

Checklist for Trails Project Planning

This checklist is a general list of items that usually need to be included in planning for a trail building or refurbishing type project. Since projects vary widely, not every item will apply to every project. You should work closely with your Project Coach and seek his/her suggestions, review, and eventual agreement that you are ready to carry out your project. Good and thorough planning is not easy, but it is an important key to successfully carrying out your project. The checklist below may include items not applicable to your project. The list is not intended to be done in a single pass, you may need to go back and revise previous steps as you learn more. As you do this planning, you should work closely with your Project Coach.

____ Read the entire Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook, the entire Chester County Council Eagle Scout Handbook, and this checklist.

____ Start out by filling in the Contact Information page of the proposal section of your workbook. In most cases, each box should be filled in.

Eagle Scout Service Project Proposal

____ Describe in detail exactly what you are going to do (but not how yet). Be sure the beneficiary agrees with this description of the scope of the project. This is the first question at the top of Proposal Page C. This should be specific with numbers such as:

We will clear and improve a new ½ mile walking trail at the East Jabip Township Park on Main Street. The trail will be a circle starting behind the picnic pavilion. Most of the route is heavy undergrowth (see pictures on Proposal Page D2) with 4 downed trees crossing the trail that my father will cut out with a chain saw. The trail will be approximately 5 feet wide. We will mark the sides of the trail with logs and branches picked up from the area. No live trees larger than 2" will be cut. In three areas, each about 5 feet long, we will build up the ground over tree roots to reduce the tripping hazard.

not:

I want to build a trail at the township park.

Give specific numbers, dimensions, quantities, locations. Pictures, sketches, and other details can be attached on page "Proposal Page D1", "Proposal Page D2" ... as needed.

____ Carefully study any applicable sections of the information at <http://www.eaglescout.itgo.com/materials.html>. This page provides helpful information, links, and questions to be answered about many useful topics. Which particular sections were applicable to your project?

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

- ____ Describe the scope of leadership required. Note that working with 5 different people, 1 on each of 5 days is not the same as leading the same 5 people for each of 3 day's work sessions, although both involve 5 people. Make this clear in your description.
- ____ Learn any other skills you will need (or will need to teach your workers) for the project to be successful. Use any resources available so that you are prepared to lead the project yourself without having to give up that leadership to someone else. You may need to do research on the internet, talk to your Eagle Project Coach, talk to a professional or skilled do-it-yourselfer, and/or watch the process being done by professionals.
- ____ Materials in the proposal do not need to be specific to the number and lengths but should identify sizes and types (4 x 4, 6 x 6, 2 x 4, 2 x 6, 2 x 12, ¾" plywood, pressure treated, furniture grade, clear, etc.). Will you be using nails, screws, bolts, or other fasteners in your project, and how will you determine the specific size and type to use? This both helps show your understanding of what you are doing, but also if anything is structural, helps prove that you can produce a safe result.
- ____ In thinking about what tools you will need, give some thought to how many and where they will come from. You do not need firm commitments for borrowing each tool yet, but you should have an idea of how many you will need (based on how many people you plan to have working at a time) and where you might be able to borrow the tools your family does not already own. If you need electricity, will that be available on site?
- ____ Identify any permits or permissions that will be required. Normally the beneficiary will be responsible for a building permit if one is required (check with the local building inspector of the township, borough, or city where the project will be done). Generally landscaping projects do not require permits unless you are changing the land contour or are working in a wetlands area. Confirm permission to access the property for your project. Confirm permission to access the property for your project.
- ____ Safety issues might involve possible risk of physical injury, use of tools (only adults can operate chain saws and log splitters, and probably only adults should operate any power saws), working with dangerous materials or chemicals, risk of encounters with dangerous animals such as Deer Ticks (Lyme Disease) or plants (poison Ivy). How will you minimize these risks and how will you be prepared to deal with any situation that may occur?
- ____ With your proposal, you should be prepared to convince each of the people who need to approve it that the project you are proposing will meet the requirements of an Eagle project, and that you will be able to successfully plan, develop, and lead the project. The more you know about what your project will require, the better you

can make this argument. You may want to go ahead and do the detailed planning at this stage before finishing the approvals.

- ___ Get your Project Proposal approved by your Unit Leader, Unit Committee, the Beneficiary. Once you have the first four approval signatures (including you), your district representative (www.EagleScout.itgo.com/contacts.html) for approval.

