



# CIVIL TALK

CIVIL ENGINEERING ♦ SURVEYING

STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING ♦ GRANT WRITING

A NEWSLETTER FROM HENEGHAN & ASSOCIATES, P.C.

[www.haengr.com](http://www.haengr.com)

Celebrating Our 24th Year in Business

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## ***“Pursuing A Hot Trail”*** **Bikes & Walking**

The National Trails System in the United States was created in 1968 which includes National Scenic Trails, National Historic Trails and National Recreation Trails. Rules and regulations are written and enforced by the land management agency in charge of the trail. The trail may be contained within one administration like a State Park, or it may pass through multiple administrations leading to confusing regulations.

In the U.S., agencies administering trails include the



**HA designed improvements for the walking trail at the Lenzburg, Illinois park.**

National Park Service, the U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, State Park systems, County Parks, cities, private organizations such as land trusts, businesses and individual property owners.

While walking and biking trails have become popular throughout the U.S., quality trail design and construction can be complex. If constructing a trail in a wet area, an elevated trailway with fill may be necessary. How steep the trail will be is another consideration. Besides being too steep for comfortable walking and/or riding, steep trails generally result in serious erosion. HA considers different factors when designing a walking trail such as the grade of the slope, drainage, the surrounding vegetation, the average precipitation, the general amount of trail use, an assessment of the soil and other variables. The slope's grades are particularly important to consider when the walking trail is intended to be wheelchair accessible.

Drainage is critically important to remember. The three most common types of drainage problems are: 1)

accumulation of water to the point that the trail is unusable. 2) erosion from moving water on the trail; 3) creation of muddy spots.

Trails are constructed of different types of materials including asphalt paving and compressed dust such as crushed rock, cinders, or decomposed granite.

A recent trend is “rails to trails” where abandoned railroad grades are being converted to bike paths or multi-use paths. Railroads in use with adjacent trails are called “rails with trails.”

A well-designed trail requires minimum maintenance besides clearing downed trees and keeping the brush trimmed back.

Luckily, with the nation's health craze about keeping fit, there is grant money available to build walking/biking trails. The Metro East Park and Recreation District (MEPRD) has just opened another round of its **Bike Trail Partnership Grant** for use by Madison and St. Clair County. Information can be found on-line at [www.meprd.org](http://www.meprd.org).

Additional funding is available through the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) **Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) Program**. According to IDNR, multi-use trails are at the top of every agency's recreational use survey. If you already have a trail, the OSLAD grant can be used to develop fitness and exercise stations along the trails.

IDNR also offers the **Recreational Trails Program** with 80% federal funding and a minimum 20% non-federal funding match. Applications are due by March 1 each year. Examples of eligible projects include: 1) trail construction and rehabilitation; 2) restoration of areas adjacent to trails damaged by unauthorized trail uses; 3) construction of trail-related support facilities and amenities; 4) acquisition from willing sellers of trail corridors through easements or fee simple title.

Another funding program for trails is IDNR's **Illinois Bicycle Path Program**. This program was created to financially assist eligible units of government to acquire, construct, and rehabilitate public, non-motorized bicycle paths and directly reported facilities. Grants are available to local governments with statutory authority

to acquire and develop land for public bicycle path purposes. Financial assistance up to 50% of approved project costs is available with the maximum grant limited to \$200,000 per annual request. The Illinois Bicycle Path grant applications are due to IDNR by March 1st.

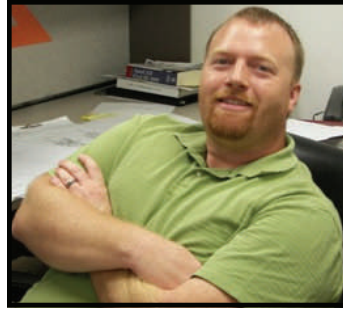
The Illinois Department of **Transportation Enhancement Program** provides funding for community based projects that expand travel choices. An example would be a bike trail that connects to existing facilities that serves a need for people traveling to and from the facilities or communities. Project sponsors may receive up to 80% reimbursement, with the remaining 20% being the responsibility of the project sponsor. Typically, applications are due by the end of August.

IDOT's **Safe Routes to School (SRTS)** is another funding mechanism for building trails. SRTS supports projects and programs to enable and encourage bicycling and walking to and from schools for kindergarten through 8th grade. SRTS applications are due by November 12th.

As you can see, there are numerous funding possibilities for the construction of a walking or bike trail. What a great way to help keep your community appealing to residents and visitors. If you're contemplating building or rehabilitating a trail, HA can help.

CIVIL TALK is published by **Heneghan & Associates P.C.** Questions or comments? Contact Susan Isringhausen (618-498-6418) or email [skisringhausen@heneghanassoc.com](mailto:skisringhausen@heneghanassoc.com). If you prefer to receive the newsletter by e-mail, just let Susan know. If there are changes in who should be receiving the newsletter, please let Susan know that too so the newsletter database can be kept up-to-date. Thank you!

## Meet & Greet Chris Hargan



This month's meet and greet person is Mr. Chris Hargan. Chris has been a Project Engineer with Heneghan and Associates (HA) in the Columbia, IL office since 2004. While Chris has many different skills in the engineering field, he serves as one of the firm's primary CADD (computer-aided drafting and design) personnel. Chris graduated from Northwestern University in 2000 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering. Chris works on many different projects with his current focus on improvements being designed by HA for Wabash Avenue for the City of Centralia. When not hard at work in the office, you might find Chris working on his tan (and his golfing skills) on the golf course or relaxing at home with his family.

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**HENEGHAN & ASSOCIATES**  
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JERSEYVILLE, IL 62052



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