

Mayor's Bicycle Advisory Council, June 2009

Breakout Session: Off-street Trails

Led by Keith Privett (CDOT) and Chris Gent (Chicago Park District)

Wednesday, June 17, 2009 at Daley Bicentennial Plaza Fieldhouse

Prepared by Matt Villanueva

Session 1

- Introductions
 - Blake (first time attendee) Reader
 - Michael (Active Trans member) Scribe
- Open Discussion and Recommendations by group
 - Recommend extra signage for learning or novice riders on bike trails
 - Everyone agrees that the trail maintenance, especially the Lake front trail is up to par.
 - The geometry of the Oak street trail could be better and leveled.
 - Extra lighting and lights that could help with congestions especially on the lake front trail.
- Keith's Questions
 - **Who and what are the uses of the off-street trails?**
 - Recreation, Tourists, kids, families, people training, jogger and roller bladders etc...
 - **Why do people use the off-street trails?**
 - To avoid traffic and sometimes is safer than on-street bikeways. There is more reliable pavement. There are more things to enjoy on the trails and kids are safer on trails.
 - **What can be done to improve the trails?**
 - Look at the usage of runners and cyclists and use that information to design the trails to suit them. Adding more unpaved running paths next to the paved trails would provide better accessibility for runners and joggers and they're not in the way of cyclists.

Keith presents to the group a draft of new trails in the area. Four major trails will be connected.

Chris Gent shows his work in the Northeastern IL Greenways & Trails Plan, which consists of approximately 700 miles of proposed trails. There are currently 992 miles of existing trails.

Session 2

- Introductions
 - Chris Everson (first time attendee) Reader and Scribe
- Open Discussion and Recommendations by group
 - Lake front trail doesn't feel complete yet, there could be improvements
 - Everyone seemed happy with the Sauganash trail and its grade separation.

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- Lakefront Trail is too crowded on Saturdays with runners
 - More separation is needed between the two groups (bicyclists and runners)
 - Paved path segments need some improvements
 - Navy Pier “flyover” would be used a lot
 - The continuity of the North Shore channel between Peterson/ Lincoln is good.
 - There needs to be a nice East/West off-street trail
 - Signalization needed especially around 35th street where the park is located. There are plenty of kids running around. Creative signage might help attract more attention to cyclists.
 - The reason why some trails are not plowed during the winter is due to the lack of use, as well as certain group who like to ski on the trails in the winter. (Sauganash Trail)
- **Users of the trails?**
 - Cyclists both fast and slow, Walkers, runners, Children, wildlife, tourists and rollerblades
 - **Why do people use the off-street trails?**
 - Faster depending on time, more recreation, scenic with no trucks or buses.
 - **Connectivity?**
 - People suggested a design to trails 50 miles uninterrupted, interstate connection and more East/West trails

Keith showed the second group the proposed off-street trails. No additional questions were asked.