

Route 66 Trail Concept Plan



DRAFT REPORT
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Route 66 Trail
Concept Plan Outline

Foreword

Chapter 1- Introduction

Vision for the Route 66 Trail
Concept Plan Purpose
Goals and Objectives
Significance of Historic Route 66 in Illinois
Why a Route 66 Trail
Continuous and Connecting
Coordination with other Route 66 Initiatives
Partnership Effort
Benefits of the Route 66 Trail

Chapter 2- Route 66 Trail Current Facilities

Defining the Trail
On-Road Alignment
Off-Road Alignment
Local and Regional Trails
Trail Miles Overview
Regional Overview
Attractions and Services

Chapter 3- Trail Alignment by Region

Northern Illinois Region
Central Illinois Region
Southern Illinois Region

Chapter 4- Plan of Action for Future Trail Improvements

Plan of Action
Executive Council Role
Trail Promotion &Marketing

Appendices

FOREWORD
by
Route 66 Trail Executive Council Vice-Chairman Diane Banta

(to be included)

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Vision for the Route 66 Trail

Establish the Route 66 Trail as a world-class bicycling, recreational, and learning experience for Illinois residents and visitors.

Continuous from Chicago to St. Louis, available to and used by a variety of non-motorized travelers for both long-distance and local trips, the trail is on the historic Route 66 highway where possible and also on nearby off-road trails and local roads.

The non-motorized trail along the historic road provides more opportunities for visitors to Route 66 and residents of the communities along Route 66 to enjoy the unique resources and legacy of the road.

The vision will be achieved through the Route 66 Trail Executive Council, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and the many agencies, organizations, communities, and people of the Route 66 corridor in Illinois.

The trail is on its way between vision and reality. A trail alignment is established and a Route 66 Trail User's Guide is available. Signs on the trail, however, are only beginning to be erected.

Concept Plan Purpose

This concept plan serves as a source of information about the Route 66 Trail. The trail is described and characterized by segments, i.e., based on three regions and if it is on-road or follows an off-road trail. The trail's 438-mile distance is analyzed for current conditions and needed improvements. The plan therefore provides a framework for development of the trail, citing needs and offering recommendations. The recommendations can be used to direct decisions for trail actions on a statewide basis. Since trail development will be accomplished using a partnership approach, among state, regional, and local interests, the plan's recommendations will also be useful in making various trail development decisions.

The Route 66 Trail Concept Plan takes the initial trail alignment, identified in 2006, to the next level. This includes planning for improvements of specific on-road segments and also planning/fostering the development of off-road trails that can offer a more user-friendly trail.

This plan is intended as a general guide for the entire trail corridor, to improve awareness of the trail throughout the state. Local communities and partners in the trail are encouraged to use the plan to undertake development and management actions that best serve their areas, while keeping the overall vision of the trail. **The plan isn't a mandate but offers recommended actions.** To initiate and pursue the further development of the Route 66 Trail, a commitment within and between communities will be needed. It is expected the concept plan will be a tool for working together to make the trail a facility that benefits all of the partner communities.

As the concept plan is adopted and used to develop the trail further, the Route 66 Trail will gain greater public recognition as a unique recreational, tourism, and alternative transportation resource.

Goals and Objectives

Goal: Develop the Route 66 Trail

Objectives

Designate and improve a system of on-road and off-road trails and routes along Historic Route 66 from Chicago to St. Louis.

Designate routes that are as close to the historic road as feasible.

Designate routes that consider safety and provide for reasonable non-motorized use, and evaluate new trail segments and revisions in the trail for safety and suitability for average cyclists.

Connect the trail to tourism, recreational, and educational resources.

Goal: Move from Planning Stage to Implementation Stage

Objectives

Work with local officials to erect signs along the entire trail corridor, both off-road and on-road.

Promote the tourism, recreational, and educational aspects of the trail.

Construct new off-road trails.

Goal: Develop Local Trail Segments through Local Sponsorship

Objectives

Implement local trail development through local decision-makers, using the concept plan as a guide.

Keep flexibility in concept plan implementation, to give local decision-makers the ability to develop and change the trail as needed to best meet local needs and goals.

Significance of Historic Route 66 in Illinois

Route 66 is a classic piece of America's heritage. It has become "a widely recognized and admired contribution to mid-20th century cultural, economic, and social history... because of its role in demonstrating the value of hard roads for commerce, its use as a migration corridor, and its impact on the entrepreneurial dreams of those who provided services to people traveling the highway." (Historic Route 66 Corridor Study).

From 1926 to the 1950's, Route 66 was a "road to opportunity." One of the earliest hard roads, Route 66 offered Americans the powerful experience of motorized travel to places beyond their home towns. In the 1930's, people escaped the Depression, traveling Route 66 to opportunities in the West. In the 1940's, the highway was important for the movement of troops and supplies, and travel was made more efficient with construction of new four-lane bypasses around communities. After World War II, Route 66 glowed with the optimism of a country in an uplifting era, and the highway gained an even bigger reputation, through popular music and television, as a means of transforming people to new places and lifestyles.

The highway that crossed the State of Illinois from Chicago to St. Louis changed the state's landscape. Route 66 became an emblem of a nation in the midst of great change, and Illinois was the important gateway for travelers to America's West.

Route 66 in Illinois offers a wealth of Route 66 experiences. The famed highway begins in Chicago, blocks from Lake Michigan. It leaves Illinois via one of the longest pedestrian bridges in the world, the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge over the Mississippi River. Between Chicago and the Mississippi lie hundreds of miles of road, previously Illinois U.S. 66 and now signed as Historic Route Illinois U.S. 66, that remain active as part of the state's transportation network. Five sections of road are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Numerous historic buildings along the highway are also listed on the National Register.



Why a Route 66 Trail?

A trail adds a non-motorized experience to the established tourism possibilities of Route 66. The Route 66 Trail provides bicyclists and other recreationists a designated facility that is safe to travel and is a recognized, compatible feature of the highway corridor.

Most visitors to Route 66 want to experience the historic landscape of the highway and enjoy the Route 66 heritage that is alive and well today. This can be an even more personally rewarding experience when accomplished by bicycle or other non-motorized means. While much of the historic highway is usable for bicycling, and many people, especially international visitors, have been riding Route 66 for a long time, establishing a trail creates a defined and safer riding environment. Where traffic or other Route 66 road conditions are undesirable, the trail follows nearby local roads and off-road trails,

as close to the historic highway as possible.

A trail offers a new place for residents of communities along Route 66 to bicycle or walk for exercise close to home. The trail contributes to a community's health and livability.

The trail also makes a new connection from residential neighborhoods to the businesses that grew along Route 66, which in many cases re-shaped local business districts in an early example of highways influencing communities' growth.

It is expected that the Route 66 Trail will stimulate the development of new local trails all along the trail corridor, which will be an important contribution to the state's network of trails.

Illinois, by implementing a Route 66 Trail, becomes the first state to develop this very compatible feature for the Route 66 corridor. As Illinois is the beginning point for the eight-state highway, it is anticipated that Illinois will also lead the way in developing the first section of what will eventually become a national trail along the entire distance of Route 66.

The national scenic byway designation for Historic Route 66 – Illinois includes recreation as one of the primary intrinsic qualities of the byway. Establishing the Route 66 Trail is an important step in furthering the recreational activities of the byway.

