

East Branch DuPage River Trail

Butterfield Road (IL 56) to Illinois Prairie Path (IPP)

Phase I Engineering Study

Public Information Meeting #1 Summary

April 29, 2025



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1 OVERVIEW

The DuPage County Division of Transportation (DuDOT) is conducting Phase I engineering and environmental studies for the East Branch DuPage River Trail (EBDRT) from the Illinois Prairie Path (IPP) to Butterfield Road (IL 56). This is a mainline distance of up to five miles depending on the study's selected preferred alternative.

The EBDRT project study team identified one practical and feasible alternative for the area from the IPP to Roosevelt Road (IL 38). This alternative is subject to additional engineering analyses and coordination.

For the area south of Roosevelt Road, the project team determined that the safety, constructability, flooding, and environmental issues near the East Branch DuPage River (EBDR) limited potential trail options. The project team identified two alternatives, which were presented to the public for feedback during the study's first Public Information Meeting (PIM #1) on April 29, 2025. PIM #1 was held from 4 to 7 p.m. at the Butterfield Park District, located at 21W730 Butterfield Road, Lombard, IL 60148. During the event, the project team gathered stakeholder feedback on trail issues, needs, and the range of alternatives.

1.1 PURPOSE

In its entirety, the EBDRT is a proposed 28-mile regional trail in central DuPage County and is intended to be a multi-use path in the vicinity of the EBDR. The following regional and local plans recognize the EBDRT as a planned project:

- DuPage County Regional Bikeway Plan
- Village of Glen Ellyn Comprehensive Plan
- Village of Lombard Comprehensive Plan
- Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning Northeastern Illinois Regional Greenways and Trails Plan

The EBDRT is part of DuDOT's long-range plan that envisions a network of continuous greenway and trail corridors linked across jurisdictions. The network's goals are to provide scenic beauty, natural habitats, and recreational and transportation opportunities.

DuDOT recognizes the value that trails add in promoting walking, biking, and other non-motorized activities to create healthy, sustainable, and equitable communities. Trails encourage more people to walk and bike for transportation by providing residents with an inexpensive and low-stress transportation corridor. Beyond their role as transportation corridors, trails also provide other benefits for communities such as enhancing the environment, contributing to improved public health, and driving local economic development.

Since trails provide low-stress environments that encourage walking and biking as everyday transportation options, a well-connected and -designed trail network can be used by all residents regardless of age, socioeconomic status, or physical abilities.

In 2021, the County identified two trail alternatives through its [2021 Alignment Study Report](#): the West Alternative and the East. The West Alternative would be located primarily along IL 53, while the East Alternative would be located closer to the EBDRT near residential/open-space areas.

To engage the public, DuDOT held PIM #1 on April 29, 2025. PIM #1 was held from 4 to 7 p.m. at the Butterfield Park District, located at 21W730 Butterfield Road, Lombard, IL 60148. This meeting had an open-house format, meaning members of the public could attend the event at any time. Attendees had the opportunity to interact with project team members, view exhibit boards, provide feedback on aerial maps, and submit comments or questions.

2 OUTREACH EFFORTS

The County promoted the event through various outreach methods in accordance with Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) requirements. All notifications are in **Attachment A**. 203 people attended PIM #1. Redacted sign-in sheets are in **Attachment B**.

2.1 SOCIAL MEDIA AND NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENTS

Announcements were posted on the County's social media accounts (Facebook on April 22, 25, and 29, and LinkedIn on April 22):



The following legal notice was posted in the *Daily Herald* newspaper on both April 8 and April 22, 2025:

The DuPage County Division of Transportation (DuDOT) cordially invites you to attend a public information meeting on Tuesday, April 29 concerning the preliminary engineering and environmental study for the East Branch DuPage River Trail (EBDRT) from the Illinois Prairie Path to Butterfield Road (IL 56).

The meeting will be held in an open house format from 4 to 7 p.m. at the Butterfield Park District (21W730 Butterfield Road, Lombard, IL 60148).

DuDOT is currently sharing information on the study at **www.EBDRT.com** and encourages public participation either in-person at the meeting or through the website. The project team encourages those interested to take the community survey at **www.surveymonkey.com/r/EBDRT** or via the link on the project website. The purpose of this public information meeting is to provide an overview of the study process and schedule and to obtain input on trail needs and the alternatives evaluation.

