



Appendix D

Paths and Trails Maintenance Guidelines



Dubuque
Parks and Recreation
Comprehensive Plan

PATHS AND TRAILS MAINTENANCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Importance of Maintenance and Purpose of This Plan

Maintenance plays a crucial role in ensuring safe and efficient pedestrian and bicycle movement within the pathway network. Proper maintenance not only enhances the aesthetics of the city's pathways and promotes a positive user experience, it also helps reduce accidents and negative incidents occurring along the paths. This maintenance management plan aims to provide guidelines for maintenance best practices. This plan is meant to serve as a guideline and does not replace any existing City of Dubuque or partner governing agency standards, policies, and procedures. This Plan is designed to be a working document and should be reviewed on a regular basis and revised as appropriate. It may be used in conjunction with the city's development of an annual maintenance budget and planning. Maintenance and service levels may fluctuate from time to time due to the availability of resources, special needs or circumstances that may arise.

Quality of Work

The importance of quality of work for pathway maintenance cannot be overstated. Quality work ensures that pathways are safe, functional, and aesthetically pleasing, leading to a positive user experience and long-term sustainability. Here are some key reasons why maintaining a high standard of quality is crucial:

- **Safety:** Pathways are used by pedestrians, cyclists, and other users, and their safety should always be the top priority. High-quality maintenance practices help identify and address potential hazards promptly, such as uneven surfaces, potholes, or obstructions. By ensuring that pathways are in good condition, we can minimize the risk of accidents and injuries.
- **User Experience:** Pathways are designed to facilitate movement and provide an enjoyable experience for users. A well-maintained pathway with smooth surfaces, clear signage, and proper lighting enhances the user experience and encourages more people to utilize the pathway. Conversely, neglecting maintenance can lead to user dissatisfaction, decreased usage, and a negative perception of the overall environment.
- **Longevity:** Quality maintenance practices contribute to the longevity of pathways. Regular inspections, proactive repairs, and proper cleaning prevent minor issues from escalating into major problems. By addressing maintenance needs promptly and effectively, we can extend the lifespan of pathways, reducing the need for costly repairs or replacements in the future.
- **Cost Savings:** Investing in quality maintenance upfront can result in significant cost savings in the long run. Preventative maintenance and timely repairs help avoid more extensive damage that may require extensive reconstruction or replacement.

- **Community Image:** Pathways are often a reflection of the overall quality and care given to an environment. When pathways are well-maintained, they contribute to a positive community image and create a sense of pride among users and stakeholders. On the other hand, neglected pathways can give the impression of a neglected environment, impacting the overall perception of the area.

Criteria to ensure that an acceptable quality of work is met consistently include:

- All work is consistent with City maintenance standards and complies with any local standards and specifications for the design and construction of public improvements
- All work is consistent with Best Management Practices and industry standards
- All work is compliant with Federal, State and local laws and regulations
- All work is compliant with manufacturer's specifications and standards

MAINTENANCE STANDARDS FOR PATHWAYS AND TRAILHEADS

The City has adopted maintenance standards to help ensure that all pathways, trailheads, facilities, and equipment are maintained to a specified level of consistent service to produce a safe, clean, functional, and visually appealing multi-modal experience. The goal of these standards is to improve consistency and minimize subjectivity when assessing pathway and trailhead conditions. These standards are consistent with industry standards and best management practices to conserve and protect resources.

The maintenance standards provided in this chapter are intended to be used for the following purposes:

- Inspection and assessment of asset conditions.
- Communicating pathway network conditions effectively
- Developing an asset management plan
- Assisting staff in the prioritization of maintenance resources and allocation

Pathways and Trails

- Pathways meet applicable ADA requirements
- Pathways provide a clear path without overgrown landscape material, litter, and debris
- Pathways are free of water collecting depressions and erosion
- Pathways and trails have a uniform surface and positive drainage
- Pathways are free of depressions or trip hazards due to grade changes
- Pathways provide users with warning prior to street or intersection crossings via signage and sensory design Signage is clearly visible and not blocked by overgrown landscape materials or other barriers

- Pathway turns or intersections do not occur within 100' of one another
- Sight visibility triangles are considered as part of trail and landscape design
- Pathways are routinely inspected and cleaned and cleared of litter, debris, and hazards, with frequency determined by assigned maintenance level

