



Forest Preserve District of DuPage County
2019 Master Plan

DRAFT



Forest Preserve District of DuPage County



Executive Summary

The Forest Preserve District Today

The Forest Preserve District of DuPage County is made up of 26,000 acres (about 13% of the county's land area), which contain 60 forest preserves, 166 miles of trails, 31 lakes and ponds, 47 miles of rivers and streams, six nature and cultural centers, 931 types of native plants, and 456 types of mammals, birds, reptiles, and amphibians. Each year 4 million people visit the preserves to hike, bike, picnic, fish, boat, camp, golf, and attend naturalist- and ranger-led programs.

Need for a 2019 Master Plan

The Forest Preserve District completed its last master plan in 1992. Since then the agency acquired 3,300 additional acres; completed major natural-resource restoration projects; improved its five nature and cultural centers and added a sixth; renovated two golf courses; and added new trails, parking lots, shelters, and other amenities. After 25 years the Forest Preserve District needed an updated master plan to address this changed environment.

The Planning Process

In late 2017 the Forest Preserve District began a robust planning process. It inventoried its current holdings and held opinion meetings for the public, volunteers, staff, commissioners and special-interest groups. It conducted surveys and analyzed peer agencies as well as national, state and regional trends.

Goals, Objectives and Tactics

From this extensive research the Forest Preserve District identified key priorities to guide it over the next five years: protect and restore natural resources; provide and improve nature experiences and outdoor recreation; maintain and improve trails; and invest in existing mission-aligned facilities.

Certified Projects, Initiatives and Other Considerations

Based on these priorities the Forest Preserve District formulated a list of certified projects and other initiatives to fulfill its goals, objectives and tactics. It is important to note, though that funding sources have yet to be identified and that unforeseen grant funding or new partnerships may bring additional mission-aligned opportunities, which the Forest Preserve District will be flexible enough to address.



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Certified Projects

Certified Projects

The term “certified project” refers to one the Forest Preserve District plans to prioritize, schedule and fund over the next five years.

The workgroup identified projects that aligned best with the approved goals and objectives, had the greatest positive effect on the public, and were most critical to the continued operation of the Forest Preserve District. To do so, each member identified specific projects for evaluation. The group then assessed and ranked those projects by linking each to related master plan goals and objectives. In this way it collaboratively identified projects most critical to operations.

The resulting list of 33 proposed natural resource, infrastructure maintenance and capital projects then went to the Board of Commissioners. After reviews and discussions, the board directed the workgroup to make revisions, ultimately agreeing on 32 certified projects to include in the master plan.

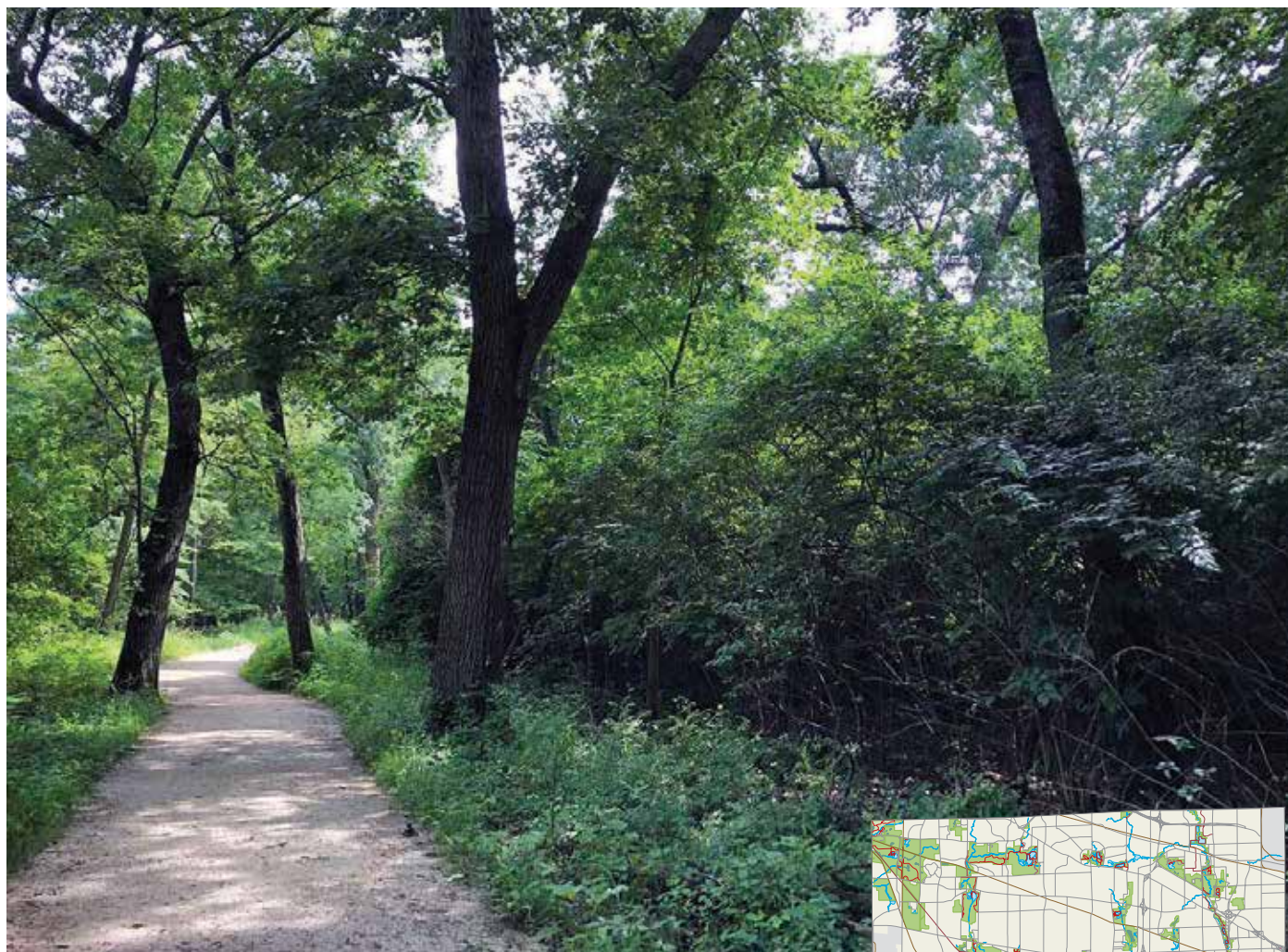
The projects are divided into four cost categories, conservatively assuming each project was implemented to the full extent as conceptually envisioned.

\$	\$0 – \$500,000
\$\$	\$501,000 – \$2,000,000
\$\$\$	\$2,000,001 – \$5,000,000
\$\$\$\$	\$5,000,001 – \$20,000,000

As directed by the board, the Forest Preserve District will develop and refine all project plans, cost estimates and subsequent project implementations.

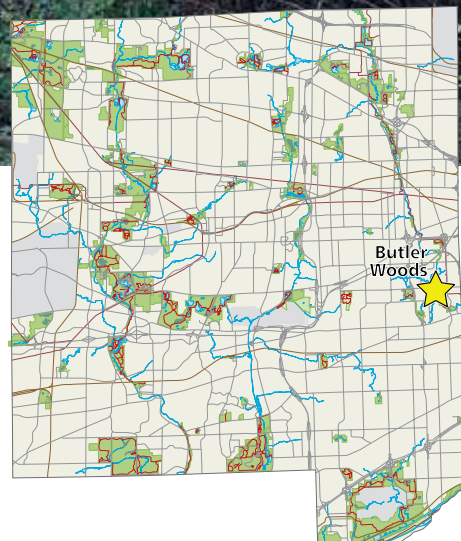
Fullersburg Woods

Butler Woods Restoration



Restoration of highly visible mesic woodland, diverse marsh, vernal ponds and bluff communities surrounding the nature education center

Three- to five-year project to remove and herbicide invasive woody and herbaceous plants, thin native woody plants, augment native species, stabilize the bluff area, and provide follow-up management



Estimated Cost \$

Description

Butler Woods is a 62-acre Class IV mesic woodland with portions of diverse marsh, vernal ponds and bluff communities. It has 336 native plant species including eight of special concern. The three- to five-year project will remove invasive woody plants, thin abundant woody native plants, herbicide invasive woody and herbaceous plants, augment native species, stabilize the bluff area, and provide follow-up management.

Project Need

The highly visible site surrounds the Fullersburg Woods Nature Education Center and is used for educational programming year-round. There has been some work at the site, but it needs additional management. This project will greatly benefit this Class IV ecosystem, which offers native plants and animals critical habitat in a heavily urbanized county.

Master Plan Alignment

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|---------------|--|
| Goal 1 | Preserve, protect and restore open spaces |
| Objective 1.1 | Allocate additional resources to maintain existing high quality natural areas and create new ones |
| Objective 1.2 | Promote the recovery of threatened and endangered species |
| Objective 1.3 | Collaborate with other organizations to further countywide restoration of natural areas |
| Goal 2 | Help people to cultivate a lifelong enthusiasm for nature by offering meaningful, first-rate outdoor recreation and learning experiences |
| Objective 2.3 | Complement and expand existing recreational offerings with increasing participation rates and more social interaction |
| Objective 2.4 | Enhance and promote unstructured nature exploration |
| Goal 3 | Improve preserves to increase access, use, efficiency and productivity |
| Objective 3.1 | Improve education centers and recreational sites |
| Goal 4 | Refocus resources by reducing infrastructures and tasks not related to the mission |
| Objective 4.3 | Refine programs to reflect the Forest Preserve District's mission, research in natural resources and expertise |

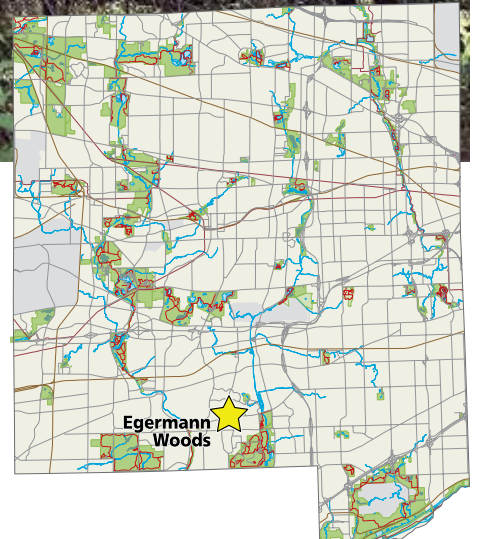
Egermann Woods

Grove Restoration



Restoration of mesic woodland with portions of wet-mesic woodland, wet-mesic upland forest and vernal ponds

Three- to five-year project to remove and herbicide invasive woody and herbaceous plants, thin abundant woody native plants, augment native species, and provide follow-up management



Estimated Cost \$

Description

The grove is a 77-acre Class IV mesic woodland with portions of wet-mesic woodland, wet-mesic upland forest and vernal ponds. It contains 297 native plants species including six of special concern. The three- to five-year project will remove invasive woody plants, thin abundant woody native plants, herbicide invasive woody and herbaceous plants, augment native species, and provide follow-up management.

