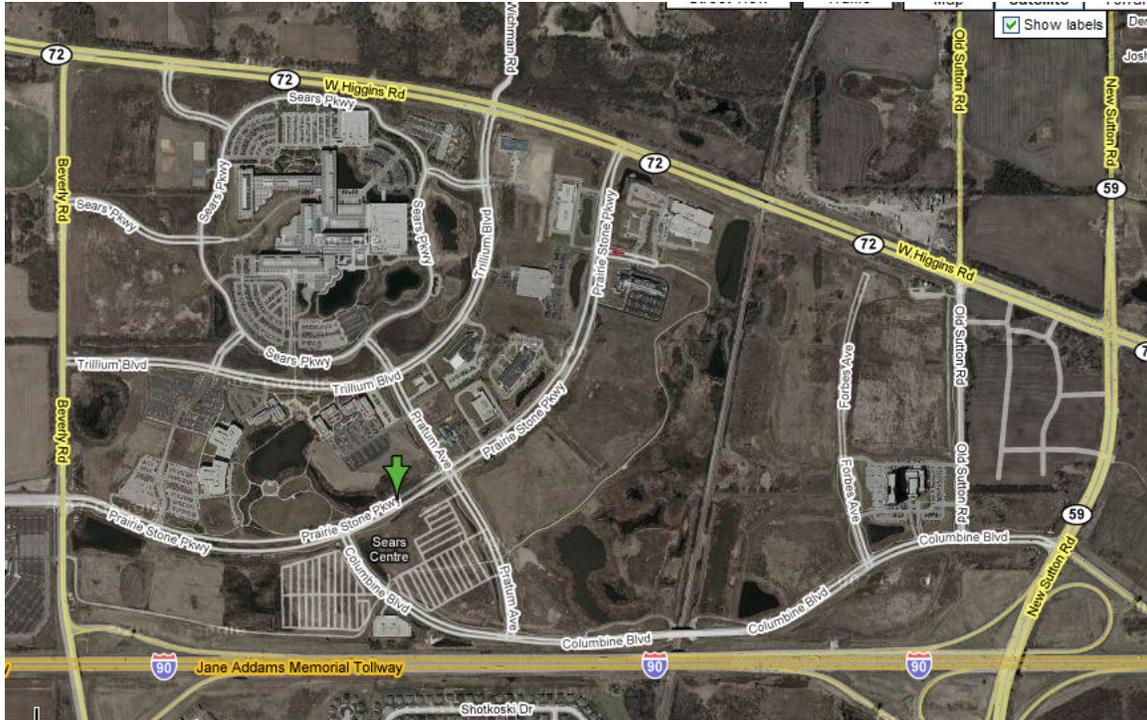
- Acres under protection
- Cost of environmental remediation

Is this a DRI? Task Force Discussion 4/4/08:

Yes. In this case, the DRI designation would have preceded an elaborate process. Truck traffic is the most noticeable impact on existing infrastructure. There is definitely an economic impact on the region, but “number of industry classifications” is too abstract as criteria. The amount of open space preserved is also significant to its regional importance.

Sears HQ relocation to Hoffman Estates

Located at I-90 and Route 59, just twenty minutes from O'Hare Airport, and surrounded by forest preserve, Prairie Stone is a 780 acre master planned business park.



Suggested by Dave Seglin

“The relocation of the Sears headquarters to Hoffman Estates created a mode shift among Sears employees from public transportation to single occupant vehicles – the exact opposite of what this region is trying to accomplish. Prior to the move upwards of 90% of Sears employees took public transportation. After the move that number dropped to around 5%. Additionally, the relocation spurred other companies to locate in the same area creating a need for expanded roadways, increased water and sewer capacity and the development of other infrastructure. Funding for these improvements would have been better spent on other regional needs.”