Continuous and Connecting

The trail provides a continuous travel experience along the entire distance of historic Route 66 in Illinois, from Chicago to St. Louis, connecting with the communities and icons of Route 66. Large cities, small villages, and rural countryside provide a backdrop for the trail.

As the trail crosses eleven counties, it connects with the places and attractions that remain as links to the historic road. "The history of Route 66 and its impact on the culture of our country is most predominantly found in the structures that line it," (Historic Route 66 in Illinois National Scenic Byway Nomination). Filling stations, diners, and unique signs emerged along the highway to serve travelers on their journey. Original and restored structures are present along the entire trail distance.

Coordination with Other Route 66 Initiatives

Route 66 is a significant presence in American history, and Illinois has a strong interest in preserving and promoting the Route 66 legacy. There is a wealth of activity, both past and current, concerning Route 66. There have been assorted studies of Route 66 history; guides to visiting and experiencing Route 66; museums; motor tours in vintage vehicles; local festivals; restoration of buildings and highway structures; and tourism aimed at giving visitors a total experience. The Illinois Route 66 Association, a not-for-profit organization, is involved in a wide variety of activities. A noteworthy accomplishment is the 2005 designation of Route 66 in Illinois as a National Scenic Byway, with the Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project managing this effort.

The Route 66 Trail adds another dimension to these and other initiatives and coordinates efforts wherever possible.

Partnership Effort

The Route 66 Trail is a cooperative effort among the many communities and counties along the route. Also included are local and regional planning committees, forest preserve districts, economic development groups, tourism agencies, recreational organizations, businesses, heritage groups, and other organizations that anticipate benefits from the trail. All will be important in establishing the trail and contributing to its promotion and success.

Benefits of the Route 66 Trail

Safety

The Historic Route 66 Trail creates a safer bicycling environment along the Historic Route 66 highway, designating segments of the highway for non-motorized use and including more bicycle-friendly local roads and off-road recreational trails.

Education

A trail adds to the possibilities for education, raising awareness of the role of Route 66 in national, state, and local history.

Tourism

Tourism promotion, already significant for Route 66, will expand to include new experiences made possible by the trail, at the statewide, and community level, as well as a future national experience

Economic

The trail as a unique recreational and tourism destination will bring increased economic benefits to communities along the trail.

National Scenic Byway

The Route 66 Trail will contribute a recreation element to the Historic Route 66–Illinois National Scenic Byway.

Health

The trail will become a community facility, a place where local residents can bicycle, walk, or otherwise enjoy the trail and be active in the outdoors.

Connecting Communities

The trail will make connections between communities on Route 66 even stronger, providing a tangible feature that communities will become a part of by the common bond of Historic Route 66.

Link to Local Trail Systems

The trail links to trail systems of several communities, including Will County, Bloomington-Normal, Springfield, and Madison County, and will stimulate the development of additional trails.

Alternative Transportation

Road improvements and development of new trails increase opportunities for people to bicycle or walk as a means of transportation.

Trail or Route

Is the Route 66 Trail a trail or a route? It's both. Generally-accepted definition is that off-road linear bicycling facilities are known as trails and on-road bicycling facilities are called bikeways or routes. In the bigger sense of what a trail has come to mean, it's a connecting of places that share a common theme and similar characteristics, facilities, etc. A trail carries people from place to place.

The term bike route also applies. According to Illinois Department of Transportation policies on bicycle and pedestrian accommodations, when roadways are signed for bicycling use, they are bike routes. In this technical sense, the Route 66 Trail is also a bike route.

Because the trail goes beyond just bicycling on roads, the Route 66 Trail name was selected to convey the sense of going from place to place or community to community along the historic highway, in a non-motorized way.



CHAPTER 2: ROUTE 66 TRAIL CURRENT FACILITIES

Note: This chapter's description of the current trail make-up and mileage is based on the Route 66 Trail User's Guide, changes in the trail since the guide was issued, and information from the regional committees.

Defining the Trail

The Route 66 Trail is a 438-mile designated trail for non-motorized users along the historic Route 66 highway in Illinois. It is a combination of on-road and off-road routing, located on or as close to the historic highway as possible.

Approximately 89% of the Route 66 Trail is on-road, and 11% follows local off-road trails.

The trail includes the main trail from Chicago to St. Louis; a western alternate route which follows the 1926 highway along the southern end of the trail; with shortcuts; and cutoffs as defined below.

While the trail is available for a variety of non-motorized uses, bicyclists are the primary users. In defining the trail alignment, suitability for bicycling by average cyclists and by advanced cyclists has been considered. The foremost intent is that the trail will provide a safe and comfortable bicycling environment, and the trail often leaves the historic Route 66 road to use nearby local roads and off-road trails, where there is less or no motorized traffic to deal with. For bicyclists who are experienced riders in traffic, shortcuts have been designated at various locations along the trail. Shortcuts often are along I-55 frontage roads, which use the old Route 66 alignment. The shortcuts allow bicyclists to follow the signed Historic Route 66 more directly but require negotiating moderate traffic.

On-Road Alignment

On-road, the trail is aligned on:

- Selected segments of the signed Historic Route 66 highway that are suitable for non-motorized use
- Local roads that are near Route 66 but have less traffic

On-Road Segments

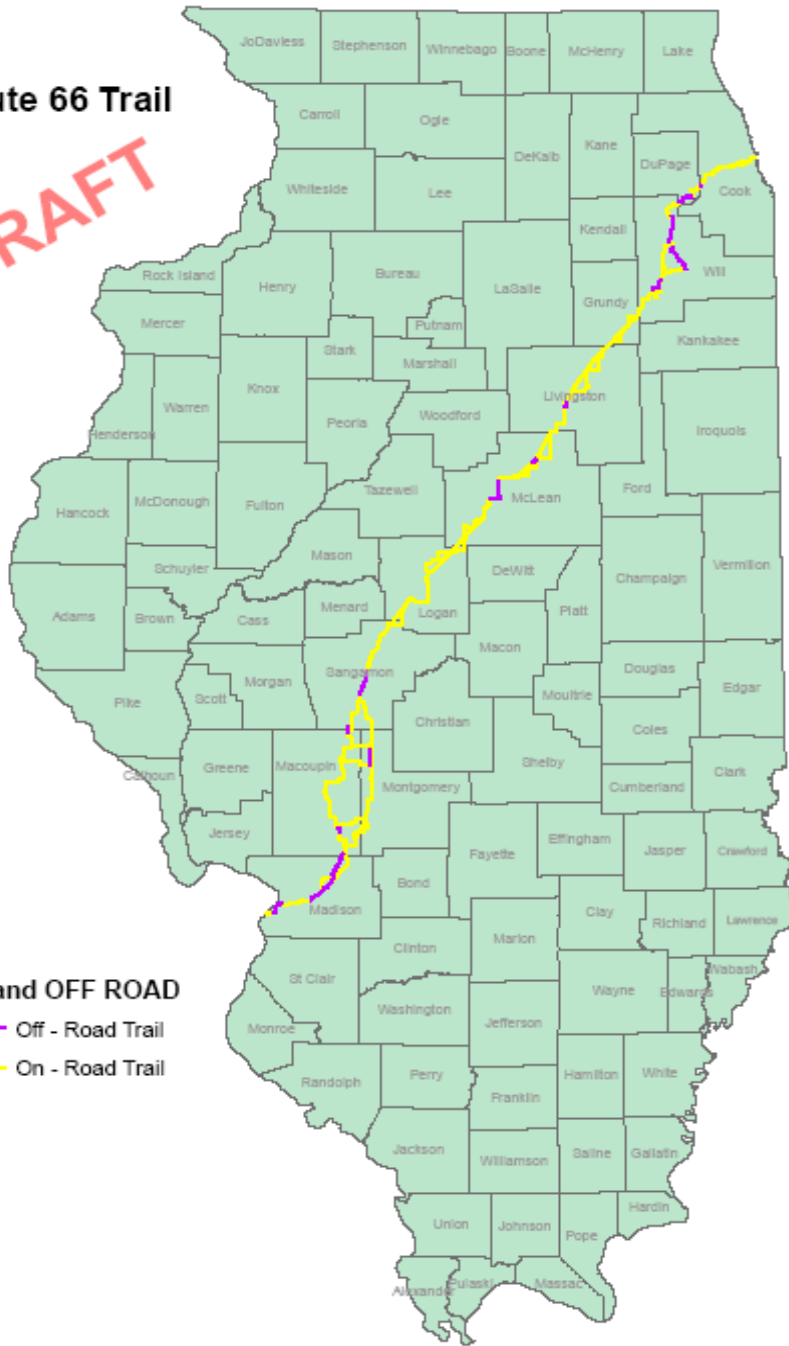
On-road segments are primarily shared-use, i.e., bicyclists travel in the same lane as motorized traffic. In selected areas the road has been improved and includes paved shoulders, of varying widths, but improved shoulders are limited and sporadic.