Project Need

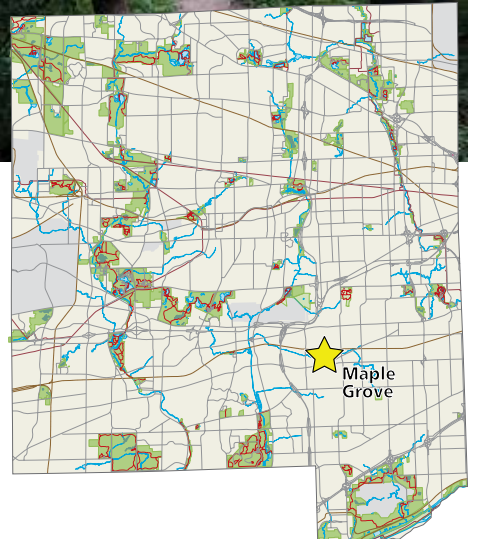
There has been some work at the site, which has a volunteer steward, but it needs additional management. This project will greatly benefit this Class IV ecosystem, which offers native plants and animals critical habitat in a heavily urbanized county.

Master Plan Alignment

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| Objective 3.1 | Improve education centers and recreational sites |
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| Objective 4.3 | Refine programs to reflect the Forest Preserve District's mission, research in natural resources and expertise |

Maple Grove

Maple Woods Restoration



Restoration of Illinois Natural Areas Inventory-recognized mesic upland forest with portions of wet-mesic upland forest, immature upland forest, vernal ponds, and stream communities

Three- to five-year project to remove and herbicide invasive woody and herbaceous plants, thin woody native plants (primarily overabundant sugar maples), augment native species, and provide follow-up management

Estimated Cost \$

Description

Maple Woods is a 65-acre Class IV mesic upland forest with portions of wet-mesic upland forest, immature upland forest, vernal ponds and stream communities. It contains 258 native plant species including one state-endangered and 17 of special concern. The three-to five-year project will remove invasive woody plants, thin abundant woody native plants (primarily sugar maples), herbicide invasive woody and herbaceous plants, augment native species, and provide follow-up management.

Project Need

There has been some work at this site, which has an active volunteer steward, but it needs additional management, especially to remove the overabundant sugar maples. This project will greatly benefit this Class IV ecosystem, which is recognized by the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory and offers native plants and animals critical habitat in a heavily urbanized county.

Master Plan Alignment

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Herrick Lake

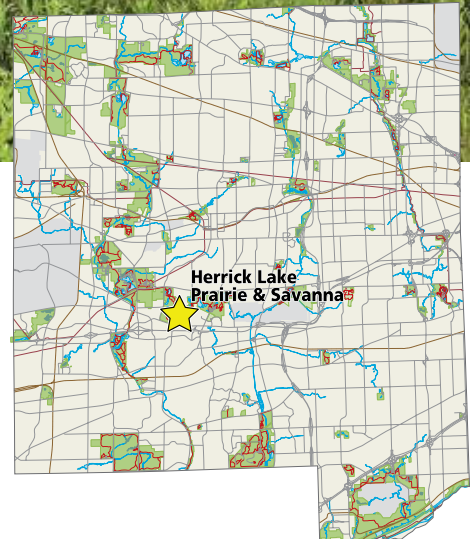
Prairie and Savanna Restoration



Restoration of Forest Preserve District's largest intact natural area with mesic woodland, shrub meadow, marsh, immature upland forest, tall-grass meadow, and re-created prairie

Three- to five-year project to remove and herbicide invasive woody and herbaceous plants, thin woody native plants, seed native species, and provide follow-up management

Estimated Cost \$\$\$



Description

This 600-acre project site is the Forest Preserve District's largest intact block of natural areas and is dominated by Class IV, III and II ecosystems with a number of communities, such as mesic woodland, shrub meadow, marsh, immature upland forest, tall-grass meadow and re-created prairie. The three- to five-year project will remove invasive woody plants, thin abundant woody native plants, herbicide invasive woody and herbaceous plants, seed native species, and provide follow-up management.

Project Need

This project will reconnect fragmented natural areas to create a showpiece of natural habitat. It will disable buried agricultural drain tiles to restore wetland hydrology, remove buckthorn tree lines along Warrenville Road and weedy invasive plants, and seed with native grasses and flowers.

Master Plan Alignment

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Fischer Woods

Dunklee's Grove Restoration



Restoration of wet-mesic upland forest with portions of wet-mesic savanna, immature upland forest, diverse marsh, vernal pond, and stream communities

Three- to five-year project to remove and herbicide invasive woody and herbaceous plants, thin woody native plants, seed native species, and provide follow-up management

Estimated Cost \$

Description

Dunklee's Grove is a 75-acre Class IV wet-mesic upland forest with portions of wet-mesic savanna, immature upland forest, diverse marsh, vernal pond and stream communities. It contains 340 native plant species including one state-endangered, one state-threatened and 18 of special concern. The three- to five-year project will remove invasive woody plants, thin abundant woody native plants, herbicide invasive woody and herbaceous plants, augment native species, and provide follow-up management.

Project Need

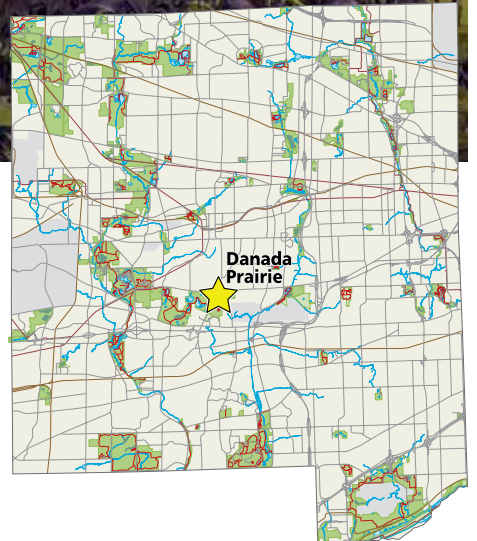
There has been some work at this site, primarily from dedicated volunteer stewards, but it needs additional management. This project will greatly benefit this Class IV ecosystem, which offers native plants and animals critical habitat in a heavily urbanized county.

Master Plan Alignment

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Danada

Rice Lake Prairie Restoration



Replacement of Eurasian meadow and invasive plants with native grasses and wildflowers at busy intersection to showcase prairie-restoration efforts

Three- to five-year project to remove or herbicide invasive woody and herbaceous plants, convert existing meadow to native prairie species, and provide follow-up management

Estimated Cost \$\$

Description

This site currently contains a tall grass meadow that has had some supplemental prairie seeding and tree planting. The three- to five-year project will remove or herbicide invasive woody plants and herbaceous plants, convert existing meadow vegetation to native prairie species, and provide follow-up management.

Project Need

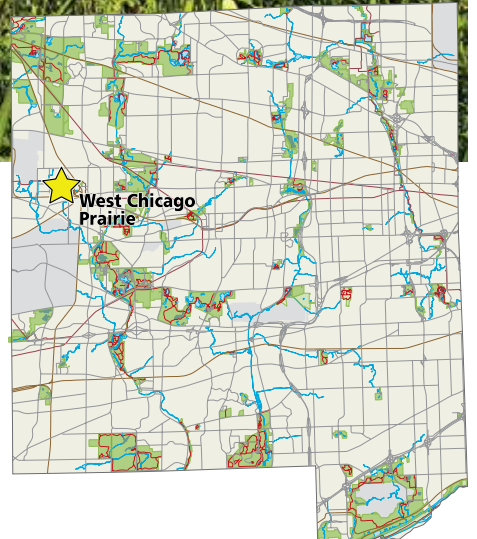
At the corner of Naperville and Butterfield roads, Rice Lake and its surrounding fields and rolling hills dominate the landscape. The project will convert the Eurasian meadows into a native vibrant prairie. It will replace existing vegetation with native grasses and wildflowers by removing nonnative invasive woody and herbaceous plants and introducing the appropriate native species. The site will be a showcase for prairie restoration at one of the busiest intersections in DuPage County.

Master Plan Alignment

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West Chicago Prairie

Restoration



Additional management of diverse prairie ecosystem within the state-designated Truitt-Hoff Nature Preserve

Three- to five-year project to remove or herbicide invasive woody and herbaceous plants, seed with native prairie species, and provide follow-up management

Estimated Cost \$\$

Description

West Chicago Prairie is an incredibly diverse 125-acre Class IV ecosystem that contains the finest prairie remnants in the county. It contains 616 native plant species, including one federally threatened, two state-endangered, one state-threatened and 56 of special concern. The three- to five-year project will remove or herbicide invasive woody and herbaceous plants, seed with native species, and provide follow-up management.

Project Need

This site is home to the state-designated Truitt-Hoff Nature Preserve and is recognized by the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory. It's one of the region's premier natural areas. Thanks in part to a very active volunteer stewardship group, there's been much work at the site, but it needs additional management. This project will greatly benefit this Class IV ecosystem, which offers native plants and animals critical habitat in a heavily urbanized county.

Master Plan Alignment

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Timber Ridge

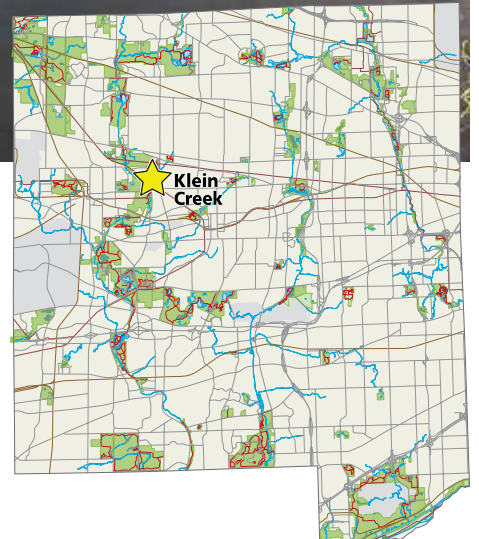
Klein Creek Restoration



Restoration of Klein Creek between Kline Creek Farm and the Timber Ridge Visitor Center

Three- to five-year project to stabilize and restore the creek, in-stream habitat and floodplain, and provide follow-up management

Estimated Cost \$\$\$



Description

This three- to five-year project at this Class IV savanna ecosystem will stabilize and restore the meandering Klein Creek between County Farm and Geneva roads, restore in-stream habitat along the entire reach of the creek and the surrounding floodplain, and provide follow-up management.