Individuals who cannot participate in person can review exhibits, take the community survey, and provide comments through the study website.

Anyone who does not have access to the internet may contact DuDOT at 630-407-6900. Written comments may be submitted via email or mail. Comments received by Friday, May 16 will become part of the official public outreach event record.

Persons that require special accommodations should submit requests by Thursday, April 24 to Sam Burns, Outreach Liaison, at 630-534-6400 ext. 108 or at sburns@metrostratgroup.com for further assistance. Spanish interpretation will be made available upon resident request.

All written correspondence regarding this study should be sent to:

DuPage County Division of Transportation
Attn: John Loper
421 N. County Farm Road
Wheaton, IL 60187

Or via email: EBDRT@dupagecounty.gov

2.2 LETTERS AND POSTCARDS

The project team mailed 196 invitation letters to regulatory agencies, government officials, and community organizations. Additionally, the team mailed 4,250 postcards to all property owners adjacent to and within ¼- to ½-mile of the study area to invite them to the PIM.

(Postcard front)



You're Invited!

East Branch DuPage River Trail (EBDRT) Public Information Meeting #1

Tuesday, April 29 from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m.
Butterfield Park District (21W730 Butterfield Rd, Lombard, IL 60148)





(Postcard back)

We invite you to join us for a **Public Information Meeting** about the **East Branch DuPage River Trail (EBDRT)** project!

This open-house style meeting, hosted by the **DuPage County Division of Transportation**, is your chance to learn more about the proposed trail from the Illinois Prairie Path to Butterfield Road (IL 56). Explore potential trail routes, share your feedback, and ask questions!

Stop by anytime during the event!

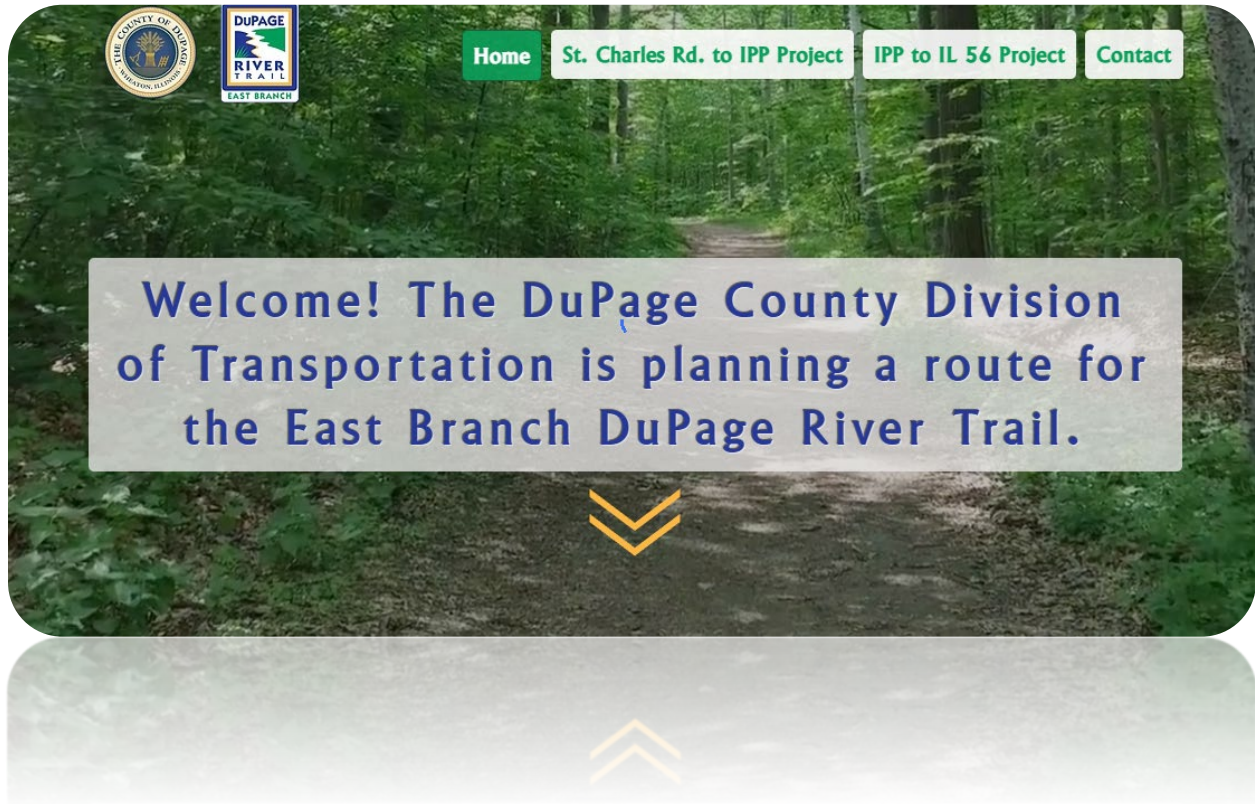
East Branch DuPage River Trail Project
c/o Metro Strategies Group
1901 Butterfield Road, Suite 260
Downers Grove, IL 60515