Route 66 Trail

DRAFT

ON and OFF ROAD

- Off - Road Trail
- On - Road Trail



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Designating the trail on segments of the Historic Route 66 highway was determined by the suitability of traffic levels, using the Illinois Department of Transportation average daily traffic (ADT) counts, both maximum and minimum. Where ADT's were determined to be too high, the trail was shifted onto nearby local roads more suitable for bicycling. Regional committees of the Route 66 Trail Executive Council were responsible for selecting appropriate local roads for inclusion in the trail. Local officials were consulted on decisions for aligning the trail in their jurisdictions.

Road Jurisdictions

Five governmental jurisdictions are responsible for management of the roads used for the trail:

- Illinois Department of Transportation Division of Highways
- Other State Agency
- County
- Municipality
- Township or Road District

Jurisdictions for the on-road trail are identified in the concept plan via mapping provided by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). Maps indicate the type of jurisdiction, according to trail segment. Trail segments are numerous and typically short, changing jurisdictions every few miles. Jurisdictions therefore resemble a patchwork over the trail's route.

The Route 66 Trail Executive Council will work with many road jurisdictions over the trail's 438 miles. Through the Council's regional committees, local jurisdictions will be identified, with the assistance of an IDOT database of road managers, which includes county engineers, township road commissioners, and municipal mayors. The regional committees will contact and work with the managers to erect trail signs; identify road improvements needed for the trail; and plan for and implement the improvements.

Off-Road Alignment

Off-road, the trail:

- Incorporates various multi-purpose non-motorized trails that provide comfortable traveling conditions
- Presents opportunities to experience the area from an off-road, often scenic perspective

An important feature of the Route 66 Trail is the inclusion of off-road recreational trails. Incorporating local and regional trails as part of the 438-mile long trail adds greatly to the variety of experiences possible over a long distance.

It is envisioned that as more off-road trails are developed they will be included, and the Route 66 Trail will become less a “mostly-on-road” trail and more a diverse collection of trail experiences that are close to or on the Historic Route 66 corridor.

Local & Regional Trails

The Route 66 Trail is aligned on existing off-road bicycle trails wherever possible. The trail becomes a part of local and regional trail systems, and likewise these trail systems extend and connect the Route 66 Trail to other locations and resources.

Sixty-two miles on thirteen off-road bicycle trails comprise eleven percent of the Route 66 Trail. These off-road trails are located throughout the Route 66 corridor and in eight of the eleven Route 66 Trail counties. Six are rail-trails, developed on former railroad corridors.

The following trails, in whole or in part, are used for the Route 66 Trail:

Waterfall Glen Trail – in DuPage County, Argonne National Laboratory, five miles in the Waterfall Glen Forest Preserve.

Centennial Trail – in Will County, Lockport-Joliet vicinity, eight miles of trail alongside the Des Plaines River.

Wauponsee Glacial Trail – in Will County, Joliet to Manhattan, eight miles.

Division Street Bike Trail – in Livingston County, Pontiac, one mile at the Rec-Plex.

Ollie and Dorothy Myers Trail – in McLean County, Lexington, one mile, on closed Route 66 lanes.

Constitution Trail – in McLean County, Normal, five miles, and Bloomington, two miles.

Interurban Trail – in Sangamon County, Springfield to Chatham, six miles.

Green Diamond Trail – in Montgomery County, Farmersville to Waggoner, four miles.

Worden-Staunton Trail – in Macoupin and Madison counties, Staunton to Worden, six miles.

Worden-Hamel Trail – in Madison County, Worden to Hamel, four miles.

Quercus Grove Trail – in Madison County, Hamel to Edwardsville, nine miles.

Confluence Trail – in Madison County, Granite City, along the Chain of Rocks Canal, four miles.

Benld-Gillespie Trail – in Macoupin County, on the Western Alternate Route, one of the oldest Illinois rail-trails, two miles.

Some of the trails are a part of regional trails systems that are in various stages of development. Other Route 66 Trail communities have recognized the importance of providing trails as alternative forms of transportation. Some of the more notable trails systems along or near the Route 66 Trail include: the Centennial Trail, a partnership of the forest preserve districts of Cook, DuPage, and Will counties, which when completed will run 20 miles along the Des Plaines River/I & M Canal corridor; diverse and connecting trail systems of the Cook, DuPage, and Will county forest

preserve districts; the Constitution Trail system of Bloomington-Normal, a central-city rail-trail that has extended throughout the community; and the Madison County trail system, extensive rail-trails that interconnect many communities in the St. Louis Metro East.

Trail Miles Overview

The Route 66 Trail is a 438-mile trail between Chicago and St. Louis. But it is much more than a single linear trail. It includes an alternate route, cutoffs connecting the main trail and alternate route, many designated shortcuts, and miscellaneous options.

Miles on the Route 66 Trail

On-road: 513 total miles

Main Trail: 323 miles

Western Alternate Route: 67 miles

Cutoffs: 26 miles

Shortcuts: 87 miles

Options: 10 miles

Off-road: 62 total miles

The Main Trail (369 miles) and Western Alternate (69 miles) combine on-road (minus cutoffs, shortcuts, & options) and off-road for a total 438 miles.

Regional Overview

The Route 66 Trail is divided into three regions: Northern, Central, and Southern.

Northern: 120 miles. Counties include: Cook, DuPage, Will, and Grundy.

Communities through which the trail passes include Chicago, Cicero, Berwyn, Riverside, Brookfield, LaGrange, Burr Ridge, Willowbrook, Woodridge, Bolingbrook, Romeoville, Lockport, Joliet, Manhattan, Elwood, Wilmington, Braidwood, Godley, Braceville, Gardner, and Dwight.