Project Need

This section of the creek flows directly between Kline Creek Farm and the Timber Ridge Visitor Center and offers picturesque moments and excellent opportunities for educational programming. There is potential cost-sharing and a leverage of funds with DuPage River Salt Creek Workgroup and Carol Stream.

Master Plan Alignment

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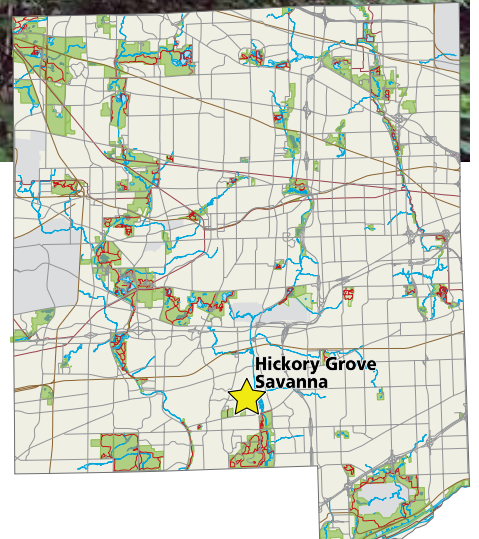
Hickory Grove

Savanna Restoration



Restoration of regionally important woodland site with mesic woodland, immature upland forest, shrub meadow, tall grass meadow, and stream communities

Three- to five-year project to remove or herbicide invasive woody and herbaceous plants, seed native species, and provide follow-up management



Estimated Cost \$

Description

The savanna is a 31-acre Class IV mesic woodland with portions of immature upland forest, shrub meadow, tall grass meadow and stream communities. It contains 243 native plant species, including three of special concern. The three-year project will remove invasive woody plants, thin abundant woody native plants, herbicide invasive woody and herbaceous plants, seed native species, and provide follow-up management.

Project Need

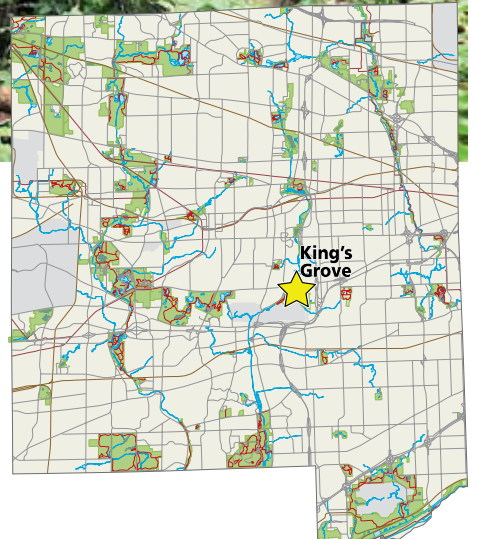
Its open structure and lack of dominance by aggressive nonnative species make this one of the most important woodland restoration sites in the northeastern morainal division. There has been some work at this site, but it needs additional management. This project will greatly benefit this Class IV ecosystem, which offers native plants and animals critical habitat in a heavily urbanized county.

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Hidden Lake

King's Grove Restoration



Restoration of dry-mesic savanna, immature upland forest, diverse marsh, shrub marsh, and vernal ponds adjacent to The Morton Arboretum

Three- to five-year project to remove and herbicide invasive woody and herbaceous plants, thin abundant woody native plants, augment native species, and provide follow-up management

Estimated Cost \$\$

Description

King's Grove is a 125-acre Class IV dry-mesic woodland with portions of dry-mesic savanna, immature upland forest, diverse marsh, shrub marsh and vernal ponds. It contains 321 native plant species including one state-threatened and nine of special concern. The three-to five-year project will remove invasive woody plants, thin abundant woody native plants, herbicide invasive woody and herbaceous plants, augment native plant species, and provide follow-up management.

Project Need

The site is adjacent to The Morton Arboretum. There has been some work at the site by arboretum volunteers and staff, but it needs additional management. This project will greatly capitalize on restoration work at the arboretum and compound the benefits of this Class IV ecosystem, which offers native plants and animals critical habitat in a heavily urbanized county.

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Springbrook Prairie

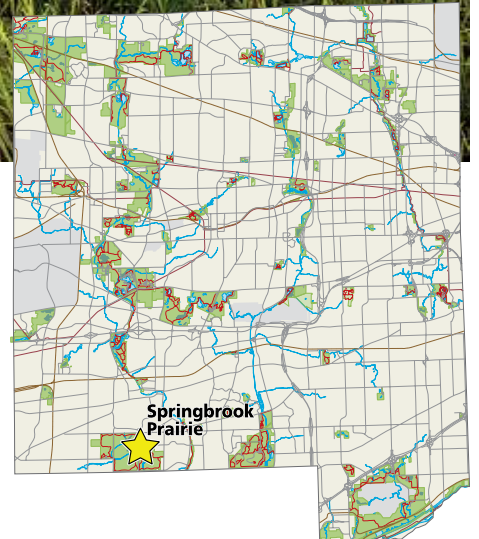
Prairie and Grassland Restoration



Restoration of fragmented natural areas to create showpiece natural habitat

Three- to five-year project to remove and herbicide nonnative woody and herbaceous plants and overseed with native grasses and flowers

Estimated Cost \$\$



Description

This project area includes a number of communities including mesic and wet prairies, grasslands, wetlands, fens, and re-created prairie. The three- to five-year project will remove invasive and exotic woody plants, herbicide invasive woody and herbaceous plants, and overseed native plant species in previous agricultural areas that have gone fallow.

Project Need

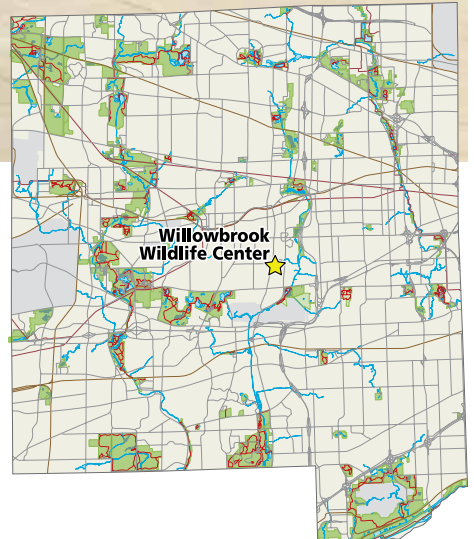
This is the largest intact block of natural prairie in DuPage County. As an Illinois nature preserve, Springbrook Prairie is dominated by Class IV, III and II ecosystems. Work on the 1,800-acre site will reconnect fragmented natural areas to create a showpiece of natural habitat. Efforts will include removing nonnative tree lines throughout the preserve to maintain an open landscape; removing weedy invasive plants and shrubs; and seeding with native grasses and flowers. It will help ensure the perseverance of no less than seven endangered and threatened species.

Master Plan Alignment

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Willowbrook Wildlife Center

Improvements Phase II



Renovated and expanded rehabilitation clinic

Addition to visitor center for exhibits and learning labs

Animal enclosures along the outdoor exhibit trail

Estimated Cost \$\$\$\$

Description

As part of the second phase of Willowbrook Wildlife Center's 2010 master plan, the project will construct a 16,850-square-foot addition to the existing visitor center for exhibits, learning labs and a rehabilitation clinic. For the permanently disabled animals that live along the outdoor exhibit trails, new enclosures will create more naturalized habitats.

Project Need

Willowbrook Wildlife Center is a nationally recognized wildlife rehabilitation center that not only serves DuPage but also assists the surrounding collar counties. Its educational programs have introduced tens of thousands of schoolchildren and other visitors to the wild animals that share their backyards. Over the decades the center has seen a dramatic increase in the number of injured and orphaned animals it admits for care each year, and the aging visitor center has been unable to keep up with the growing needs of visitors and programs. This project will transform Willowbrook Wildlife Center into 21st century facility.

Master Plan Alignment

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| Objective 1.3 | Collaborate with other organizations to further countywide restoration of natural areas |
| Goal 2 | Help people cultivate a lifelong enthusiasm for nature by offering meaningful, first-rate outdoor recreation and learning experiences |
| Objective 2.1 | Improve the preserve experience by modernizing amenities |
| Objective 2.3 | Complement and expand existing recreational offerings with increasing participation rates and more social interaction |
| Objective 2.4 | Enhance and promote unstructured nature exploration |
| Goal 3 | Improve preserves to increase access, use, efficiency and productivity |
| Objective 3.1 | Improve education centers and recreational sites |
| Objective 3.2 | Evaluate and invest in maintenance and operations buildings as well as infrastructure |
| Objective 3.3 | Modify forest preserve facilities to accommodate a diverse range of users |
| Goal 4 | Refocus resources by reducing infrastructures and tasks not related to the mission |
| Objective 4.1 | Evaluate and eliminate infrastructures that do not actively support significant operations |
| Objective 4.3 | Refine programs to reflect the Forest Preserve District's mission, research in natural resources and expertise |

Mayslake Peabody Estate

Exterior Restoration and Parking Improvements



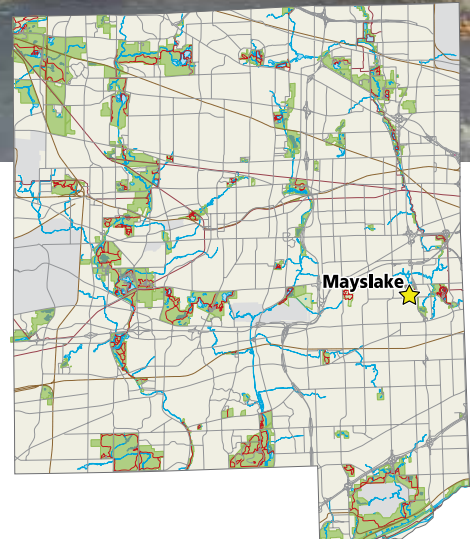
Restoration of exterior masonry, windows and
woodwork to protect historic materials

Expanded interior space for cultural
and educational programming

Perimeter drainage system

Renovated parking lots

Estimated Cost \$\$\$\$



Description

The project will restore all of the exterior masonry, windows and woodwork to protect historical materials and expand interior space for cultural and educational programming. A new perimeter foundation drainage system will ensure the interior of the hall remains dry. The project will also renovate the retreat wing parking lot and front parking lot to improve accessibility and address runoff concerns.

Project Need

Designed by renowned Chicago architect Benjamin H. Marshal, the Tudor Revival style Mayslake Hall is on the National Register of Historic Places and is one of the last remaining examples of the country estates that dotted DuPage between 1880 and 1924. It serves as an education center, connecting people to nature through art and providing space for exhibits, adult-education classes, teacher trainings, tours, theatrical presentations, concerts, community events and private rentals. Because Mayslake Hall is almost 100 years old, many of the original materials used in its construction need to be repaired or replaced. This project will protect the historical character of the structure and the millions of dollars in restoration already invested in the hall's interior. It will ensure the entire exterior above and below grade, including windows and doorways, will be sealed water-tight to control humidity; increase energy efficiencies; exclude water, pests, and unwanted wildlife; and minimize further deterioration of the structure.