Visit the project's website for more information at www.EBDRT.com.

2.3 PROJECT WEBSITE

The project website (www.EBDRT.com) provided PIM #1 information, exhibits, and a link to take the EBDRT Trail Survey. The project website had 1,166 unique visitors from April 8 through May 16, 2025, the duration of the survey being open. Survey results are detailed in Section 3.1.



3 PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY/COMMON THEMES

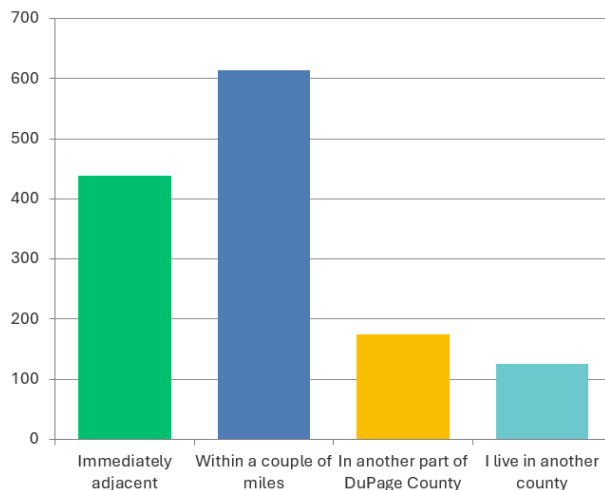
The PIM #1 public comment period concluded on May 16, 2025. The County welcomed public feedback through the following options:

1. DuDOT's EBDRT trail survey that was open to the public from February 10 through May 16, 2025. The survey was made available through a link provided on the project website and a direct SurveyMonkey URL (www.surveymonkey.com/r/EBDRT).
2. Comments submitted directly through the project website,
3. Sticky notes posted to PIM #1's aerial maps, and
4. Comment forms submitted in-person at PIM #1, mailed, or emailed prior to the close of the comment period.

3.1 EBDRT TRAIL SURVEY RESULTS

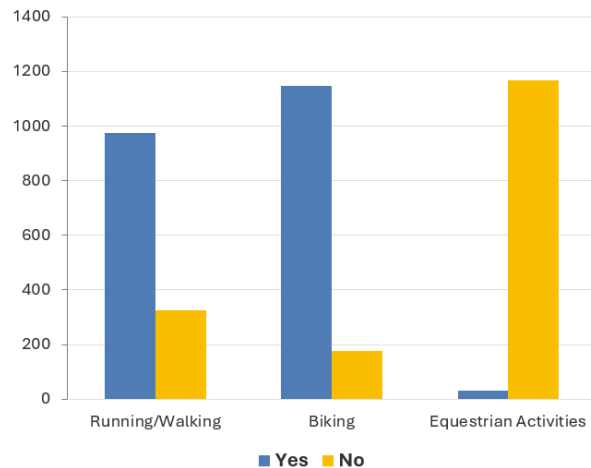
DuDOT collected 1,357 survey responses, with response information summarized below. A full summary of results is in **Attachment D**. *Please note that not all survey questions required responses, and certain questions allowed multiple responses; as a result, some totals and percentages do not equal 1,357 or 100% respectively.*

- **How close do you live to the project area?**



	No. of Responses	Percent
Immediately adjacent	438	32.40%
Within a couple of miles	614	45.41%
In another part of DuPage County	175	12.94%
I live in another county	125	9.25%
TOTAL	1,352	