Physical Planning measures

- Public Transit Level of Service
- Public water capacity
- Public sewer capacity

Economic and Community Development measures

- Number of secondary firms generated

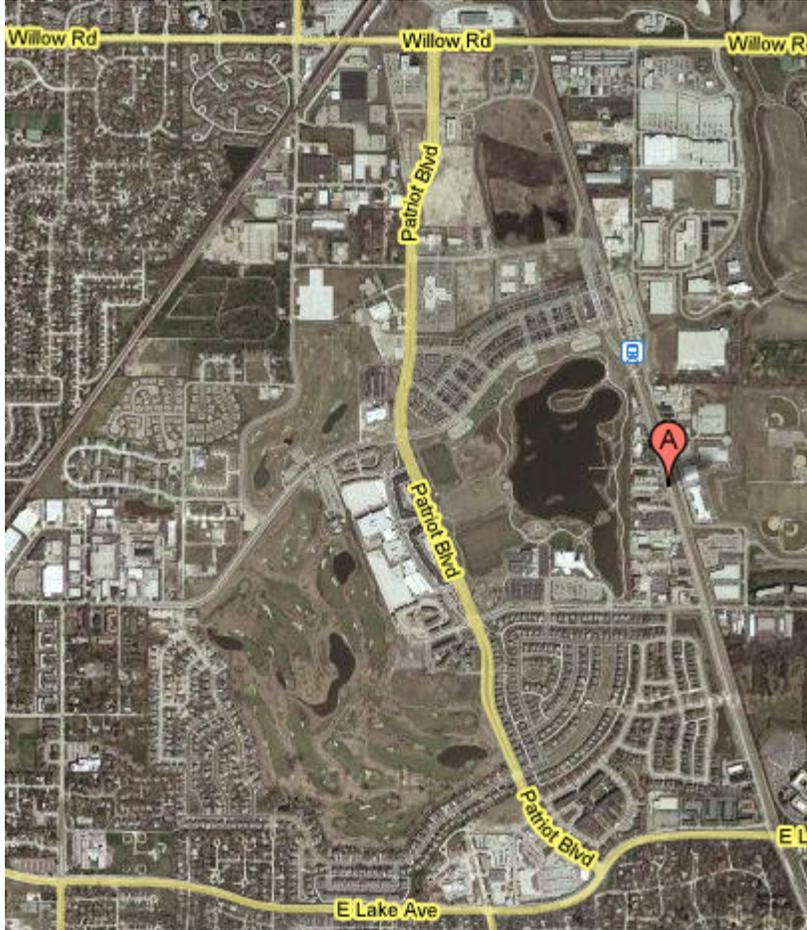
Environmental Stewardship measures

Is this a DRI? Task Force Discussion 4/4/08:

Yes. It was the stated intent of the project to be regional in scale.

Glenview Naval Air Station conversion

Naval Air Station Glenview was an operational U.S. Naval Air Station from 1923 to 1995. The former air base has now been redeveloped into a residential subdivision and commercial area called The Glen, although the control tower has been preserved as a historic building.



Suggested by Dave Seglin

“At 1,121 acres, the redevelopment of the former naval airbase into a mixed-use development had a significant impact on transportation, water and sewer infrastructure and the general development of the north shore area.”