The trail begins in Chicago, at Michigan Avenue near the city's famous Buckingham Fountain, with Lake Michigan and the Chicago skyline providing a picturesque backdrop. Stretching west and south, the trail travels through cities and villages that celebrate Route 66 and their local histories. Various Route 66-era restaurants continue in operation and have original signs and displays. The trail incorporates three off-road trails: Waterfall Glen Trail, Centennial Trail, and Wauponsee Glacial Trail. The Route 66 Trail also connects with the I & M Canal State Park trail, Grand Illinois Trail, and American Discovery Trail.

Central: 118 miles. Counties include: Livingston, McLean, and Logan. Communities through which the trail passes include:

The central region includes the longest stretch of trail, across McLean County,



underway for improvement and development.

Southern: 124 miles Main Trail. 69 miles Western Route. Counties include: Sangamon, Macoupin, Montgomery, and Madison. Communities through which the trail passes include: Williamsville, Sherman, Springfield, Chatham, Divernon, Farmersville, Litchfield, Mt. Olive, Livingston, Hamel, and Edwardsville. On the Western Route communities include: Auburn, Virden, Girard, Nilwood, Carlinville, Gillespie, Benld, and Staunton.



The southern region offers the attractions of Springfield and a choice of dual routes for travel south. The alternate Western Route follows the oldest 1926-30 Route 66 alignment. Cutoffs connect the Western with the Main trail. The Old Chain of Rocks Bridge, one of the world's longest bicycling and pedestrian bridges, anchors the trail's southernmost end. Attractions in the southern region include authentic service stations w/ memorabilia, historic restaurants, sections of original Route 66 pavement, and small communities with rich ethnic heritage. The southern section of the trail includes numerous off-road trails, the Interurban Trail, Green Diamond Trail, Quercus Grove Trail, and Confluence Trail.

Attractions and Services

Route 66 heritage and tourism are motivations for many visitors to the Route 66 Trail, and the counties and communities along the trail offer a wealth of attractions related to the historic road. Trail visitors also have an interest in other amenities that are special to Route 66 communities, such as parks, downtown districts, shopping areas, and other historic sites.

Icons of Route 66 and other notable attractions include:

Northern Region: Buckingham Fountain – Chicago, Lou Mitchell's Restaurant – Chicago, Sears Tower – Chicago, Henry's Drive Inn – Cicero, Wolf's Head Inn – Indian Head Park, Dell Rhea's Chicken Basket – Willowbrook, White Fence Farm Restaurant – Romeoville, I & M Canal museum & settlement – Lockport, Midewin Tallgrass Prairie – Elwood, Gemini Giant at Launching Pad Drive-In – Wilmington, Polk-a-dot Drive-In – Braidwood, Riviera Roadhouse Restaurant – Braceville, 1906 two-cell City Jail – Gardner

Central Region: Ambler's-Becker's Marathon station – Dwight, Odell Station – Odell,– Pontiac, Meramec Caverns barn – northeast of Pontiac, Route 66 Hall of Fame and Museum and Old Log Cabin Inn – Pontiac, Memory Lane – Lexington, Route 66 geography exhibits – Towanda, Beer Nuts factory – Bloomington, Funks Grove Maple Sirup – Funk's Grove, Dixie Truck Stop – McLean, Bunyon Giant, wall mural, 66 park, library/museum – Atlanta, Pig Hip Restaurant – Broadwell.

Southern Region: Die Cast Auto Sales, Route 66 Dream Car Museum – Williamsville, Illinois State Fairgrounds, Shea's Gas Station/Museum, Lincoln's Tomb, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library & Museum, Illinois State Capitol & Museum, Lincoln's Home, Cozy Dog Drive-In – Springfield, The Railsplitter – Divernon, Our Lady of the Highways shrine – Waggoner, Skyview Drive-in Theater, Ariston Café – Litchfield, Mother Jones Monument, Soulsby's Shell station – Mt. Olive, Lewis & Clark Historic Site – Hartford, Old Chain of Rocks pedestrian/bicycling bridge – Mississippi River.

In addition to tourism destinations, trail visitors require assorted services, such as food, lodging, vehicle/transportation service, and more. Bicyclists, especially, need repair shops and services. All of these need to be noted as part of the inventory and planning process for the trail and its facilities.



CHAPTER 3: TRAIL ALIGNMENT BY REGION

The trail through each region – northern, central, and southern – is a mix of on-road and off-road segments. On-road trail is on the historic Route 66 highway where possible. Where traffic or road conditions for safe bicycle travel are a concern, the trail is aligned along nearby local roads, connecting back to Route 66 as much as possible. Off-road recreational trails close to Route 66 are used wherever they are available. Off-road trails give the Route 66 Trail an element of variety and additional safety.

Alignment of the trail along Historic Route 66, local roads, and off-road trails offers an interesting and always-changing experience to the trail visitor.

Counties and municipalities may in the future revise or change the alignment of the trail or proposed improvements contained in this concept plan, if later they find there is a better alternative, obstacles to the alignment, limited boundaries or cost concerns.

Northern Region

The recommended alignment for the northern section of the Route 66 Trail begins in downtown Chicago on a variety of on- road and off-road trail segments to the Village of Dwight. It is the intention to define the Route 66 Trail (alignment), using as many existing, planned and potential future off-road trails that are close (within several miles) to the original Route 66 road route. When off-road trail use is not available, on-road segments will be used to connect to the off-road trails. Some on-road segments may or will need various levels of improvements to safely accommodate cyclists as will some existing off-road trails. Future planned and potential new trail segments should be developed and built to safely accommodate all multi-recreational users.

General Route 66 Trail Description from Chicago to Dwight

The Route 66 Trail route is mostly on paved roads from Chicago through Cook County to the Village of Lyons. From here it will connect to the future planned expansion of the **Centennial Trail**. From the trail, the route is on paved roads until connecting to the **Waterfall Glen Trail** in DuPage County. Then again on paved roads connecting the future planned **Veterans Memorial Trail** near the Village of Lemont, and then onto the **I&M Canal** in Village of Lockport. The route is on paved streets and roads to and through the City of Joliet connecting to the **Wauponsee Trail**. From there south on several paved streets and roads until it connects to the **Midewin Trail System** south of Joliet. The route then proceeds onto paved streets, rural and frontage roads through Grundy County where it eventually connects to the central region portion of the Route 66 Trail route in the Village of Dwight in Livingston County.

COOK COUNTY

Chicago, Cicero and Berwyn

The trail heading west begins in downtown Chicago extending from the city on the following paved roads: Adams, Canal, Clinton, Jackson, Roosevelt, 21st Street, Leavitt, 25th Street, Kostner, Ogden, and /or 26th Street.

Lyons, Summit, Countryside, Hodgkins and Willow Springs

The trail extends west on Ogden Ave which could connect onto a existing trail path located at the corner of Ogden Ave and 39th Street. Leaving the south side of the path the Route 66 Trail can connect to a future planned side path on the north side of 47th street crossing over 47th street on the south side of the street and then connecting to the planned future expansion of the Centennial Trail along the DesPlaines River, through Countryside, Hogkins and Willow Springs.

DUPAGE COUNTY

Woodridge, Willowbrook

The Route 66 Trail is on the Centennial Trail heading west entering DuPage County. It intersects with 91st where it can connect to the Clarendon Hills Roadway Bikeway to the entrance to the Waterfall Glen Trail. Leaving the Waterfall Glen Trail connects to 101st then onto the Woodward Ave Trail. Then onto the International Parkway where it connects to the new planned Veterans Memorial Trail.