Master Plan Alignment

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|---------------|---|
| Goal 2 | Help people cultivate a lifelong enthusiasm for nature by offering meaningful, first-rate outdoor recreation and learning experiences |
| Objective 2.1 | Improve the preserve experience by modernizing amenities |
| Goal 3 | Improve preserves to increase access, use, efficiency and productivity |
| Objective 3.1 | Improve education centers and recreational sites |
| Objective 3.3 | Modify forest preserve facilities to accommodate a diverse range of users |
| Goal 4 | Refocus resources by reducing infrastructures and tasks not related to the mission |
| Objective 4.2 | Reevaluate operations to increase efficiency and productivity and to reduce the maintenance of areas not critical to the mission |
| Objective 4.4 | Evaluate and make recommendations for historic holdings |

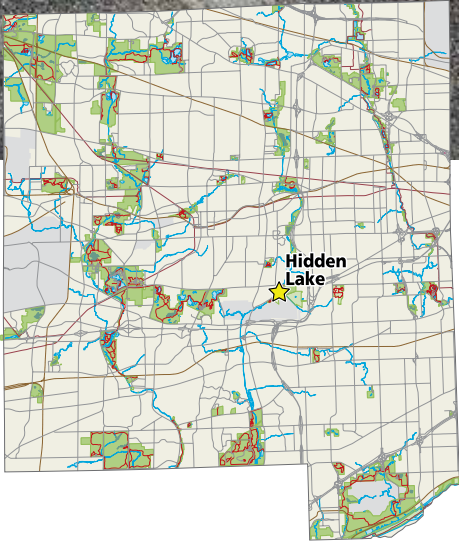
Hidden Lake

Bridge Replacements



Bridge replacements on looped trails around Round Meadow and Eagle lakes

Estimated Cost \$



Description

The project will cover anticipated shortfalls in funding to replace bridges #17-9131 and #17-B-001.

Bridge #17-9131 is an 80-foot prefabricated bridge with a steel truss and reinforced concrete abutments. It's part of a 0.9-mile looped trail around Round Meadow Lake. The project will replace the structure with a 50-foot prefabricated single-span bridge with a steel truss and reinforced concrete deck and abutments. The shorter span will not affect the lake.

Bridge #17-B-001 is part of a 1-mile looped trail around Eagle Lake. The project will replace the structure with a 14-foot-wide prefabricated single-span bridge with a steel truss and reinforced concrete substructure.

Both bridges will have a 20-ton vehicle load capacity and a 90 pounds-per-square-foot pedestrian load capacity.

Project Need

Recent inspections determined the two bridges are structurally deficient, but both give anglers, hikers, bicyclists and dog walkers access to well-used forest preserve trails. Their permanent removal would limit visitors' access to amenities at this popular preserve and staff's ability to maintain those amenities.

Master Plan Alignment

- Goal 2 Help people cultivate a lifelong enthusiasm for nature by offering meaningful, first-rate outdoor recreation and learning experiences
 - Objective 2.2 Create trail links that connect key recreational sites and regional trails to major residential, commercial and institutional areas

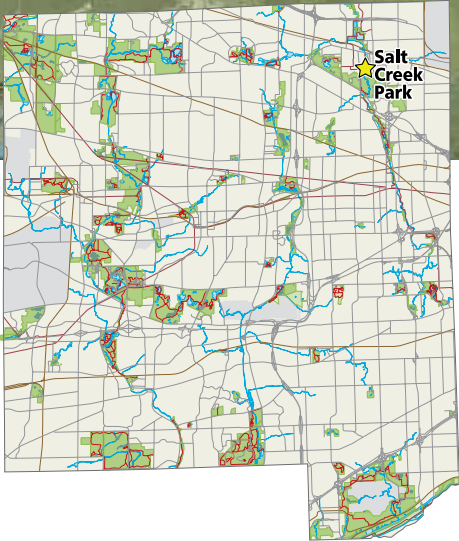
Salt Creek Park

Bridge Replacement



Bridge replacement on trail from Addison Road

Estimated Cost \$\$



Description

This project will replace bridge #24-B-001.

Project Need

Recent inspections determined the bridge is structurally deficient. Floodwaters frequently flow over the deck and rails, increasing maintenance and repair costs. Its low profile within the floodplain causes debris to continually build on its piers, restricting the flow of Salt Creek and contributing to scouring, erosion and sedimentation downstream. Forest Preserve District maintenance vehicles can no longer cross it.

This structure primarily provides pedestrian access and connects neighborhoods along Addison Road with the preserve. It also connects the Salt Creek Greenway Trail with the trailhead at the main parking lot. Its permanent removal would limit visitors' access to this popular preserve.

Master Plan Alignment

Goal 2 Help people cultivate a lifelong enthusiasm for nature by offering meaningful, first-rate outdoor recreation and learning experiences

Objective 2.2 Create trail links that connect key recreational sites and regional trails to major residential, commercial and institutional areas

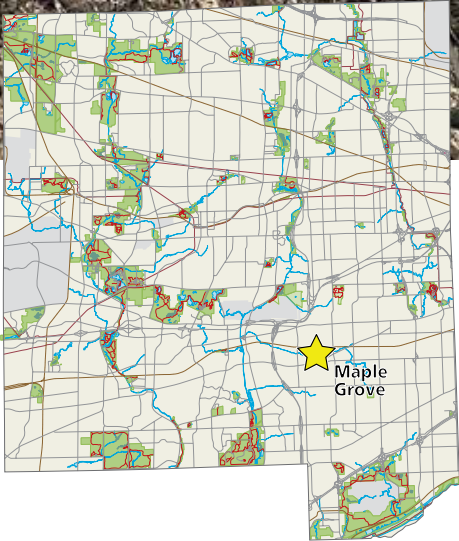
Maple Grove

Bridge Replacement



Bridge and sanitary sewer pipe replacements along north-south trail between Gilbert Park and adjacent neighborhoods

Estimated Cost \$



Description

The project will cover anticipated shortfalls in funding to replace bridge #19-B-001.

Project Need

Recent inspections determined the bridge, which crosses St. Joseph's Creek, is structurally deficient.

The bridge provides north-south access through Maple Grove and between ballfields at Gilbert Park and neighborhoods along Gilbert Avenue and Maple Roads. It also carries a significant sanitary sewer overflow pipe for the Downers Grove Sanitary District. Its permanent removal would eliminate the only north-south pedestrian route in the preserve and minimize the sanitary district's service area.

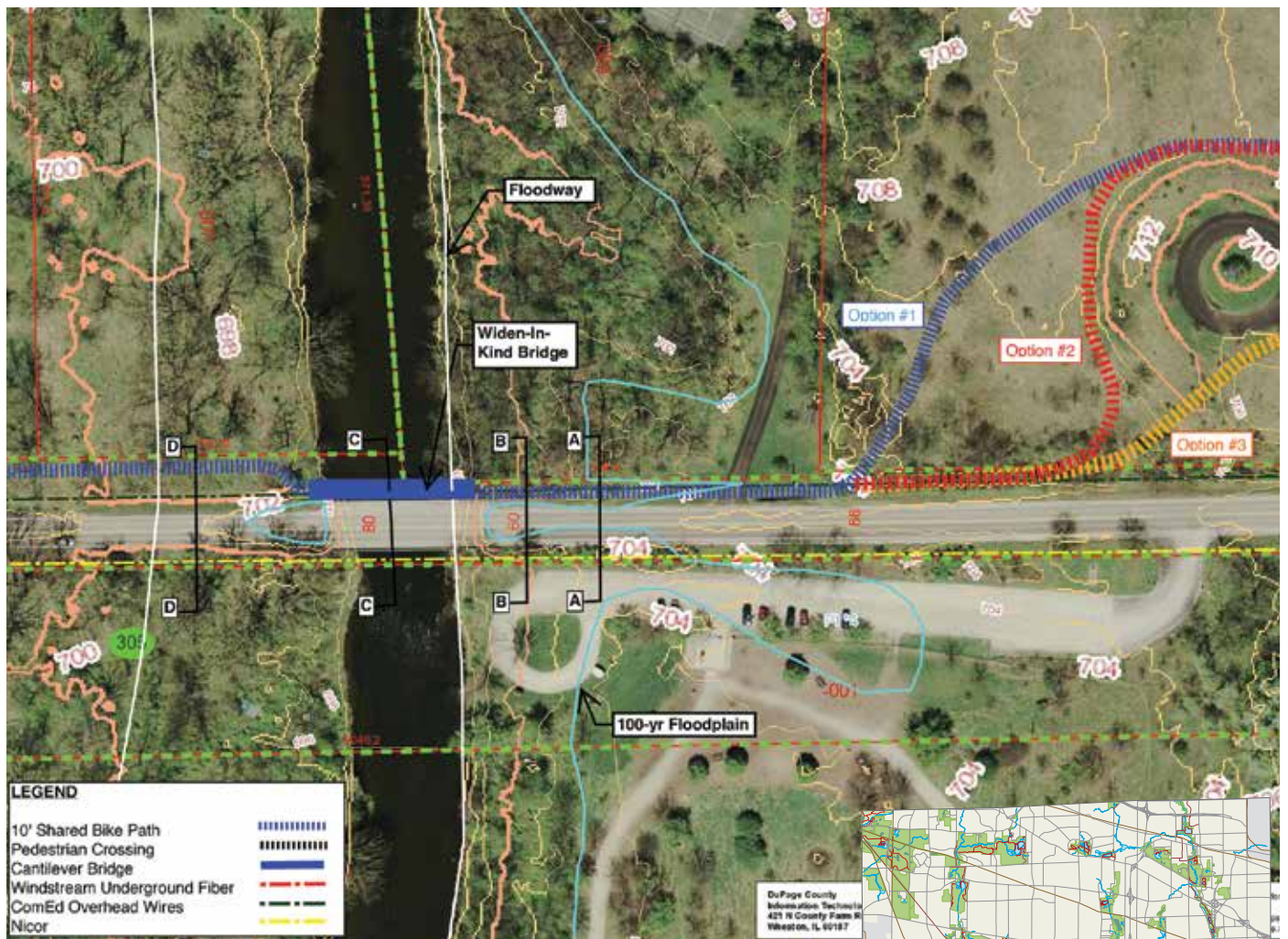
Master Plan Alignment

Goal 2 Help people cultivate a lifelong enthusiasm for nature by offering meaningful, first-rate outdoor recreation and learning experiences

Objective 2.2 Create trail links that connect key recreational sites and regional trails to major residential, commercial and institutional areas

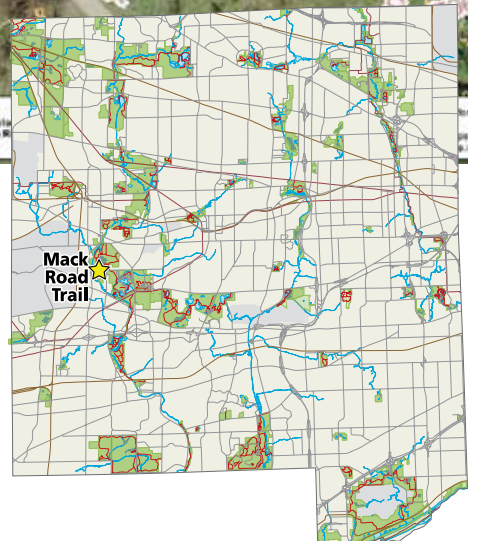
Blackwell

Mack Road Trail



1-mile trail along Mack Road connecting neighborhoods west of Route 59 to the McKee Marsh parking lot

Estimated Cost \$



Description

The project will construct a 1-mile-long, 10-foot-wide multipurpose asphalt path within the right-of-way on the north side of Mack Road between Route 59 and the turnaround at the McKee Marsh parking lot. It will also modify the pedestrian signal at Route 59 to connect the trail to sidewalks and trails within the Fox Hollow subdivision. Warrenville will expand and upgrade the bridge on Mack Road to accommodate an elevated path.