• **I would use the EBDRT for:**

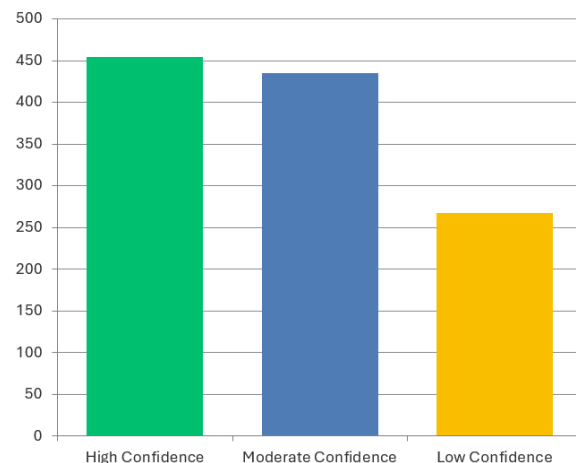


	Yes	No	% Yes	Total
Running/Walking	976	324	75.08%	1,300
Biking	1,147	176	86.70%	1,323
Equestrian Activities	32	1,166	2.67%	1,198

• **I would use the EBDRT for “other” (common themes from 127 open-ended responses)**

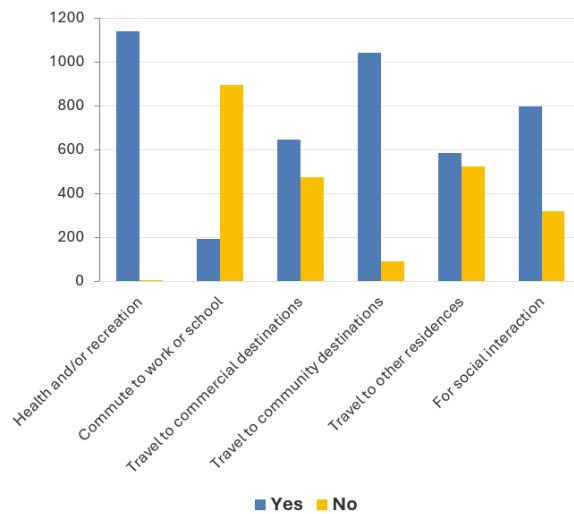
- Opposition to trail alignment through Butterfield West (privacy, safety, property value)
- Strong interest in peaceful nature-based activities (birding, strolling, nature watching)
- Desire for safe, car-free transportation to schools, parks, shops
- Trail seen as a valuable recreational outlet (biking, skating, skiing)
- Widespread dog walking and family usage
- Mixed feedback on trail design (surfaces, accessibility, shared use with horses/dogs)
- Community uses: meetups, group hikes, restoration work
- Concerns about communication and trust in the planning process

• **How confident of a bicyclist are you?**



	No. of Responses	Percent
High Confidence (e.g., willing to bicycle with no bicycle-specific infrastructure)	454	39.24%
Moderate Confidence (e.g., willing to bicycle on-road with bicycle-specific infrastructure in place, such as bike lanes)	435	37.6%
Low Confidence (e.g., only willing to bicycle on a path separated from motorized vehicles)	268	23.16%
TOTAL	1,157	

• Why would you use the EBDRT?

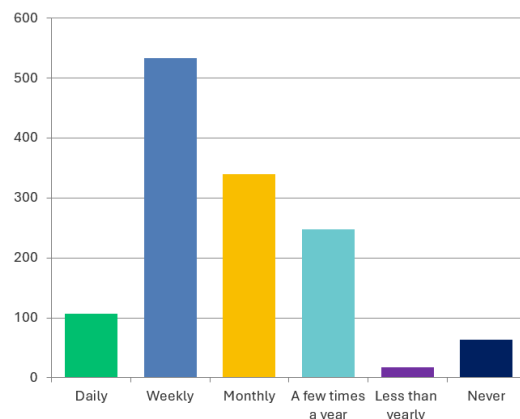


	Yes	No	% Yes	Total
Health and/or recreation	1,141	4	99.65%	1,145
Commute to work or school	192	898	17.61%	1,090
Travel to shopping, restaurants, or other commercial destinations	646	475	57.63%	1,121
Travel to community destinations (parks, forest preserve)	1,044	90	92.06%	1,134
Travel to other residences (e.g., a friend's house)	586	525	52.75%	1,111
For social interaction purposes (walking clubs, etc.)	798	320	71.38%	1,118

• Are there other reasons you would use the EBDRT? (common themes from 195 open-ended responses)