Eagle Scout Service Project Plan

The following steps get finalized in the Project Plan part of your planning, but the more you know earlier, the better you will be able to explain your project proposal.

- ___ Take pictures of existing conditions at the locations where your trail will go. This will show the conditions before you started, and probably something of the amount of work needed. Describe how these conditions will affect your project.
- ___ Break the project down into major phases. These may represent work days, or other logical divisions of planning and executing your project.
- ___ Prepare something that shows where the trail will go. This might be markings on a map, pictures, aerial photograph, or other representation. Be sure you know the length of the trail you are building or refurbishing. There is a section on Aerial Photographs and Topographic Maps, and how you might get these for your proposal, on <http://www.eaglescout.itgo.com/materials.html> if they would be helpful.
- ___ Prepare step-by-step instructions to prepare you to explain to your workers what they are to do. Each step should be small enough that you can give these instructions to your workers, and they can carry out that step based on the instructions. You need to be able to give detailed enough instructions that someone who knows nothing about your project could carry it out just from your instructions. You might need to give different instructions for different sections of the trail depending on the existing conditions.
- ___ For each step above (not just day by day) determine how many people will be needed for that step and estimate how long it will take. Present this information in a table with 4 columns (task, people, time, person-hours). In this process think about how the step will be done, and thus how many people are needed. This will also help you determine how many people you will need to recruit, and how long your project is likely to take.
- ___ Identify any permits or permissions that will be required. Normally the beneficiary will be responsible for a building permit if one is required (check with the local building inspector of the township, borough, or city where the project will be done). Confirm permission to access the property for your project. Confirm permission to access the property for your project.

- ___ Prepare a list of Materials, with enough detail to define a specific item. Get prices, from multiple sources if the costs are significant. Be sure the materials actually exist. It is a good idea to go look at the materials and be sure they really are what you expect. In many cases the materials you need will already be there, or none are needed.
- ___ Do the same for Supplies (things that you will use up but do not go into the finished project, like temporary tarps).
- ___ Do the same for Tools (things you will use and return). Where will they come from? Be sure you have enough tools for all your workers.
- ___ Prepare a budget. Where will the money come from? If you will be running a fundraiser, you may need to do a fundraiser application (See the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook). If the fundraiser is an event, some planning for that event will be needed as part of your plan. (See www.EagleScout.itgo.com/EventsChecklist.pdf for ideas of what may need to go into this planning).
- ___ Describe general schedule issues such as how many work sessions do you expect, what kind of workers (skills, ages, youth/adult), how many people will you need each work session. How will you recruit and communicate with your workers.
- ___ Prepare a logistics plan for such things as transportation, food/drinks, and bathrooms.
- ___ Prepare a plan for any safety issues that your project will encounter. Will you be using dangerous materials or chemicals like weed killers? Will you be using dangerous tools? Should you have a first aid kit, emergency communications (cell phone), or other emergency preparedness steps? Only adults are allowed to use chain saws and mechanical log splitters? Is everything being done within the policies of the Guide to Safe Scouting (<http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/HealthandSafety/GSS/toc.aspx>)?
- ___ Prepare contingency plans for what might cause postponement or cancelation of your project or a work session. What would you do if this happens?
- ___ Using the plans above, you should be able to describe to unskilled workers:
 - ___ What exact materials, supplies, and tools will be purchased, donated, or borrowed, from where, and for how much money?
 - ___ Where will the necessary funds come from?
 - ___ For anything to be removed, how will they know what to remove, what tools and techniques should be used to remove it, where will the trash go, and how will it get there?

- _____ What conservation techniques should your workers be familiar with to minimize the impact on the environment, both from building the trail and from people using the trail? How will erosion be prevented?
- _____ Review your plans with your Project Coach. If he/she has suggestions, they should be integrated into your plans and the review process repeated if necessary.
- _____ Although not required, once you have completed the final planning process, your district representative (see <http://www.eaglescout.itgo.com/contacts.html>) may be willing to help you review your plans. The final project, as completed, is approved by the Board of Review after you have completed all the requirements for the rank of Eagle Scout. Having the district representative's involvement and review of your final plan is optional, but it can help you avoid many problems or mistakes. **This can also improve your chances of passing the Eagle Scout Board of Review.**
- _____ If for any reason the scope of the project has to change, this change should be communicated to all the people who originally approved the project and with your Project Coach. You do not want to get into a situation where the Board of Review rejects the finished project because you did not do the project that was approved.