Physical Planning measures

- Total land area
- Population
- Employment

Economic and Community Development measures

- Existing land use
- Proposed land use

Environmental Stewardship measures

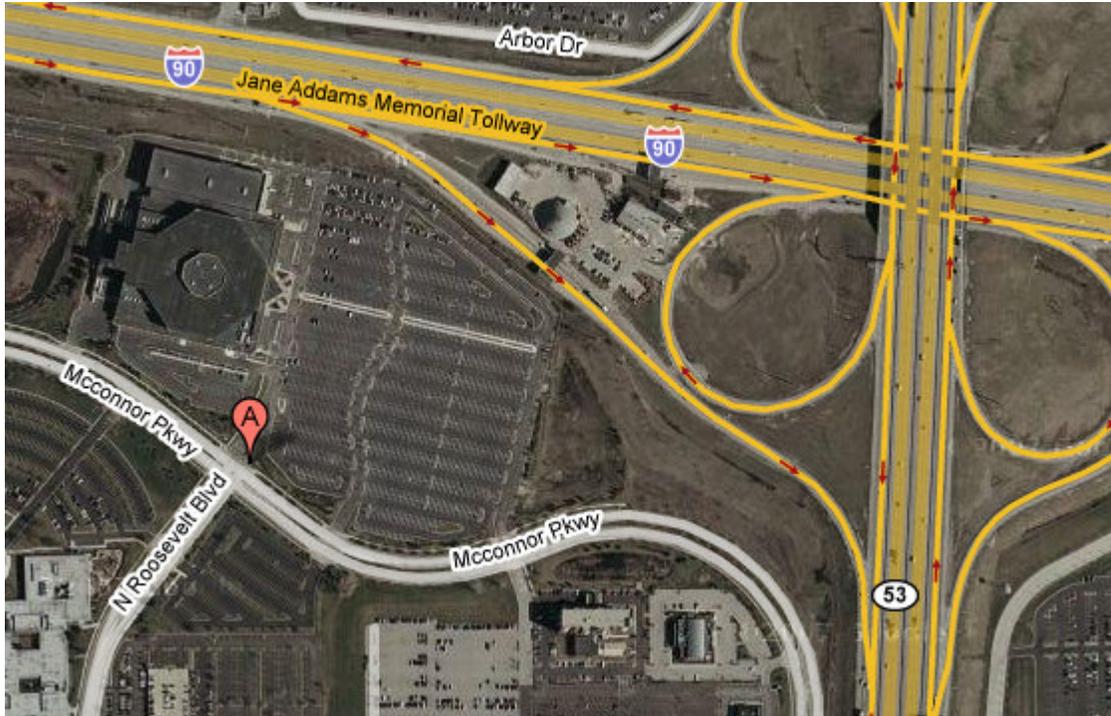
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Is this a DRI? Task Force Discussion 4/4/08:

Yes. It went from public to private ownership.

IKEA

E. McConnor Parkway, Schaumburg, IL



Suggested by Mike Walczak:

“Large commercial development with transportation impacts.”

Physical Planning measures

- Commercial floor space
- Parking spaces

Economic and Community Development measures

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Environmental Stewardship measures

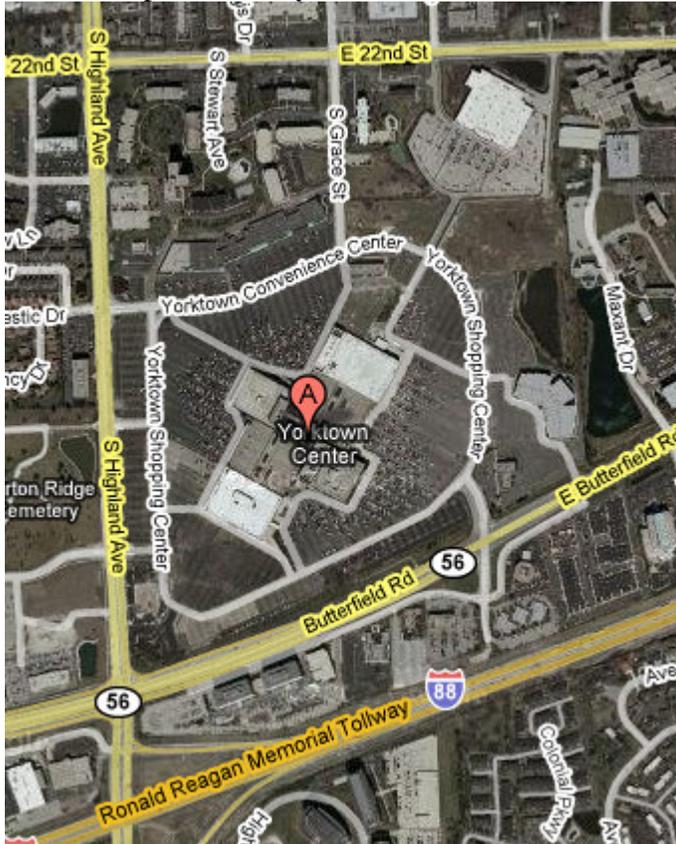
Is this a DRI? Task Force Discussion 4/4/08:

No consensus.