WILL COUNTY

Lockport, Joliet, Manhattan, Elwood, Braidwood

Leaving the Veterans Memorial Trail, the Route 66 Trail connects to the existing I&M State Trail heading south from Lemont to Joliet. In Joliet the Route 66 Trail will be on the following streets/roads. Columbia, Chicago, Clinton, Eastern Washington, Boulder, 2nd Ave, Rowell then connect to the Wauponsee Trail south of Joliet. From the Wauponsee trail then on roads to connect to the future expansion of the east side of the Midewin Trail System. Exiting the MidewinTrail system on the following roads, River, Kankakee, then on the future planned bike path through Wilmington. Existing Wilmington onto to W. Baltimore Street then onto Stripmine Road.

GRUNDY COUNTY

Braceville, Gardner, Dwight

Wilmington to Dwight on- road segment. Improvements will be needed from Hickory /Kankakee streets mostly with paved shoulders. Improvement extended south to the Old Route 66 (frontage road) and should include some re-surfacing as well as paved or expanded shoulders. The route alignment goes near or through the villages of

Braidwood, Godley, Braceville and Gardner to Dwight. Roads needing improvements: Braceville, Cherry Hill, IL Rt129/53, Center, Historic Old Rt 66 (Frontage Road), Goman, Sully and Brewster.

Central Region

General Route 66 Trail Description Central Region

The Central Region section of the Route 66 Trail extends from the northern county line in Livingston County near Dwight and continues to the southern county line in Logan County just south of Elkhart. Within the Central Region there are 114 miles that cross the three counties of Livingston, McLean, and Logan Counties running from north to south.

Livingston County: 32 miles. The proposed trail is a mix of county, township, municipal, and Historic Route 66 (state) roads. The proposed trail will be composed of 16 miles of Historic Route 66 road, and the other 16 miles will consist of municipal, township, and county roads.

- Grundy-Livingston county line south to Dwight: Historic Route 66, useable roadway, IDOT (state).
- Dwight to Rt. 47 & McNamara: Local streets, municipal
- McNamara to Wauponsie/Historic Rt. 66: Local streets, municipal
- Historic Rt. 66 to Odell: Historic Route 66, IDOT (state)
- Odell - Historic Route 66, municipal/township
- Historic Rt. 66 to Pontiac area: Historic Route 66, IDOT (state)
- Pontiac - Local streets, municipal, township
- Rec-Plex to 1500E: on roadway, township/county
- 1500E to 1100N: Roadway, township/road district
- 1100N to 1300E: Roadway, township/road district
- 1300E to 900N: Roadway, adjacent township/roadway district

McLean County: 48 miles. The proposed trail alignment is a combination of municipal, township, county, Historic Route 66 (state) road ways, and existing trails. The proposed alignment will have 28 miles on Historic Route 66. 10 miles will be on roadways, and the remaining 10 miles is existing trails.

- Chenoa to Lexington: Existing on Historic Route 66, municipal/IDOT (state)
Historic Route 66, IDOT (state)
- Lexington – Ollie & Dorothy Meyers Trail: Existing Historic Route 66, municipal
- Lexington to Towanda: Historic Route 66, IDOT (state)
- Towanda: Local streets, municipal, roadway, township/road district/county
- Normal/Bloomington: Constitution Trail, municipal (existing), Historic Route 66 is off road, IDOT (state)
- Bloomington (Six Points) to Funks Grove: Rural roadways, municipal/township,
Trail on road shoulders.
- Funks Grove to county line thru McLean: Historic Route 66, IDOT (state)

Logan County: 34 miles. The proposed trail alignment is a combination of municipal, township, county, and Historic Route 66 (state) roadways. The proposed alignment will have 19 miles that will be on Historic Route 66, 6 miles will be on roadways, and 9 miles on the old Interurban right of way.

- McLean-Logan county line towards Atlanta: Historic Route 66, IDOT (state)
- Atlanta: Historic Route 66, municipal/IDOT (state)
- Atlanta to north of Lincoln: Historic Route 66, IDOT (state)
- North of Lincoln: Roadways, township, county
- Lincoln: Roadway, county; local streets, municipal
- South to Broadwell: Interurban right of way, county
- South to Elkhart: Interurban right of way, county
- Elkhart to Logan-Sangamon county line: Historic Route 66, IDOT (state)

Southern Region

General Route 66 Trail Description Southern Region

The Southern Region section of the Route 66 Trail extends from Springfield on the north to the St. Louis Metro East area on the south, starting at the Sangamon County line, north of Springfield and Williamsville, and ending at the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge on the Mississippi River at Granite City. There are 128 miles of main trail and 69 miles of alternate route trail in the southern region.

SANGAMON COUNTY: 45 miles. The trail is a mix of county, township, state, and municipal roads. The Interurban Trail is used between Springfield and Chatham.

- Logan-Sangamon county line south to Williamsville: county roads.
- Williamsville to Sherman to Springfield: primarily on Historic Route 66
- Springfield: local streets to the Interurban Trail
- Interurban Trail to Chatham
- Chatham to Divernon: primarily township roads

MONTGOMERY COUNTY: 35 miles. Almost twenty miles of Historic Route 66 (I-55 frontage road) is used. The trail goes onto local streets in Litchfield, and township and county roads are used both north and south of Litchfield. The trail follows the Green Diamond Trail between Farmersville and Waggoner.

- Divernon to Farmersville: Historic Route 66
- Farmersville to Waggoner: Green Diamond Trail
- Waggoner to Litchfield: Historic Route 66, county and township roads
- Litchfield: local streets
- South of Litchfield: township and county roads

MACOUPIN COUNTY: 17 miles. The trail crosses the southeastern corner of the county, through Mt. Olive and Staunton and onto the new Staunton-Worden Trail, opened Fall of 2008.

- Litchfield to Mt. Olive: township and county roads
- Mt. Olive: local streets and on a section of Old Historic Route 66
- Mt. Olive to Staunton: township roads
- Staunton: local streets
- Worden-Staunton Trail, one-half mile then into Madison County

Note: The trail has changed from its original alignment in the Route 66 Trail User's Guide to include the new Worden-Staunton Trail and Worden-Hamel Trail. From south of Mt. Olive to Livingston, the former Main Trail alignment is eliminated, and the trail instead uses the cutoff and Western Alternate alignment into Staunton. Local streets then access the new trails.

MADISON COUNTY: 30 miles. Almost all of the trail is on off-road trails, including the Worden-Staunton Trail, Worden-Hamel Trail (open in 2009), Quercus Grove Trail, and Confluence Trail. The Worden-Hamel, Quercus Grove, and Confluence trails are managed by Madison County Transit.

- Staunton to Worden: Worden-Staunton Trail
- Worden to Hamel: Worden-Hamel Trail
- Hamel: on-street one-half mile
- Hamel to Edwardsville: Quercus Grove Trail
- Edwardsville: state highway and local street
- Edwardsville to Confluence Trail: county road
- Confluence Trail to Granite City
- Granite City to Old Chain of Rocks Bridge: local road

Note: The trail has changed from its original alignment in the Route 66 Trail User's Guide to include the new Worden-Hamel Trail, to be opened in 2009. The on-road alignment around Hamel will continue until the trail's opening.