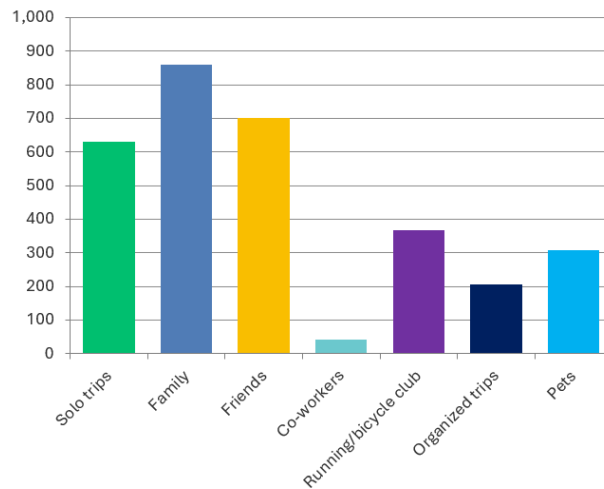
- Desire for safe, car-free transportation (commuting, errands, school trips)
- Interest in connecting to other trails and destinations (Arboretum, Prairie Path, local parks)
- Preference for scenic, natural trail alignment (along river, with native plants)
- Broad recreational use (biking, walking, skiing, dog walking, birding)
- Focus on health and wellness benefits (mental health, fitness, stress relief)
- Need for accessibility (seniors, families, e-bikes, strollers)
- Strong enthusiasm and urgency to build the trail
- Vision for social and family use (group rides, exploring with guests, community connection)

• How often do you envision yourself using the EBDRT?



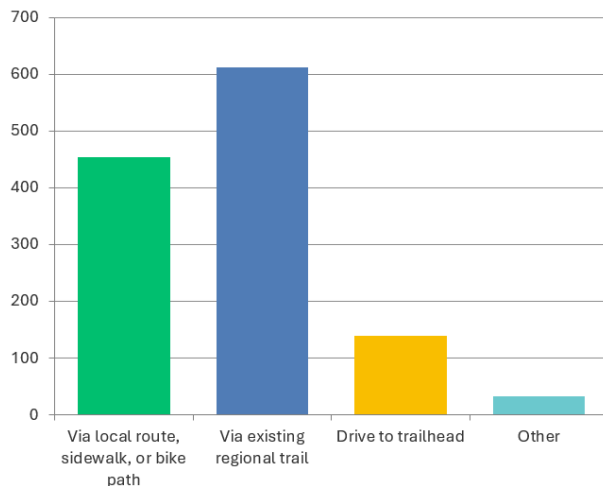
	No. of Responses	Percent
Daily	107	8.18%
Weekly	533	40.75%
Monthly	340	25.99%
A few times a year	248	18.96%
Less than yearly	17	1.30%
Never	63	4.82%
TOTAL	1,308	

• **Who would join you on the trail trips? (multiple answers were permitted)**



	No. of Responses	Percent
I typically make solo trips	630	50.24%
My family member(s)	859	68.5%
My friends	703	56.06%
My co-workers	41	3.27%
Running or bicycle club	368	29.35%
I would join organized trips	207	16.51%
Pets	308	24.56%
TOTAL	1,254	

• **How would you primarily access the EBDRT?**

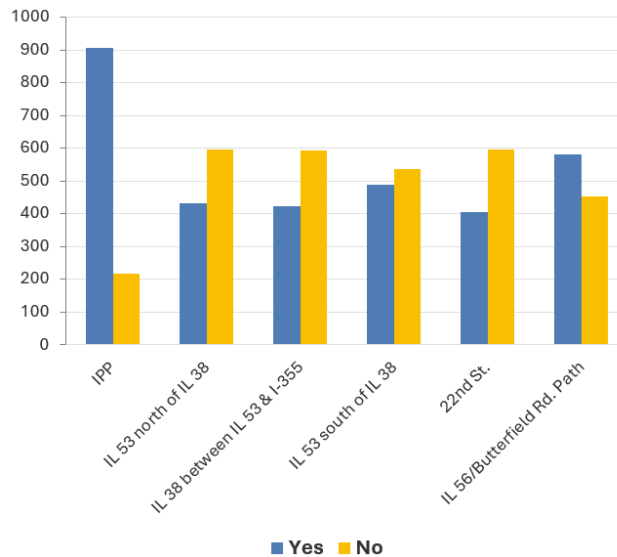


	No. of Responses	Percent
Via local route, sidewalk, or bike path	454	36.61%
Via existing regional trail (Great Western Trail, Illinois Prairie Path)	613	49.44%
Drive to trailhead	140	11.29%
Other	33	2.66%
TOTAL	1,240	