Project Need

Blackwell is the hub of a trail network that connects the Illinois Prairie Path to the West Branch DuPage River Trail. Per a 2016 intergovernmental agreement, the Forest Preserve District has committed to work with Warrenville to construct this trail to increase access to the West Branch DuPage River Trail and thousands of acres of open space, especially for residents of the Fox Hollow and Maple Hill subdivisions.

Master Plan Alignment

- Goal 2 Help people cultivate a lifelong enthusiasm for nature by offering meaningful, first-rate outdoor recreation and learning experiences
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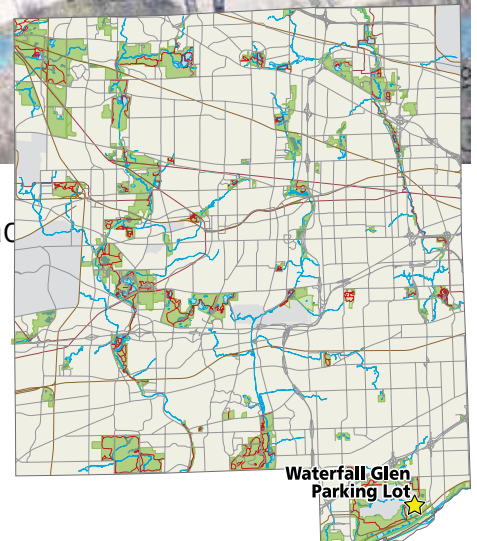
Waterfall Glen

Cass Avenue and Bluff Road Parking Lot



175 – 200 car parking lot near Cass Avenue and Bluff Road to serve the Rocky Glen area

Estimated Cost \$\$



Description

The project will construct an asphalt parking lot for 175 – 200 cars near the intersection of Cass Avenue and Bluff Road. It will make minor adjustments to the intersection to improve visibility, deter parking on roadway shoulders, and create a trailhead and a connector trail to the Rocky Glen Trail. Overall, it will enhance safety and access to a highly popular destination.

Project Need

On weekends when the existing lot is at capacity, visitors heading to the Rocky Glen area park along the shoulders of Cass and Bluff. In nice weather, there can be up to 300 cars in no-parking areas or areas reserved for the youth-group campground. These visitors walk or bike into oncoming traffic and are often hidden by parked cars. Some vehicles prevent groups from parking at their sites at the youth-group campground.

This informal parking arrangement presents safety concerns for pedestrians and motorists, and the 90-degree bend at the intersection of Bluff and Cass further limits visibility. Because the intersection has multiple jurisdictions (the Forest Preserve District, Argonne National Laboratory and the Downers Grove Highway Township Road District) law enforcement efforts are a challenge.

Master Plan Alignment

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| Goal 2 | Help people cultivate a lifelong enthusiasm for nature by offering meaningful, first-rate outdoor recreation and learning experiences |
| Objective 2.1 | Improve the preserve experience by modernizing amenities |
| Objective 2.3 | Complement and expand existing recreational offerings with increasing participation rates and more social interaction |
| Goal 3 | Improve preserves to increase access, use, efficiency and productivity |
| Objective 3.1 | Improve education centers and recreational sites |
| Objective 3.3 | Modify forest preserve facilities to accommodate a diverse range of users |
| Goal 4 | Refocus resources by reducing infrastructures that do not actively support significant operations |
| Objective 4.1 | Evaluate and eliminate infrastructures that do not actively support significant operations |
| Objective 4.2 | Reevaluate operations to increase efficiency and productivity and to reduce the maintenance of areas not critical to the mission |

Districtwide

Restroom Improvements



Evaluate needs and locations for modern public restrooms with toilet and hand-washing conveniences, giving particular consideration to critical high-use recreational areas

Estimated Cost \$\$\$

Description

The project will first evaluate and identify locations that need modern restroom facilities and then identify which types of facilities would best serve each location. A follow-up analysis will determine which locations are in highest need. A primary goal will be to remove and replace pit latrines, which are unpopular with the public. Modern facilities with toilet and hand-washing conveniences would be portable units regularly serviced by outside vendors or new masonry buildings, which would have municipal sewer and water connections or wells and septic fields as required by local codes. Grading, paving and landscaping will comply with accessibility requirements and stormwater best management practices.

Project Need

Restrooms at many of the Forest Preserve District’s most popular preserves are more than 30 years old and consist of portable or pit toilets with no potable water. A steady increase in use has put a strain on these aging facilities. Modern restrooms with toilets and hand-washing conveniences will better accommodate visitors, improve accessibility, and reduce annual operational and maintenance costs.

Master Plan Alignment

- Goal 2 Help people cultivate a lifelong enthusiasm for nature by offering meaningful, first-rate outdoor recreation and learning experiences
 - Objective 2.1 Improve the preserve experience by modernizing amenities
- Goal 3 Improve preserves to increase access, use, efficiency and productivity
 - Objective 3.3 Modify forest preserve facilities to accommodate a diverse range of users

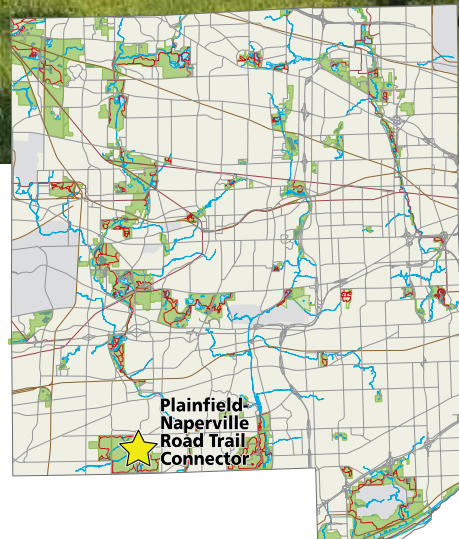
Springbrook Prairie

Trail Link to Regional Trail



0.25-mile trail connecting a trailhead to the Southern DuPage Regional Trail

Estimated Cost \$



Description

The preliminary vision of the project includes the construction of a 10-foot-wide, 0.25-mile-long limestone pedestrian and bicycle trail along the forest preserve right-of-way on the east side of Naperville-Plainfield Road. The trail will connect a municipal sidewalk along the Brighton Ridge subdivision to a limestone trailhead parking lot in the preserve. The project will also modify the trailhead and remove select trees and shrubs within the right-of-way and preserve.

Project Need

Residents of the densely populated Brighton Ridge subdivision currently cross five commercial entrances and the busy intersection of Naperville-Plainfield Road and 75th Street to reach trails within Springbrook Prairie. A municipal sidewalk on the east side of Naperville-Plainfield Road runs from the subdivision’s Bailey Road south to the edge of the preserve but stops 0.25 mile short of the trailhead. The new trail segment will connect the end of the sidewalk with the trailhead, which links to the Henslow’s and Sunflower trails and a trail underpass below Naperville-Plainfield Road. This will give residents safer access to Springbrook Prairie, the Southern DuPage Regional Trail and thousands of acres of open space.

Master Plan Alignment

- Goal 2 Help people cultivate a lifelong enthusiasm for nature by offering meaningful, first-rate outdoor recreation and learning experiences
 - Objective 2.2 Create trail links that connect key recreational sites and regional trails to major residential, commercial and institutional areas

Fullersburg Woods

Visitor Center HVAC, Exterior and Exhibit Improvements



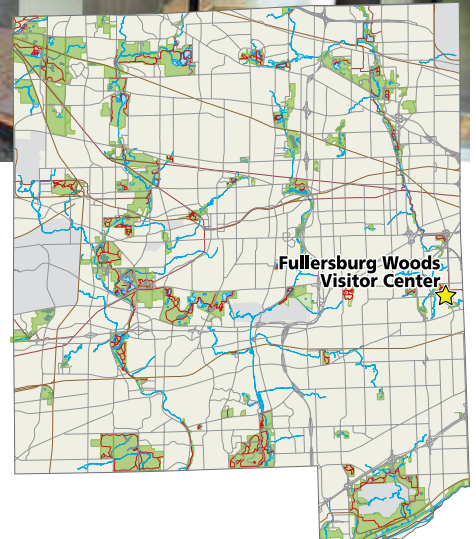
New HVAC and mechanical systems

Replaced or repaired exterior woodwork
and tuck-pointed limestone masonry

Updated lighting

Updated educational exhibits

Estimated Cost \$\$



Description

This project will replace and relocate the HVAC and mechanical systems, replace or repair deteriorated exterior woodwork, and tuck-point the building's limestone masonry. It will redesign and replace outdated educational exhibits, provide cases for sensitive artifacts, update lighting to increase energy efficiencies and reduce ultraviolet effects on exhibits and artifacts, and address accessibility concerns.

Project Need

The visitor center at the Fullersburg Woods Nature Education Center attracts approximately 45,000 preserve users a year of which about 21,000 are children from schools within the larger 6 County Chicagoland metropolitan area.

The HVAC and mechanical systems are at the end of their useful life and need to be relocated for easier access.

During major rains the lower level continues to flood, requiring extensive clean up and creating problems with humidity. After years of such wear, the exterior woodwork needs to be replaced or repainted, and the interior and exterior limestone masonry needs tuck-pointing and minor repairs.

The exhibits have not been significantly changed over the past 15 years and need to be refreshed to better enhance visitors' experiences.