CHAPTER 4: PLAN OF ACTION FOR FUTURE TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS

Various improvements will be needed for both on -road and off-road trail segments to provide as safe experience for cyclist and other users. Most of these improvements will consist of adding bike lanes, striping, widen shoulders, side paths, road resurfacing, bridge expansions and new off-road trail development.

The alignments for the Route 66 Trail follow roads that are currently adequate for safe bicycle travel; contain road segments needing various levels of improvements to adequately allow safe bicycle traffic to connect to the off-road trail segments. Various off-road trails are complete; some are in the planning stage and yet to be constructed, and some are longer-term projects for the future.

Add paragraph: off-road trail development is the preferred future of the trail...

Add criteria for recommending improvements...



Northern Region Recommended Route 66 Trail Improvements

COOK COUNTY

Chicago, Cicero and Berwyn

Improvements needed to improve bicycle safety on these roads include bike lanes, striping, wider shoulders, side path and signs posted.

Lyons, Summit, Countryside, Hodgkins and Willow Springs

Improvements needed to improve bicycle safety and an of-road experience should include bike lanes, striping, wider shoulders, side path and a new off road trail segment (Centennial Trail) with the associated infrastructure.

Miles	Bike Lanes	Striping	Shoulders	Side Paths	Signs
	7.2	10.7	1.0	1.0	50

DU PAGE COUNTY

Woodridge, Willowbrook

Improvements needed to improve bicycle safety include bike lanes, striping, widen shoulders, side path, and posted signs.

Miles	Bike Lanes	Striping	Shoulders	Side Paths	Signs
	1.7	1.0	1.8	2.0	15

WILL COUNTY

Lockport, Joliet, Manhattan, Elwood, Braidwood

Road improvements needed include bike lanes, striping, widen shoulders, road and street resurfacing and a new side paths.

Miles Bike Lanes	Striping 3.0	Shoulders 5.0	Side Paths	Signs 104
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GRUNDY COUNTY

Braceville, Gardner, Dwight

Improvements needed include striping, widen shoulders, road resurfacing and posted signs.

Bike Lanes	Striping 3.7	Shoulders 15.0	Side paths	Signs 40
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ACTION

To be initiated within first 1-3 years of plan implementation

Construct bicycle lanes, stripping widen shoulders and side paths on and along roads and streets, particularly if ready for repairs. (construction to be implemented if feasible by the local and state jurisdiction as shown in the Concept Plan Maps.

Resurface with widen shoulders on the frontage roads portions of which are of the (historic road route) in DuPage and Grundy Counties

Post Route 66 Trail signs approximately every 1 mile or as recommended by the local jurisdiction, agency and or sponsor.

ACTION

To be initiated within 3-5 years of plan implementation

Complete the estimated 7.50 miles of any needed surface improvements of the Centennial Trail from Lockport to Joliet

Complete an estimated 2.0 miles of the new Veterans Memorial Trail

Complete an estimated 5.3 miles of the eastern boundary portion of Midewin Trail

Plan and construct a 150 foot bike/pedestrian bridge over tributary of the Desplaines River in Wilmington and a 3/4 mile new bike trail through the Village of Wilmington.

ACTION

To be initiated within 5-7 years of plan implementation

Construct 4.0 miles of the future expansion of the Centennial Trail from Lyons to Willow Springs.

Complete any gaps of the Centennial Trail from Joliet to Lyons

IN FRACTURE COSTS

On-Road Standards, Cross Section, and Costs per Mile

	Number of miles	Average cost per mile
Bike Lanes	9.0	
Striping	18.5	
Widen Shoulders	22.5	
Side Paths	4.5	
Road resurfacing	15.0	
Off-Road resurfacing	7.5	
New off-road trail Segments	23.0	
Posted Signs	209.0	

Total Cost

Central Region Recommended Route 66 Trail Improvements

First and foremost for the Central Region will be the use of the Historic Route 66 highway. It is essential that some form of commitment from the Illinois Department of Transportation be worked out. In prior projects the success has limited with IDOT.

It is clear that in the Central Region the desire is to use 63.3 miles of the existing Historic Route 66, this is more than half the distance in the Central three counties. The approach for the Central has to be unified and should incorporate both the North and Southern Regions.

By unified we mean that there should be a joint effort that includes as many of the possible sponsors in an inter-governmental agreement that would make a request to

IDOT for the use/control of all the designated segments along the proposed alignment. IDOT would/should be asked to be a member in the agreement.

This method is clearly the strongest way to approach IDOT. Clearly it is important for development of projects in the Central Region to have this issue cleared up before getting into great detail on Historic Route 66 project.

LIVINGSTON COUNTY

- Dwight: 2.2 miles of roadway – signage, paint stripping
- Odell: 1.65 miles of roadway – signage, paint stripping
- Pontiac: 3.2 miles of roadway – signage, paint stripping
- Historic Route 66: 14.05 miles (in three different segments) of Old Route 66, get IDOT approval, review surfacing needs, signage, and stripping.
- Rural roads: 10.7 miles (four different segments), require signage, shoulder widening, and possible stripping

MC LEAN COUNTY – Three projects are currently prepared for the grant process.

- Chenoa: Existing 1.0 miles
- Lexington: Existing 2.5 miles
- Towanda: .25 miles on roadway – signage, paint stripping
- Bloomington-Normal: Existing Trails 9.75 miles
- Historic Route 66: 26.75 miles (five different segments) of Historic Route 66, get IDOT approval, review surfacing needs, signage, and stripping.
- Rural roads: 7.5 miles (two different segments), require signage, shoulder widening, and possible stripping

LOGAN COUNTY

- Atlanta: 1.6 miles, Historic Route 66, get IDOT approval, signage, stripping, and surface review
- Lincoln: 3.4 miles of roadway – signage, paint stripping
- Broadwell: In town area signage
- Elkhart: In town area signage
- Historic Route 66: 17.0 miles (four different segments) of Historic Route 66, get approval, signage, paint stripping, and surface review
- Rural roads: 3.2 miles (two different segments), require signage, shoulder widening, and possible paint stripping
- Interurban Right of way: 9.0 miles (one segment) off road trail requires base, surface, signage, and stripping

Southern Region Recommended Route 66 Trail Improvements

SANGAMON COUNTY

Springfield

- Business 55/Peoria/Veterans Parkway: Sidepath (future). Maintenance to sweep paved shoulders.
- 8th/Eastman/1st/Spring/College street - Striping
- North St. – Shoulders or bike lanes

Chatham

- Main St. – Shoulders or bike lanes

On the Western Alternate

Auburn

- Kennedy St. – Improve to 4-ft. shoulders

Thayer-Virden

- IL Route 4 sidepath – Improve surface

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Farmersville, Waggoner, and Litchfield

Needed improvements include:

- Frontage Road/Historic Route 66, Farmersville to Waggoner. Re-surface the road, including improved and widened shoulders. This is a priority project not only for the trail but also as a road project for the communities.
- Green Diamond Trail, Farmersville to Waggoner. Improve the surface.
- Washington Street, Litchfield. Widen shoulders.
- Ferdon Street, Litchfield. Bike/pedestrian improvements.
- Historic Old Route 66, Litchfield, south of IL Route 16. Shoulder improvements.