Yorktown Center

“The Shops on Butterfield at Yorktown Center introduces a sophisticated, outdoor shopping atmosphere to this already fantastic retail destination. Some of the finest

shopping and dining is available to our guests in an upscale, open-air environment. All of this is complimented by a four-star, 500 room Westin Hotel and Convention Center. “



Suggested by Tam Kutzmark

“This is **not** a DRI. Although it is the lynchpin of a multi-use plan for residential / commercial / facility development, generated significant job growth in the Butterfield Corridor, and spurred major improvements to transit service and road infrastructure, **the impacts are sub-regional in nature.**”

Physical Planning measures

- Maximum occupancy
- Number of parking spaces

Economic and Community Development measures

- Convention Center Use days per year

Environmental Stewardship measures

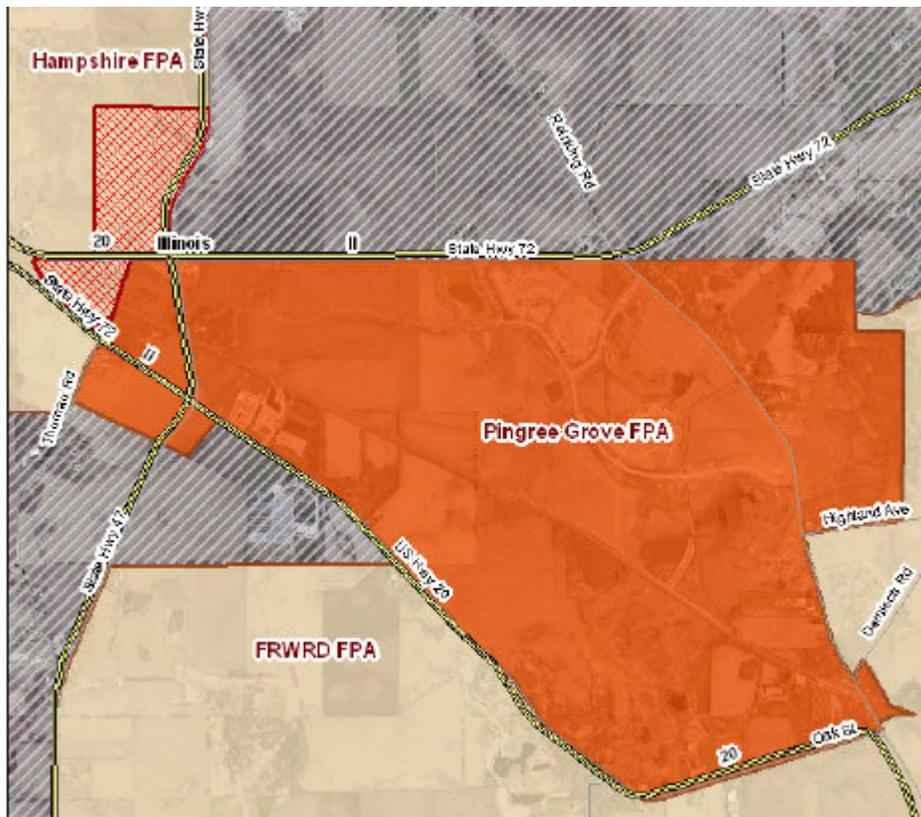
Is this a DRI? Task Force Discussion 4/4/08:

No.

Major FPA Boundary Changes

NIPC 2004: “Village of Pingree Grove amendment request for the transfer of 3,875 acres of nonFPA area into the Pingree Grove FPA and the construction of a 2.0 mgd. land treatment system.”

CMAP 2008: “The Village of Pingree Grove has requested an amendment of state and areawide water quality management plans to reflect the transfer of 133 acres of land from the Hampshire FPA into the Pingree Grove FPA. The Village has recently annexed and zoned the subject parcels into its Comprehensive Planning Area and the amendment area would receive wastewater treatment service from the Village’s wastewater treatment plant.”