Master Plan Alignment

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|---------------|---|
| Goal 1 | Preserve, protect and restore open spaces |
| Objective 1.2 | Promote the recovery of threatened and endangered species |
| Goal 2 | Help people cultivate a lifelong enthusiasm for nature by offering meaningful, first-rate outdoor recreation and learning experiences |
| Objective 2.1 | Improve the preserve experience by modernizing amenities |
| Objective 2.3 | Complement and expand existing recreational offerings with increasing participation rates and more social interaction |
| Objective 2.4 | Enhance and promote unstructured nature exploration |
| Goal 3 | Improve preserves to increase access, use, efficiency and productivity |
| Objective 3.1 | Improve education centers and recreational sites |
| Objective 3.2 | Evaluate and invest in maintenance and operations buildings as well as infrastructure |
| Objective 3.3 | Modify forest preserve facilities to accommodate a diverse range of users |
| Goal 4 | Refocus resources by reducing infrastructures and tasks not related to the mission |
| Objective 4.3 | Refine programs to reflect the Forest Preserve District's mission, research in natural resources and expertise |
| Objective 4.4 | Evaluate and make recommendations for historic holdings |

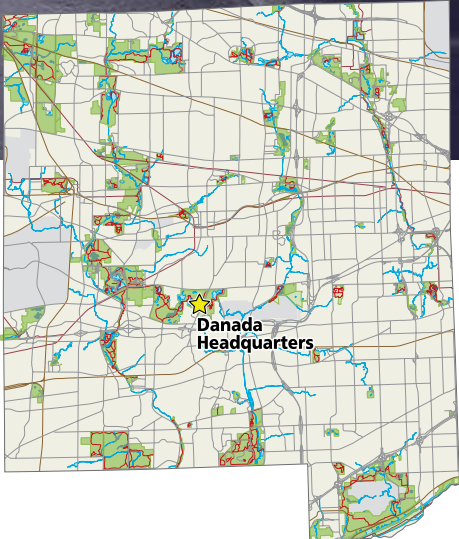
Headquarters

Building Roof Replacement



New roof to replace existing materials at the end of their useful life

Estimated Cost \$



Description The project will replace the 49,883-square-foot roof of the headquarters building using materials similar to the existing roof, which is 68.5% asphalt shingle and 31.5% EPDM low slope. There is \$275,000 in the current capital budget for the project.

Project Need Although not a primary destination for visitors, the headquarters building houses the Forest Preserve District’s administrative offices, which serve DuPage County taxpayers. The roofing system is a primary component that protects the building’s infrastructure and interior from damage.

The building was completed in 2000, and sections of the asphalt roof are at the end of their useful life and require many repairs. The low-slope roof requires annual visits by contractors to keep it water-tight.

- Master Plan Alignment**
- Goal 3 Improve preserves to increase access, use, efficiency and productivity
 - Objective 3.2 Evaluate and invest in maintenance and operations buildings as well as infrastructure
 - Tactic 3.2a Make structures more energy efficient

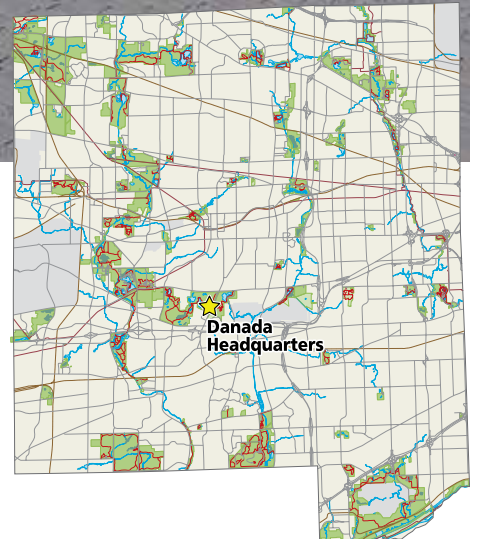
Headquarters

Building HVAC Replacement



New energy-efficient, cost-effective system to replace existing unit at the end of its useful life

Estimated Cost \$\$



Description

The project will replace the building’s HVAC system. A price range has been provided because there are several replacement options.

Project Need

Although not a primary destination for visitors, the headquarters building houses the Forest Preserve District’s administrative offices, which serve DuPage County taxpayers.

The building was completed in 2000, and the current HVAC and mechanical systems are at the end of their useful life. They continue to demand maintenance and repairs, and some of their components are becoming obsolete. The system has five rooftop units that provide gas heating and electric compressor cooling to 35 controlled zones. Perimeter baseboards and supplemental hydronic heaters provide additional heat through a single boiler. An automated system monitors, adjusts, manages performance, troubleshoots and issues alerts.

A Smart Energy Design Assistance Center survey of the headquarters building showed opportunities for increased energy efficiencies, comfort and control with a new system. With newer technologies and incentives for using energy-efficient systems, staff will be able to choose a replacement that will balance the highest level of efficiency with cost. A new system may also be able to address special ventilation requirements, such as the Law Enforcement evidence storage room and the IT server room.

Master Plan Alignment

- Goal 3 Improve preserves to increase access, use, efficiency and productivity
 - Objective 3.2 Evaluate and invest in maintenance and operations buildings as well as infrastructure
 - Tactic 3.2a Make structures more energy efficient

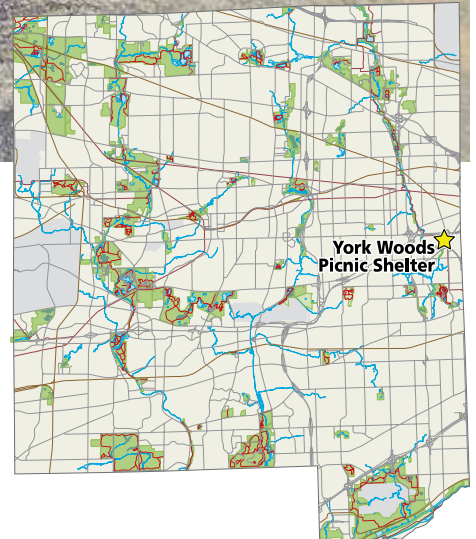
York Woods

South Shelter Reconstruction



Repairs to major structural deficiencies and new roof, respecting the cultural value of the Civilian Conservation Corps structure

Estimated Cost \$



Description

The project will correct several structural deficiencies. The log post and lateral post construction points of termination are failing, and the roof needs to be replaced. Substructure improvements also need to be addressed. Because the structure has a high cultural value, staff will develop a thorough reconstruction plan.

Project Need

The shelter was constructed in the 1930s by the Civilian Conservation Corps and was in the central part of the forest preserve until 1981. It's now on the west side of the south parking lot. It's the only high-capacity amenity at York Woods, a forest preserve that offers great experiences on the east side of DuPage.

The shelter is deteriorating rapidly and has deficiencies beyond routine maintenance. The Forest Preserve District has suspended maintenance beyond immediate repairs until it determines how to reconstruct the shelter but continues to inspect it to ensure it remains safe to use.

Master Plan Alignment

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|---------------|---|
| Goal 2 | Help people cultivate a lifelong enthusiasm for nature by offering meaningful, first-rate outdoor recreation and learning experiences |
| Objective 2.1 | Improve the preserve experience by modernizing amenities |
| Goal 3 | Improve preserves to increase access, use, efficiency and productivity |
| Objective 3.1 | Improve education centers and recreational sites |
| Objective 3.2 | Evaluate and invest in maintenance and operations buildings as well as infrastructure |
| Goal 4 | Refocus resources by reducing infrastructures and tasks not related to the mission |
| Objective 4.4 | Evaluate and make recommendations for historic holdings |

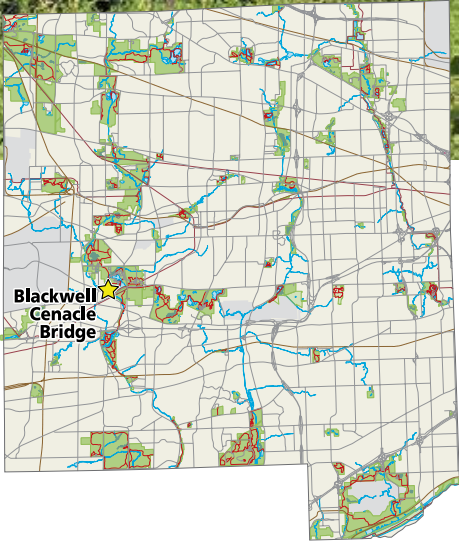
Blackwell

Cenacle Bridge



Determine the best option to maintain preserve access levels in this area and make needed improvements

Estimated Cost \$



Description

This project will assess the needs of the current bridge and determine whether to repair, replace, relocate or eliminate the deteriorating structure. The estimated cost would return the existing bridge to the design's original capacity and condition, if that ended up as the decision.

Project Need

Former property owners built the bridge to access a retreat house on the east side of the West Branch DuPage River. After purchasing the land, the District reinforced the stringers and floor beams in 2009 to obtain a 25-ton load rating but did not make improvements to the decking, stringers, railings or abutments. The reinforcements were more cost-effective than demolition.

Today, the abutments, wing walls, wooden stringers, decking and railings are rapidly deteriorating beyond general maintenance. If the bridge remains, it will require substantial repairs.

The bridge is used by hikers and bikers, but trail users can also reach the southwest corner of the preserve via a link off Butterfield Road, access made easier after improvements to the controlled crosswalks at Batavia and Butterfield roads and the addition of a pedestrian lane on the Butterfield bridge over the West Branch DuPage River.

Forest Preserve District maintenance vehicles occasionally use the bridge, but most access the east side of the river via the Urban Stream Research Center.

Master Plan Alignment

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|---------------|---|
| Goal 2 | Help people cultivate a lifelong enthusiasm for nature by offering meaningful, first-rate outdoor recreation and learning experiences |
| Objective 2.2 | Create trail links that connect key recreational sites and regional trails to major residential, commercial and institutional areas |
| Goal 3 | Improve preserves to increase access, use, efficiency and productivity |
| Objective 3.1 | Improve education centers and recreational sites |
| Objective 3.2 | Evaluate and invest in maintenance and operations buildings as well as infrastructure |
| Goal 4 | Refocus resources by reducing infrastructures and tasks not related to the mission |
| Objective 4.1 | (Potential) Evaluate and eliminate infrastructure and buildings that do not actively support significant operations |
| Objective 4.2 | Reevaluate operations to increase efficiency and productivity and to reduce the maintenance of areas not critical to the mission |
| Objective 4.4 | Evaluate and make recommendations for historic holdings |

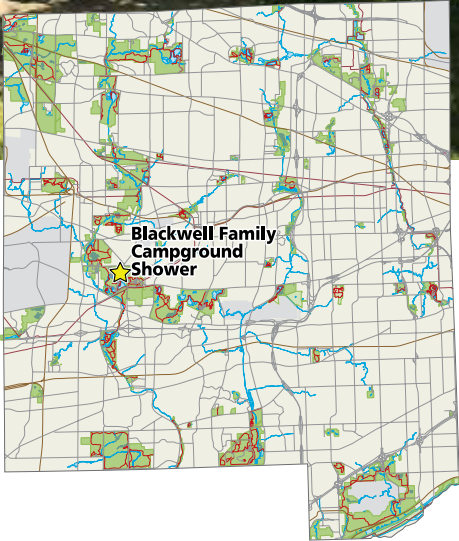
Blackwell Family Campground

Shower Building Improvements



Interior remodel and HVAC improvements

Estimated Cost \$



Description

The project will renew the interior of the shower building using sustainable materials and fixtures that will make it easier to maintain, reduce future repairs, and improve aesthetics and the overall experience for users. HVAC improvements will reduce the rate of deterioration of finishes and improve the climate and air quality, especially in high-use conditions.