Litchfield to Mt. Olive: A unique opportunity

Original 1954-1956 concrete pavement exists in the corridor from Litchfield to Mt. Olive, and ten miles of this high-quality highway remnant have been included in the National Register of Historic Places. The northbound lanes of the four-lane “bypass highway” have been closed to vehicle traffic for over fifteen years.



In 2003, a bike trail feasibility study was conducted by Macoupin County in conjunction with the National Park Service Route 66

Corridor Preservation Program National Trails System Office. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources and Greene and Bradford, Inc. coordinated project work.

The unique remnant highway at this location poses various options for an off-road bike trail. It would offer an experience to ride or walk on an original section of Route 66. This would become a showcase facility and, importantly, would preserve and restore a section of historic pavement that continues to deteriorate.

Funding and project sponsorship are major considerations. While this may be a project for the future, the concept plan for the Route 66 Trail should consider the possibilities.

MACOUPIN COUNTY

On the Western Alternate

Girard

- Center St. - Striping, if possible

Carlville

- University/Nicholas St. - Striping, if possible
- Monterey Road – Improve shoulders

Gillespie

- IL Route 16 (high traffic) – Improve shoulders to 4-6 ft. or sidepath
- Macoupin St. – Striping, if possible

Benld

- IL Route 4 – Add shoulders where there are none. Note: Plans for the future ITS Trail will take the trail off-road at this location.

Staunton

- Union St. – Striping, if possible

MADISON COUNTY

Livingston - on the Western Alternate

- Williamson/Livingston Ave. – Shoulders or striping

Hamel

- Route 157 – Shoulder improvements and safety signage/lights. This half-mile on-road connection between the Worden-Hamel and Quercus Grove trails has extremely high traffic counts.
- Off-road trail connection between the Worden-Hamel and Quercus Grove trails – This is a future priority, for a safer experience through the high-traffic Route 157/140 intersection.

Edwardsville

- Vandalia/St. Louis St. – Move to another location. This is a priority, as these streets are also state highways and have extremely high traffic.
- St. Louis St. - Striping, if possible.

Need a wrap-up section re: roles & responsibilities, trail promotion, plan adoption, etc.

REFERENCES

The following were useful sources of information in the development of the **Route 66 Trail Concept Plan**.

Central Region Council of Mayors Bike Plan, West Central Municipal Conference of Mayors, 2008.

City of Berwyn Bike Plan, 2008

City of Wilmington Route 66 Bike Trail Alignment, Robert E. Hamilton Consulting Engineers, 2008.

DuPage County Regional Bikeway Plan, DuPage County Department of Economic Development and Planning, 2008.

Forest Preserve District of Will County Wauponsee Trail Map.

Guide to Municipal Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning, League of Illinois Bicyclists, www.BikeLIB.org.

Historic Route 66 Corridor Study, Illinois Department of Transportation, prepared by Barton-Aschman Associates, Inc., August, 1995.

Historic Route 66 in Illinois National Scenic Byway Nomination, Volumes 1 and 2, March 8, 2005.

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Illinois Department of Transportation Year-End Roadway File, 2006, with local jurisdictions field, October, 2007.

Illinois Official Bicycle Map, Illinois Department of Transportation, 2006

Iowa's Mississippi River Trail Plan, Iowa Department of Transportation, prepared by the Center for Transportation Research and Education, Iowa State University, April, 2003.

Northeastern Illinois Regional Greenways Plan, 1992, and Northeastern Illinois Regional Greenways and Trails Implementation Program map, 1997.

Route 66 Trail User's Guide, League of Illinois Bicyclists.

Traveling the New, Historic Route 66 of Illinois, John Weiss, 2003.

U. S Forest Service Midewin Trail Map

The mileages for the existing Route 66 Trail described in this plan are based upon the **Route 66 Trail User's Guide, First Edition**. The User's Guide provides a detailed turn-by-turn description of the trail, as well as attractions and accommodations information. North-to-south cue sheets describe turns, road names, and mileages. The guide also includes inset maps for many communities.

APPENDIX A: GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTING LOCAL SEGMENTS OF THE ROUTE 66 TRAIL

Chapter 3 establishes the Route 66 alignment through work done by the 3 regional committees and closely follows the route as described in the Route 66 Trail User Guide. These guidelines presented in this chapter will help further the development of the trail so local partners can make best decisions to get route segments established, be it putting up signs, striping, or widening in conjunction with another road project, or pursuing an off-road trail. These guidelines are designed so local units of government can use the same consideration when implementing their section of the trail and there are standards, measures and consistency along the 400 plus miles of the Route 66 Trail.

The Route 66 Trail may consist of off-road trails and various types of on-road bikeways, depending on what is appropriate and feasible for each segment. The preferred implementation is an off-road, hard-surfaced trail on its own right-of-way, separate from all motorized traffic. When that is not possible, then options may include an off-road “sidepath” trail parallel to a road, on-road bicycle lanes, paved shoulders, or the roadway “as is”, without any improvements. In each case, the Route 66 Trail sign should be used for continuity and wayfinding purposes. The best practices around the country and the AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities should be used to build these types of bicycle facilities.

The below guidelines are meant only as guidelines to help provide a consistent trail experience. Each local agency, when implementing their section of the trail route, should consider what is best for their segment of the route.

Guidelines For Implementing Rural Segments:

The majority of the Route 66 Trail is on rural roads. The hard surface (no gravel) lower traffic roads are already suitable for many bicyclists, especially those longer-distance cyclists that would be in rural areas. For a large proportion of these lower traffic roads, wayfinding signage is the only improvement needed as the trail has been aligned along roads that are already relatively "bicycle-friendly". For the busier rural roads, (swept) paved shoulders on each side (with width varying according to traffic volume) are recommended. Illinois Department of Transportation's (IDOT) paved shoulder bicycle policy should be used as is as follows:

<u>Vehicle Daily Traffic Count (ADT)</u>	<u>Minimum paved shoulder width</u>
<u>Under 1,000</u>	<u>1 foot</u>
<u>1000 - 2999</u>	<u>4 feet</u>
<u>3,000 or more</u>	<u>4-6 feet</u>

*Paved shoulder width will be increased to 6 feet for 55mph posted speeds; or for 45mph with either high truck, RV or bus traffic or where usage by inexperienced bicyclists is expected.

Guidelines For Implementing In-Town Segments:

For in-town segments, where a separate trail on its own right-of-way is not possible, the following goals and strategies should be observed:

Especially in towns, plan for a target audience of casual adult bicyclists. At the same time, address the needs of those who are less traffic-tolerant, including children. When an in-town segment is on road, sidewalks should be present.

As much as possible, choose routes with lower traffic, ample width, directness, fewer turns and stop signs, 4-way stops or stop lights at busy roads, and access to destinations.

Be opportunistic, implementing improvements during other road projects and development.

Do not remove on-road parking if at all possible.

Where appropriate, use road stripping to serve not only Route 66 Trail users but adjacent residents, as well. Cite the safety, traffic calming (slowing) and other benefits of striped, narrower roads.

Try to avoid widening sidewalks to 10-foot sidepath (adjacent off-road trail) widths where at least some residential front yards would be impacted.

Do not widen residential roads solely for Route 66 Trail improvements.