Suggested by Heidi Files

“As an example of the cumulative impacts on transportation, sewer, stormwater, housing types, education, employment, etc.”

Physical Planning measures

- Acres of FPA jurisdiction transferred

Economic and Community Development measures

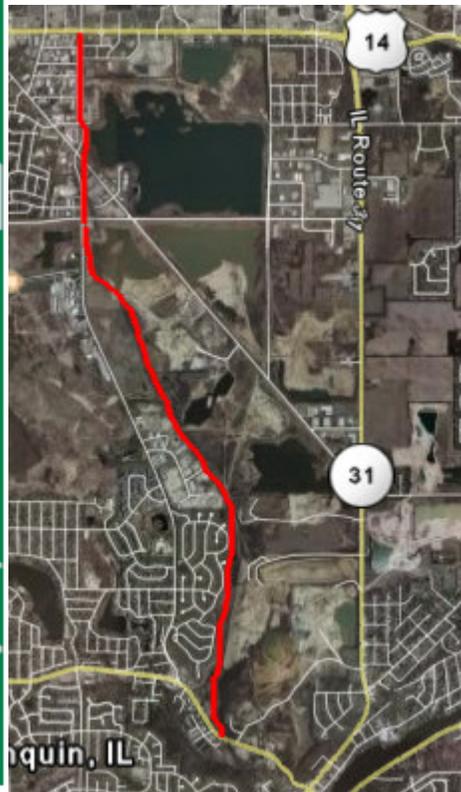
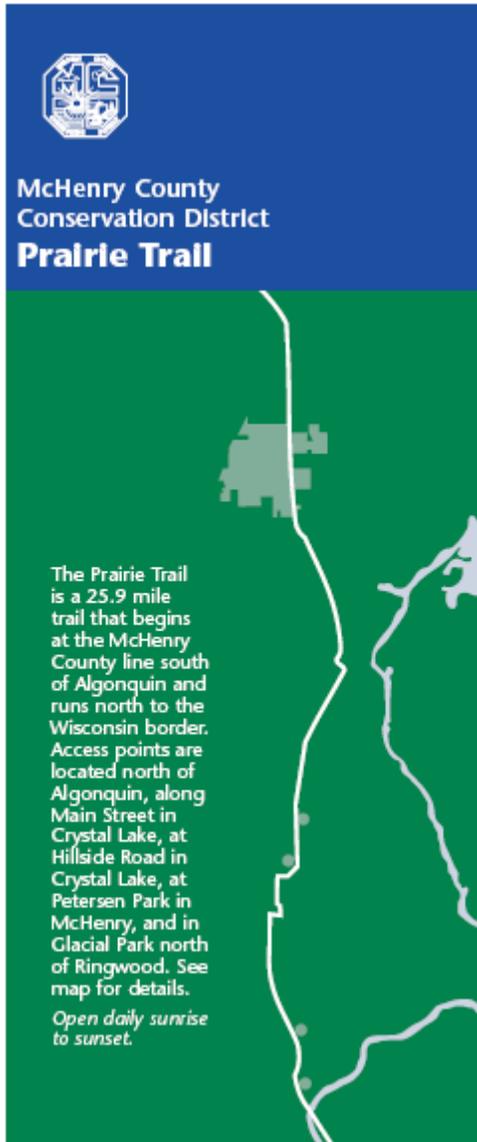
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Environmental Stewardship measures

Is this a DRI? Task Force Discussion 4/4/08:

Yes.

Conversion of any railroad to a bike trail



Suggested by Jason Osborn

“In McHenry County the conversion of railroads through gravel pits to create the Prairie Trail without considering the future damage to the region's highways was short-sighted.”

Physical Planning measures

- Volume of traffic diverted.

Economic and Community Development measures

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Environmental Stewardship measures

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Is this a DRI? Task Force Discussion 4/4/08:

Yes.