Landscape Areas

- Landscape areas are inspected on a weekly basis
- Turf areas are mowed and trimmed at a height of 2.5" to 3"
- Turf areas should only be provided at picnic areas or other spaces utilized for specific programming
- Plant material should be native or adaptive species and be drought tolerant
- Pathways, trailheads, and facilities are routinely inspected and cleaned and cleared of litter, debris, and hazards, with frequency determined by assigned maintenance level
- Shrubs and grasses are not overgrown or infringing on active pathway areas
- Trees are planted and pruned for the purpose of providing shade to pathway users
- Native grasses are mowed for health, aesthetics, and weed control
- Wildlife habitat is provided prioritized as applicable
- Noxious weeds are controlled as needed

Drinking Fountains

- Fountains are accessible and operational
- Consider the use of bottle fillers and dog bowls when selecting appropriate drinking fountain models
- Where electricity can be provided, water cooling systems are included
- Drinking fountains are located at all trailheads
- Fountains are checked for debris and cleaned as needed
- Fountains are installed on a solid and ADA compliant surface

Restrooms

- Restrooms are located at most trailheads
- Toilets are clean and sanitary
- Restrooms provide required ADA access
- Restrooms include vandal-resistant partitions and components
- Restrooms are fully operations and regularly maintained
- Restrooms include security system/cameras where allowable

Trash Receptacles

- Receptacles are clean and routinely emptied
- Receptacles are painted or powder coated
- Receptacles are installed per manufacturer recommendations and properly anchored
- Receptacles are installed on concrete pad
- Trash receptacles are adequately provided at trailheads, picnic areas, shade structures, and at increments of approximately every 500 linear feet along pathways
- Pet waste stations are located and stocked at trailheads
- All receptacles, containers and pet waste stations meet current ADA guidelines for accessibility and height

Benches and Picnic Tables

- Benches are installed on accessible concrete pad and per manufacturer recommendations
- Bench placement considers viewsheds, wildlife habitat, and other areas of interest
- Regular inspection occur and asset management program is in place for site furnishing replacement

Signage

- Signs are clean, legible, and free of vandalism
- Pathway signs are secure and properly installed in a highly visible location free of plant material overgrowth or other barriers
- Pathway network maps and rules signs are secure and properly installed at all trailheads and major points of ingress/egress
- Signage meets ADA requirements
- Trail markers are secure, placed at appropriate intervals, and installed in a highly visible location
- Inventory trail signage and traffic signs as part of the City's asset management system, including water trail signage

Lighting

- Lighting is provided at all trailheads and restroom buildings
- Low level security lighting is provided along trails in urban corridors where allowable
- Where applicable, conduit may be provided for future lighting to be added to pathway corridors

Shade Structures and Pavilions

- Shade structures and pavilions are installed on concrete pads with ADA compliant points of ingress/egress
- Shelters are installed per manufacturer recommendations and footings are designed based on sealed structural calculations provided by a registered structural engineer
- Regular inspection occur and asset management program is in place for shade structure and pavilion replacement
- Shelters are clean and sanitary
- LED lighting is provided at all pavilions
- Security lighting is provided in areas adjacent to pavilions
- Electrical receptacles are provided at pavilions
- Quick couplers and hose bibs are provided if utilities are available
- Rules signage, pavilion identification signage, and reservation signage is posted in highly visible locations

Preventative Maintenance

The City follows a comprehensive preventive maintenance plan for all pathways, trailheads, facilities, and equipment that it is responsible for maintaining. Regularly scheduled maintenance and monitoring of the pathway network is critical to meeting user needs. Visual and physical examinations of all pathway network amenities are routinely conducted through staff evaluation and assessment to ensure compliance, safety, proper operation, and to mitigate liability risks. Formal inspections are to be performed by qualified individuals and inspection documentation should be completed and archived in accordance with city document storage practices.

Repairs to all applicable assets should be completed as required upon notification or inspection in a timely manner. Repairs that include an immediate need or a condition that poses a risk to user safety should be considered immediate priorities. Any areas or assets that are considered a safety risk should be closed and off limits to public use until necessary repairs can be made. All applicable maintenance equipment utilized by the city should be locked and tagged out if found to be unsafe to operate until necessary repairs can be made.