• **How would you primarily access the EDBRT (common themes for 33 open-ended responses)**

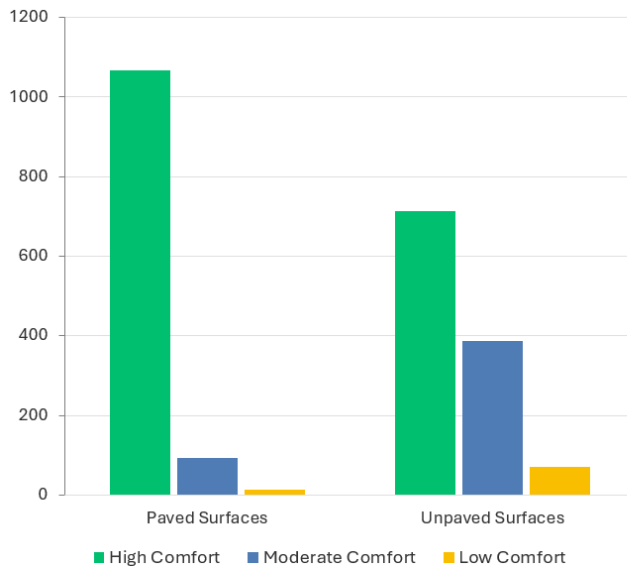
- Ride bike from home, if safe
- Drive and park at trailhead
- Access via Metra (especially Glen Ellyn station)
- Walk from nearby neighborhoods (e.g., Butterfield West, Valley View)
- Connect through existing trails (e.g., Prairie Path, Hidden Lake)
- Desire for safe access from Downers Grove, Lisle, and Westmont
- Avoid trails near busy roads like Route 53
- Want more/better connections to existing infrastructure

• Which of the following trail or road segments would you use to access EBDRT?



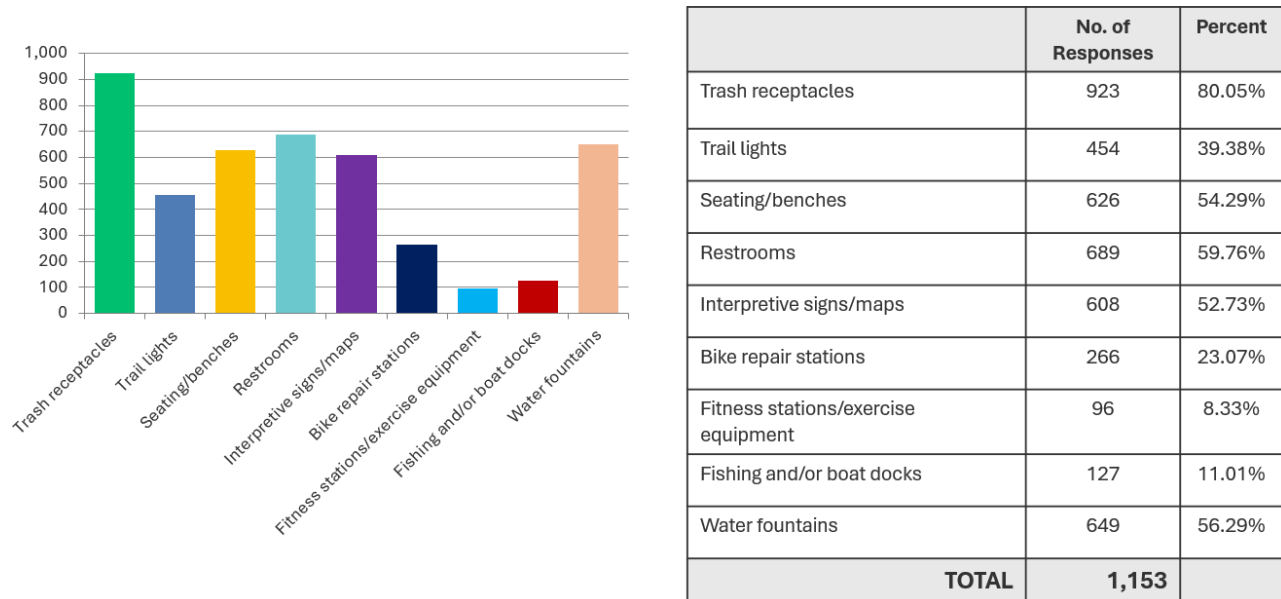
	Yes	No	% Yes	Total
The Illinois Prairie Path	906	216	80.75%	1,122
IL 53 north of IL 38 (Roosevelt Road)	431	597	41.93%	1,028
IL 38 (Roosevelt Road) between IL 53 and I-355	422	593	41.58%	1,015
IL 53 south of IL 38 (Roosevelt Road)	488	537	47.61%	1,025
22 nd Street	404	596	40.40%	1,000
IL 56/Butterfield Rd. Path	582	454	56.18%	1,036