Project Need

Opened in 1999, the building has been a major enhancement and convenience, attracting and retaining local campers. Rangers often receive positive comments from visitors.

The building is not climate-controlled, though, and ventilation is limited to minimal exhaust systems and passive air movement. High humidity and the adverse nature of the building’s overall function have made maintenance a challenge. Many of the finishes used in its initial construction were likely not designed to handle current conditions and as a result are deteriorating.

Master Plan Alignment

- Goal 2 Help people cultivate a lifelong enthusiasm for nature by offering meaningful, first-rate outdoor recreation and learning experiences
 - Objective 2.1 Improve the preserve experience by modernizing amenities
 - Objective 2.3 Complement and expand existing recreational offerings with increasing participation rates and more social interaction
- Goal 3 Improve preserves to increase access, use, efficiency and productivity
 - Objective 3.1 Improve education centers and recreational sites
 - Objective 3.2 Evaluate and invest in maintenance and operations buildings as well as infrastructure
 - Objective 3.3 Modify forest preserve facilities to accommodate a diverse range of users

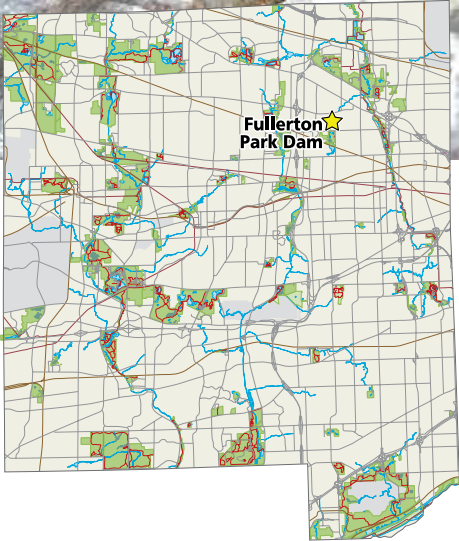
Fullerton Park

Industrial Dam Replacement



Replacement of the state-regulated dam’s failing outlet structure

Estimated Cost \$



Description

The project will replace the dam's failing outlet control structure. The dam is one of six that the Forest Preserve District owns and the state regulates.

Project Need

Recent inspections noted a significant section loss in the flowline of the pipe, causing a potential loss of structural integrity. The outlet, a 36-by-58-inch corrugated metal pipe, appears to be original, and staff is evaluating options such as lining the pipe in place or fully replacing it.

The dam provides flood-control benefits for homes immediately downstream in the Westwood Creek floodplain. It can hold over 135 million gallons of stormwater from the 2.6-square-mile watershed.

It was built in 1968 before the District acquired the preserve and had improvements made to the outlet structure in the late 1980s.

Master Plan Alignment

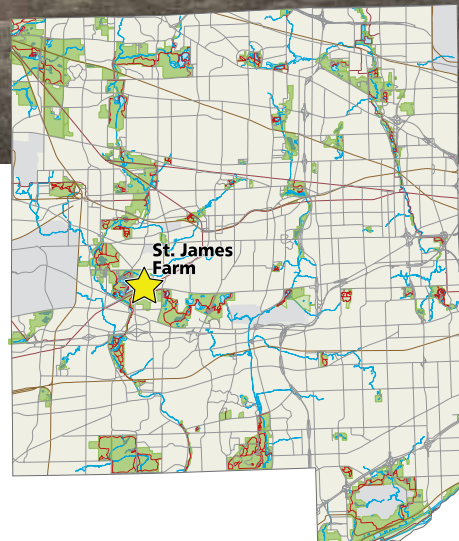
- Goal 3 Improve preserves to increase access, use, efficiency and productivity
 - Objective 3.2 Evaluate and invest in maintenance and operations buildings as well as infrastructure
- Goal 4 Refocus resources by reducing infrastructures and tasks not related to the mission
 - Objective 4.2 Reevaluate operations to increase efficiency and productivity and to reduce the maintenance of areas not critical to the mission

St. James Farm

Exterior Building Improvements



Replacement or upgrades for windows, ventilation, roofing, siding, trim, gutters, stormwater drainage, tuck-pointing and painting as needed at the east barn, show stables, yellow block stables, dairy barn, red brick stables, coach house, dairy barn, breeding barns and guard residences



Estimated Cost \$\$

Description

The project will make one or more improvements to several buildings at the preserve. Many require new windows, ventilation, roofing, siding, trim, gutters, stormwater drainage, tuck-pointing or painting. Those in most need are the east barn, show stables, yellow block stables, dairy barn, red brick stables, coach house, dairy House, breeding barns and guard residences.

Project Need

As St. James Farm continues to develop programming and increase public use of its facilities, improvements to the buildings’ exteriors are critical. Properly maintained exteriors ensure building materials do not deteriorate and keep the interiors sound. Since taking possession of the property, the Forest Preserve District has replaced the roofs on all but three structures and has painted each at least once, but many deficiencies present at the time of possession remain.

Master Plan Alignment

- Goal 3 Improve preserves to increase access, use, efficiency and productivity
 - Objective 3.1 Improve education centers and recreational sites
 - Objective 3.2 Evaluate and invest in maintenance and operations buildings as well as infrastructure
- Goal 4 Refocus resources by reducing infrastructures and tasks not related to the mission
 - Objective 4.1 Evaluate and eliminate infrastructures and buildings that do not actively support significant operations
 - Objective 4.2 Reevaluate operations to increase efficiency and productivity and to reduce the maintenance of areas not critical to the mission
 - Objective 4.4 Evaluate and make recommendations for historic holdings

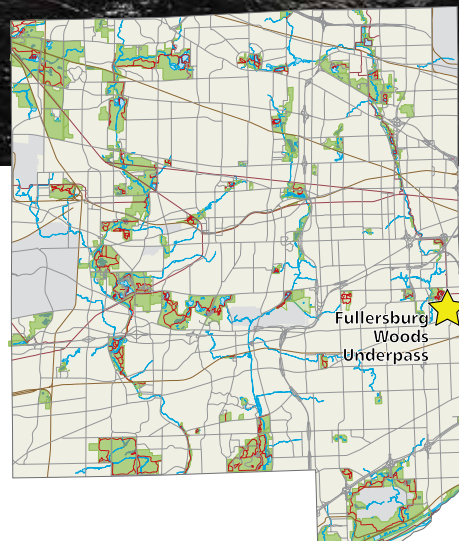
Fullersburg Woods

York Road Pedestrian Bridge



Repair or replace wooden walkway under York Road connecting the parking lot to Graue Mill and the Fullersburg Woods trail system

Estimated Cost \$



Description

The wooden pedestrian bridge below York Road has several deficiencies that require extensive reconstruction.

Project Need

For visitors who park on York Road, the pedestrian bridge that runs under the road along Salt Creek is the primary way to reach Graue Mill, Graue House and the forest preserve trail system. However, the high-maintenance structure is frequently filled with fast-moving flood waters and littered with trees, limbs and other debris, including debris that constricts the flow of Salt Creek. The bridge is closed several times a year because of flooding, requiring visitors to cross at the traffic light until the water subsides and repairs are completed.

Because of insufficient sunlight and poor air circulation, the high-moisture environment cannot dry sufficiently between floods, and its fasteners, joist hangers, lumber and finishes are not designed for this level of saturation. Several of the concrete pilings that secure the support posts in Salt Creek are spalling and deteriorating and require repair.

The project will first need to explore different solutions, such as removing the wooden bridge and improving the pedestrian traffic signal at York and Spring roads, repairing the bridge using higher-quality materials, or constructing a new bridge that would require less maintenance. Costs would vary based on the chosen option.

Master Plan Alignment

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Districtwide

Tree Trimming



One-year contract for routine tree maintenance to allow staff to focus on hazardous trees and urgent issues

Estimated Cost \$

Description

The project will provide for a one-year professional services contract for tree maintenance.

Project Need

As forest preserve infrastructure continues to develop (new picnic and off-leash dog areas, 70 new miles of trails over the past 18 years, etc.) more trees require scheduled maintenance to meet Forest Preserve District standards. This coupled with a spike in tree mortality from emerald ash borers, severe storms, oak wilt and other causes has shifted crew responsibilities from planned maintenance schedules to day-to-day scheduling to address hazardous trees and other urgent issues as they arise.

The project will allow the Forest Preserve District to ensure pending tree maintenance is completed so its high standards can continue to be met.

Master Plan Alignment

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|---------------|---|
| Goal 2 | Help people cultivate a lifelong enthusiasm for nature by offering meaningful, first-rate outdoor recreation and learning experiences |
| Objective 2.1 | Improve the preserve experience by modernizing amenities |
| Objective 2.4 | Enhance and promote unstructured nature exploration |
| Goal 3 | Improve preserves to increase access, use, efficiency and productivity |
| Objective 3.1 | Improve education centers and recreational sites |
| Goal 4 | Refocus resources by reducing infrastructures and tasks not related to the mission |
| Objective 4.2 | Reevaluate operations to increase efficiency and productivity and to reduce the maintenance of areas not critical to the mission |

Districtwide

Asphalt Maintenance



One-year contract for routine asphalt maintenance to allow staff to focus on urgent issues

Estimated Cost \$

Description

The project will provide for a one-year professional services contract for asphalt maintenance.

Project Need

As forest preserve infrastructure continues to develop (a 21% increase in hardscaped surface maintenance and 1 square mile of new asphalt surface since 2000, for example) more areas require scheduled maintenance to meet Forest Preserve District standards. This increase, however, has shifted crew responsibilities from planned maintenance schedules to day-to-day scheduling to address urgent issues in these areas as they arise. Already, the established four-year cycle of patching, seal coating, filling and striping has been extended to a five-year cycle.

The project will allow the Forest Preserve District to ensure pending asphalt maintenance is completed so its high standards can continue to be met.

