



MEMORANDUM

To: Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force

From: Tom Murtha

Date: June 12, 2014

Re: Regional Greenways and Trails Plan (RGTP) Implementation

Greenways and Trails

1.1. Northeastern Illinois Regional Greenways and Trails Plan

CMAA coordinates planning for trails and greenways in the region. The officially adopted Northeastern Illinois Greenways and Trails Plan is a long-range, multi-jurisdictional plan which envisions a network of trails and greenways across northeastern Illinois. The plan includes conceptual alignments along with existing greenways and trails. The plan is used extensively by local and county governments, trail users, environmental agencies and organizations, and corridor councils. The map and plan serve as a basis for planning and programming funding for greenways and trails, as a framework and guide for making connections between communities and other greenways and trails, and as a consideration in major infrastructure investment decisions.

1.2. Implementation Status

Regional Trails Implementation

Implementation of the trails element of the Northeastern Illinois Regional Greenways and Trails Plan continues. The table below shows the status of the trails element implementation for 2013 and for 2009, when the plan was last updated. The table shows that nearly 1,100 miles of the envisioned system of nearly 2,700 miles of regional trails have been completed.

Regional Trails Implementation, 2009-2012

County	Total System Miles (Existing Plus Proposed, as of 2013)	Existing Trails System Miles, 2009	Existing Trails System Miles, 2013	Percent of Regional Trails Element Complete, 2009	Percent of Regional Trails Element Complete, 2013
Cook	738.98	294.31	310.04	39.8%	42.0%
DuPage	278.10	192.48	207.12	69.2%	74.5%
Grundy (Part)	11.91	8.99	8.99	75.4%	75.4%
Kane	379.23	146.02	150.50	37.4%	39.7%
Kendall	239.68	17.34	18.43	7.2%	7.7%
Lake	351.81	157.55	178.87	45.0%	50.8%
McHenry	201.30	60.37	65.14	31.3%	32.4%
Will	509.54	121.32	155.82	23.8%	30.6%
Total	2,710.54	998.37	1,094.90	36.8%	40.4%

Source: CMAP.

Note: Projects on the Illinois Department of Transportation's Notices of Letting through April, 2013 (typically to begin construction in 2013) are tallied as "existing" for this purpose. In Grundy County, only Aux Sable Township is included in the Chicago Metropolitan Planning Area and in the Northeastern Illinois Greenways and Trails Plan.

Among the seven counties wholly within the Chicago metropolitan planning area, DuPage County leads in trails element implementation with 74.5% completion. Over the past three years, Will County has completed the largest amount of new miles, with nearly 35 miles of new trails completed. Lake County completed more than 18 miles over the same period, and is the second county to achieve over 50% completion of the trails element of the plan.

Between 2009 and 2013, about 95 miles of the regional trails were constructed or let for bid. As of April, 2013, an additional 87 miles of trails are programmed for future year funding. That is, these trails have funding commitments and are in various stages of preliminary engineering, with construction expected in the next several years. Regional trails are eligible for a variety of fund sources, including the [Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program](#) and the [Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement \(CMAQ\) Program](#). While trails often have recreational uses, data also indicates a substantial transportation use for many trails. Of the 24 bicycle facility projects selected for FY 2012-2016 CMAQ Program funding, 15 were for projects included in the trails element of the Regional Greenways and Trails Plan.

Greenways Implementation

Approximately half of the trail mileage in the Regional Greenways and Trails Plan are on greenway corridors. Of the 1,355 miles of system trail on greenways, 731 (54%) have been completed. An additional 59 miles have been programmed, and are likely to be constructed by 2015. Thus, by 2015, 790 miles of greenway trails are likely to have been constructed. The target identified in the [Parks and Open Space](#) chapter of GO TO 2040 (p. 124) is 808 miles.