• What is your comfort level walking/riding on the following surfaces?



	High Comfort	Moderate Comfort	Low Comfort
Paved Surfaces (Asphalt/Concrete)	1,068	93	14
Unpaved Surfaces (Stone/Gravel)	714	386	71
TOTAL	1,177		

• **What kind of trail amenities would you like to be included in the EBDRT?**



• **What kind of trail amenities would you like to be included in the EBDRT? (common themes from 99 open-ended “other” responses)**

- Restrooms and portable toilets, especially at trailheads
- Benches, covered areas for rain/shade, picnic spots
- Pet waste stations, dog poop bags, dog-friendly water fountains
- Maps, mile markers, emergency call boxes, wayfinding signs
- Trash and recycling bins, with concerns about maintenance and proper placement
- Lighting – Mixed opinions: some request it for safety, others worry about light pollution
- Native plants, prairie buffers, bird/wildlife viewing areas
- Minimalist approach preferred by some – “Just build the trail,” no lights, no pavement, fewer structures

- **Other comments (441 open-ended responses)**

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong support for the trail overall • Support for East Alternative (near river, more scenic) • Support for West Alternative (shortest connection, stay outside neighborhoods) • Concerns about West Alternative (Rt 53) – noise, safety, traffic proximity • Desire to keep trail natural, quiet, and away from roads | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for safe crossings (especially at Butterfield, Roosevelt, Rt 53, and 22nd) • Requests for connectivity to other trails and destinations (Morton Arboretum, Prairie Path, Great Western Trail) • Interest in expanded access for walking, biking, and families • Emphasis on safety, privacy, and minimizing impact on neighborhoods |
|--|---|

3.2 AERIAL ROLL PLOTS, COMMENT FORM, AND EMAILED COMMENTS: COMMON THEMES

As noted above, the project team provided the public with several options for providing input. Photographs of the marked-up aerial roll plots, scans of the comment forms received, and comments submitted via email or through the project website are provided in **Attachment C**.

Common comment themes include concerns regarding safety, environmental impacts, and community disruption. As with the Trail Survey, attendees provided varying feedback depending on whether they primarily indicated themselves as a trail user or as a resident along the East Alternative.

Many residents expressed safety concerns, particularly with the East Alternative, which would place the path through their residential neighborhoods. Attendees were concerned about increased traffic, poor sight distance due to the hilly terrain and sharp curve from Glenbard to Sunnybrook roads, mixing many types of users on narrow roadways (vehicular, parked landscaping trucks, bikes, and pedestrians), and the safety of children playing outside. Conversely, other attendees supported the East Alternative for its scenic and quieter route away from busy highways. Environmental concerns were also prominent, with several comments about potential impacts to trees, wildlife habitats, and natural landscapes. Additionally, some expressed concerns about potential impacts to property values and residential privacy.

Supporters of the West Alternative believe that it would be less disruptive to neighborhoods and safer, as it would run along IL 53 and noted that there are many other roadway locations with a similarly-configured, multi-use sidepath. On the other hand, some attendees expressed concerns about the safety of bikes and pedestrians on IL 53 due to high-speed traffic and limited space for a dedicated path. They indicated that proximity to fast-moving vehicles would make them feel less safe. Further, the resulting noise and car exhaust would make the West Alternative unpleasant and generally undesirable, and it would therefore be used less than the East Alternative.

3.3 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

A list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) is included as **Attachment E**. The FAQ combines all comments and questions received through the EBDRT Trail Survey, project website, email, mail, and during PIM #1.

3.4 MEETING PHOTOGRAPHS

Photographs documenting PIM #1 are included below.