Selecting Bikeway Type

These guidelines are recommended for specific route segments:

Do not recommend sidepaths (adjacent off-road trails) for lower speed (35 mph or less) roads with frequent crossing conflicts, including driveways, entrances, and cross streets. Generally, on-road bicycling is safer on these roads, due to cyclists being more visible to motorists at crossings, where most crashes occur. Sidepaths are a more appropriate choice along busier, faster (40+mph) roads, which usually have fewer crossings.

Where on-road bikeways are recommended, try to achieve a Bicycle Level of Service* (BLOS) rating of High C or better. This is an appropriate goal for accommodating the casual adult bicyclists. Striping can significantly improve BLOS.

Where there is sufficient width and need, stripe roads for dedicated 5-foot bike lanes on each side of the road, following AASHTO standards. No parking is permitted in bike lanes, although roads with occupied parking can have bike lanes between travel lanes and parking spaces.

On sufficiently wide roads with sparse parking occupancy, stripe 7-8 feet Combined Bike/Parking Lanes on each side, and sign as a Bike Route. Typical roads for this treatment are residential roads with lane width over 17 feet and less than 10 percent parking occupancy.

The 2009 Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices will include the Shared Lane Marking. This treatment may be used where the striping options above are not possible or desired. The pavement marking is used to inform motorists that the travel lane will be shared with bicyclists, and to inform cyclists about proper road positioning – especially to avoid opening doors on parked cars, often in downtown areas.

Combine each type of bikeway above with the Route 66 Trail signing to be most effective at wayfinding purposes.

*Bicycle Level of Service is a measure used nationally for quantifying the “bike friendliness” of a roadway. It indicates bicyclist comfort level for specific roadways geometries and traffic conditions. Roadways with a better (lower) score are more comfortable – and usually safer for bicyclists. An on line calculator can be accessed at: www.bikelib.org/roads/blos/losform.htm

APPENDIX B: BICYCLE ROUTES AND ILLINOIS' LIABILITY ISSUE

While a continuous off-road trail may be the ultimate vision of the Route 66 Trail, cost and other realities will make this virtually impossible. It is likely that much of the route will remain on-road, sometimes with the bikeway types identified in Appendix A, but often with no changes to the existing road. In very many cases, an on-road segment may be entirely adequate for the user audience.

For purposes of continuity and ease of use, it is critical that all segments of the Route 66 Trail include wayfinding signage. However, due to a unique liability disincentive in Illinois, many local agencies have been reluctant to designate on-road bikeways either through signage, striping, or other means. Others have proceeded with on-road bikeway plans. The issue is described below in excerpts of “*On-road Bicycle Routes and Illinois’ Liability Disincentive*”, from the League of Illinois Bicyclists:

The sharing of roads by bicyclists and motor vehicles is fully recognized around the nation, in the Uniform and Illinois’ Vehicle Codes, and in industry standards from IDOT, AASHTO, and the Federal Highway Administration.

These guidelines provide for “shared roadways” – the majority of the road network; those common, undesignated roads not needing any special treatment or signage. Some options listed include paved shoulders (for busy rural roads), bike route signage (on preferred routes), and on-road bike lanes (on some urban roads). In appropriate locations, these options may be used to improve on-road bike safety.

However, many local governments in Illinois have decided not to add these safety features because of a court-induced liability disincentive. We believe there has been overreaction on this issue, and we ask agencies to take a closer look.

In the sharply-divided *Boub v. Wayne Township* decision in 1998, the Illinois Supreme Court granted immunity to local governments for injuries suffered by cyclists due to road condition. Further, this immunity vanishes for roads designated with bike-specific features such as signage or bike lane markings. Do nothing, get immunity; add on-road bike lanes or signage, incur liability.

Thus, the disincentive – a problem unique to Illinois, and unchanged since 1998 despite attempts at legislation. But how much liability exposure is there? Are other local governments adding on-road bikeways in this environment? Typical agency decision-making weighs risk management and exposure against policy, safety, and service to residents. Has this issue been receiving a fair assessment?

Level of Exposure: Historically, the exposure level has been very minimal, based on experiences in:

- 1) Illinois now: lots of pre-1998 Bike Route signs and even bike lanes exist in many scattered towns around the state; new on-road bikeways have since been installed in several other towns (below);
- 2) On all Illinois roads before the 1998 decision;
- 3) In all other states – where the Uniform Vehicle Code grants cyclists "all of the rights and duties applicable to the driver of a vehicle" – including liability protection.

While still unsettled in case law (which itself shows a lack of lawsuits), it could be interpreted that on-road bikeways would only bring a willful and wanton level of exposure – instead of the negligence standard. (Willful and wanton seems to be a comfortable liability level for agencies, as evidenced by the abundance of off-road trails and a wide variety of recreational and other facilities.) ... This has been suggested by the top local government expert on this issue....

In March 2007, two major insurers of Illinois local government agencies (IPARKS and St. Paul-Travelers) were asked how much insurance premiums would rise for hypothetical additions of: a) 10 miles of off-road bike path; b) 10 miles of on-road bike lanes; and c) 10 miles of signed road routes. Both responded that there would be ZERO increase for each case, assuming that they were consulted to ensure proper engineering design standards were met.

Other towns: Several Illinois towns have proceeded since the 1998 decision, despite the disincentive. Chicago is the most notable (104 miles of bike lanes and 155 miles of signed

routes in 2005; another 130 miles planned by 2015). Almost all of Chicago's on-road bikeways have been added since *Boub*.

While definitely not an all-inclusive list, the following are some other Illinois cities believed to have installed marked bike lanes and/or signed bike routes since 1998:

- Batavia (signed bike routes and bike lanes)
- Champaign (bike lanes)
- Darien (bike lanes)
- Downers Grove (bike lanes and signed bike routes)
- DuPage County (Clarendon Hills Road bike lanes, and 2008 on-road bikeway policy)
- Edwardsville (bike lanes, New Poag Rd)
- Elgin (bike lanes)
- Evanston (bike lanes and signed bike routes)
- Geneseo (bike lanes and signed bike routes)
- Geneva (bike lanes and signed bike routes)
- Joliet (signed bike routes)
- Moline (signed bike routes)
- Morrison (signed bike routes)
- Naperville (bike lanes and signed bike routes)
- Northbrook (Share the Road signs and "sharrows" markings on the road – without stripes)
- Oak Park (signed bike routes)
- Park Ridge (bike lanes and signed bike routes)
- Plainfield (bike lanes, Van Dyke Road)
- River Forest (signed bike routes)
- Rock Island (bike lanes)
- Roselle (bike lanes and signed bike routes)
- Schaumburg (bike lanes)
- Springfield (bike lanes)
- Skokie (bike lanes and signed bike routes)
- Urbana (bike lanes)
- Warrenville (signed bike routes)
- Westmont (signed bike routes)

A Closer Look: In other towns, however, it seems that officials have only looked at the "either liability or immunity" perspective. This is too simplistic, not considering the true level of risk exposure. Quantifying exposure based on existing evidence is necessary to making an informed policy decision. Towns do this all the time, in situations where doing nothing would mean no liability. So it should be with on-road bikeways, which create much less exposure than many other public amenities.

For many, unfamiliarity with on-road bikeways plays a role in the decision. Much can be learned from successful examples around the country – and from resources including the AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities. Following the court-accepted

AASHTO guidelines is the best way to minimize liability exposure while improving public safety.