

Dane County Exec. Parisi: Dane County Bicycle Wayfinding Manual wins innovative state award

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Today, Dane County Executive Joe Parisi announced that Dane County's Bicycle Wayfinding Manual, a handbook used to help people navigate bike trails, won the Innovations in Planning Award from the American Planning Association Wisconsin Chapter. The manual is the first formal bicycle wayfinding manual produced in Wisconsin that includes step-by-step directions on selecting wayfinding destinations, sign design, fabrication, placement, and installation.

"We are very fortunate to have such a rich system of bike trails in Dane County," said County Executive Joe Parisi. "Our manual has helped local communities heighten visitors' overall experience with our trails. It's an honor for Dane County to be recognized for our efforts to improve navigation for bicyclists."

The Bicycle Wayfinding Manual was developed in response to Dane County's growing bicycle infrastructure, which presented a need and opportunity to improve navigation for bicyclists across jurisdictions. The Manual was promoted and shared widely with communities across Dane County who have used it for planning and installing signage on several bikeways in at least eight jurisdictions.

Most recently, Dane County Parks installed wayfinding signage along the new 2.5-mile Lower Yahara River Trail that goes from Lake Farm County Park to McFarland's McDaniel Park. The signage tells bicyclists how far they are from and what direction to go to nearby communities, parks, facilities and points of interest such as the

mile-long boardwalk and observation tower. Dane County Executive Joe Parisi has allocated the dollars necessary for planning and design work on the next planned segment of the Lower Yahara River Trail, a link from McFarland south to Fish Camp County Park.

The Bicycle Wayfinding Manual accelerates the vision of Dane County's Parks and Open Space Plan that has a key goal to connect our parks and communities by bike trails. Wayfinding signage based on the Manual will connect the dots while also creating a sense of place for bicyclists as they ride through Dane County. The development of the manual was a cooperative venture with Toole Design Group as the primary consultant and the Madison Area Transportation Board providing project management support.

Communities will be able to apply and help fund their trail and wayfinding projects through Dane County's "PARC and Ride" program. The County Executive's 2018 budget restores funding to this program to provide matching grant funds to communities for the purpose of designing and constructing new trails. A total of \$500,000 in county grants will be available for communities to apply for and further expand Dane County's network of trails.

The Innovations in Planning Award is one of seven awards that are given each year by the American Planning Association Wisconsin Chapter. The award recognizes an approved plan, activity, or event that expands the art and practice of planning. It is given to projects that are original, innovative, transferable and will provide increased understanding of planning and be effective at attaining results.