Master Plan Alignment

- Goal 2 Help people cultivate a lifelong enthusiasm for nature by offering meaningful, first-rate outdoor recreation and learning experiences
 - Objective 2.1 Improve the preserve experience by modernizing amenities
- Goal 3 Improve preserves to increase access, use, efficiency and productivity
 - Objective 3.1 Improve education centers and recreational sites
 - Objective 3.2 Evaluate and invest in maintenance and operations buildings as well as infrastructure
- Goal 4 Refocus resources by reducing infrastructures and tasks not related to the mission
 - Objective 4.2 Reevaluate operations to increase efficiency and productivity and to reduce the maintenance of areas not critical to the mission

Districtwide

Demolitions



Removal of underused structures to allow staff to focus on the maintenance of high-priority assets

Estimated Cost \$\$

Description

The project will allow the Forest Preserve District to identify and demolish underused structures, allowing crews to focus on maintaining high-priority assets.

Project Need

As part of its core infrastructure, the Forest Preserve District maintains 60 shelters, 87 bridges, 394 gates, 229 buildings, 230 benches, 60 latrines and 80 well systems. It adds to or improves this list annually.

Because infrastructure requires continuous inspection, maintenance and repair (and eventually renewal), the Forest Preserve District works to identify assets for decommissioning, those with low use or little effect on visitors, operations or the District's mission. With headcount at a 25-year low, reducing unneeded assets is one way the District can operate without significantly increasing cost or decreasing standards and structural conditions of its remaining assets. In some cases, it can even create new open spaces.

Master Plan Alignment

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| Goal 1 | Preserve, protect and restore open spaces |
| Objective 1.1 | Allocate additional resources to maintain existing high-quality natural areas and create new ones |
| Goal 4 | Refocus resources by reducing infrastructures and tasks not related to the mission |
| Objective 4.1 | Evaluate and eliminate infrastructures and buildings that do not actively support significant operations |
| Objective 4.2 | Reevaluate operations to increase efficiency and productivity and to reduce the maintenance of areas not critical to the mission |
| Objective 4.4 | Evaluate and make recommendations for historic holdings |

A photograph of two ducks swimming in a body of water. The duck in the foreground is a mallard, and the one behind it is a wood duck. The water is blue and slightly rippled.

Initiatives and Other Considerations

Throughout the master planning process, the Forest Preserve District heard from stakeholders about issues beyond those addressed in the certified projects, issues identified in need of further development. In most cases, these opportunities warrant further study before recommendations can be made to address them.

Land Acquisition Plan

With few large undeveloped tracts of land remaining in DuPage County, the Forest Preserve District should reassess its land acquisition strategy and create a new plan for the future. The plan should address the Forest Preserve District's strategic plan, which states that acquisitions should align with the agency's mission, vision, and purpose. The Forest Preserve District should also explore any beneficial land swaps and streamlined utility easements.

ADA Transition Plan

The Americans with Disabilities Act was enacted in 1992. That same year the Forest Preserve District created its ADA transition plan. Since then, the agency's made many improvements as regulated under the act, but it should now reevaluate sites and buildings to confirm compliance with the act and to identify improvements.

Landfill End-Use Plans: Environmental Controls and Monitoring, Habitat, and Cultural and Recreational Uses

The Forest Preserve District owns and stewards mounds of decomposing waste and scores of acres affected by the indiscriminate disposal of potentially harmful materials. A principal responsibility of the Forest Preserve District is to maintain these lands to protect and conserve human health and the natural environment.

While these lands pose risks, when carefully planned they also offer opportunities for valuable natural habitat as well as recreational and cultural uses. The most recent end-use plans are over 20 years old and include features incompatible with modern systems required for the sites' long-term care.

It's imperative that the Forest Preserve District update its end-use plans to cement its commitment to the enduring operation, maintenance, and monitoring of these sites and to identify the most appropriate secondary uses, such as natural habitat or compatible recreational space. Plans should also identify long-term costs and funding.

Education Center Master Plans

Many quality nature and learning experiences start at the Forest Preserve District's six education centers: Danada Equestrian Center, Fullersburg Woods Nature Education Center, Kline Creek Farm, Mayslake Peabody Estate, St. James Farm and Willowbrook Wildlife Center. Most master plans for these sites are over 10 years old; some are much older. The master plans for all six should be refreshed to evaluate changes and address new issues and challenges.

Individual Forest Preserve Master Plans

With the exception of a few forest preserves, the last site-specific master plan for each was completed in 1992. Since then the Forest Preserve District acquired several new preserves and added to others.

All of the forest preserves would benefit from refreshed individual plans to address existing conditions, changes in user needs and preferences, and features that could advance the Forest Preserve District's mission. Forest preserves such as Blackwell, Herrick Lake and Greene Valley with the highest visitation should take priority.

East Branch DuPage River Trail

The Forest Preserve District is partnering with DuPage County and Glen Ellyn to evaluate the feasibility of adding a segment of the East Branch DuPage River Trail from Churchill Woods to Hidden Lake. Pending the completion of a feasibility study, these partnering agencies will need to arrange for engineering and agreements so they can move forward with funding, construction and plans for long-term maintenance.

Green Energy Study

To further strategic-plan priorities to increase energy efficiencies and reduce the agency's carbon footprint, the Forest Preserve District should study ways to harness solar and other renewable or sustainable energy sources. The study should consider restraints while formulating a plan, schedule and funding sources.

Natural Resources and Grounds Maintenance Operations Assessment and Facility Provisions

Throughout the year 60 to 75 natural resources and grounds employees maintain and restore natural areas and infrastructure across 26,000 acres, 166 miles of trails, 31 lakes, and 47 miles of waterways within 60 preserves.

In 2007 an outside consultant assessed the operational and infrastructure needs of these crews. It found the Forest Preserve District's facilities undersized, aged, in marginal states of repair and usefulness, and substandard as compared to similar facilities used by peer agencies. A 2019 reexamination by outside consultants again found facilities inadequate, obsolete and in poor condition.

For crews to continue to achieve the high level of service the public has come to expect, the Forest Preserve District needs to evaluate its land-maintenance and -restoration needs and practices, identify target levels of service, and then determine the optimal means for reaching and maintaining those levels.



Sign Plan

The Forest Preserve District has thousands of posted signs in varying conditions. To ensure consistent branding and the communication of accurate, legible, aesthetically pleasing information, the Forest Preserve District needs to develop a plan that outlines standards and schedules for replacement. It also should consider the development of a comprehensive regional trail sign system in coordination with the county, municipalities and other agencies.

Trail Plan

The Forest Preserve District has added hundreds of miles of trails over the past few decades. As such, it needs to summarize existing conditions and create an outline for opportunities for improvements and enhancements to guide future development decisions.

Cultural Resource Management Plan

The Forest Preserve District has numerous structures with potentially significant cultural value. To guide any future protection, the Forest Preserve District needs to develop a plan to identify these structures, the goals for their operation and preservation, potential partnerships, and funding sources. In doing so it should take into consideration current or potential partnerships for sites such as the Danada House, Danada Model Farm, Graue Mill, Frederick Graue House, and Greene Farm Barn. Additionally, it should update its policy for the management of historic and cultural resources.

Site Operations Work Site Consolidation Plan

With the ongoing consolidation and reorganization of site operations staff, the Forest Preserve District should develop a plan to identify surpluses or deficiencies in office, work and equipment storage spaces and make appropriate adjustments to meet future operational needs.

Headquarters Workspace Efficiency Improvement Plan

Recent reorganization efforts have changed the way space is used within the Forest Preserve District's headquarters building. The Forest Preserve District should reevaluate its needs to optimize use of the facility.

Infrastructure Management Plan

The Forest Preserve District contains hundreds of buildings and other structures. It needs to develop a comprehensive plan to identify conditions, the status of regular or deferred maintenance, and plans for the continued routine maintenance or revitalization of principal structures. This will ensure continued efficient operations and delivery of services. Establishing an infrastructure management funding mechanism based on the Sherman-Dergis formula should be explored.

Special Needs Recreation Plan

The Forest Preserve District needs to develop a plan for special-needs audiences that includes camps, adventure days, and other opportunities and programs.



The Forest Preserve District Today

Demographics

At 336 square miles, DuPage is the smallest county in the seven-county Chicago metropolitan area, but as of 2019 it has the second-largest county population in the state at 929,980. Between 2010 and 2019 its population increased 1.42% as the state's overall population decreased by 0.46%.

The median age in DuPage County is 39.8, slightly older than the state median of 38.5.

Compared to Chicago metropolitan area averages, DuPage County has a larger white and Asian population but a smaller black population. Of its 25.73% minority population, 14.77% are Hispanic or Latino; the area average is 21.9%.

The average household size in DuPage is 2.66. That number is slightly larger than the state average of 2.56 but is the second lowest in the seven-county metropolitan area next to Cook County. In DuPage 35.42% of households have children; 33.45% do statewide.

In the seven-county metropolitan area DuPage residents have the highest levels of education, rates of employment, and percentages of owner-occupied housing units. Compared to the state median of \$66,487, the median household income in DuPage is \$91,357.

Over 40 local government park districts provide DuPage residents with open-space and recreational opportunities, but the single largest agency of its kind is the Forest Preserve District.

Land Use

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, DuPage County is in the Valparaiso-Wheaton Morainial Complex of the Central Corn Belt Plains within the Eastern Temperate Forest Ecoregion. This hilly, hummocky, rolling complex contains moraines, kames, eskers, rolling till plains, outwash plains, kettle holes, and ravines. Its soil is largely derived from thick late-Wisconsinian glacial drift. Bedrock is generally deep below this glacial drift, but some outcroppings occur near streams.

In the 19th century, prairies and forests dominated the moraines; poorly drained areas contained swamp white oak forests and marshes. Prairie covered more than half of the region. As European settlers suppressed natural fires and installed drainage tiles for crops, open prairies and wetlands dwindled. Today, the urban landscape contains scattered pasturelands, wooded areas, lakes and wetlands.

Currently 19.4% of the county is open space, and only 2.9% remains undeveloped. The largest land uses are single-family residences (34.5%) and transportation or other (20.0%).

Forest Preserve Land

In 1915 Illinois passed the Downstate Forest Preserve Act, which authorized the establishment of forest preserve districts “to acquire and hold lands containing forests, prairies, wetlands and associated plant communities or lands capable of being restored to such natural conditions for the purpose of protecting and preserving the flora, fauna and scenic beauty for the education, pleasure and recreation of its citizens.”

That same year DuPage voters approved the organization of the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County. It acquired its first preserve — York Woods in Oak Brook — in 1917.

Over the next few decades growth was slow, but as the county’s population skyrocketed between 1950 and 1970, the Forest Preserve District began to aggressively acquire land. Between 1963 and 1969 it acquired three times as many acres as it had during its first 50 years.

Land acquisition slowed in the 1980s and 90s, but bond-issue referendums in 1987, 1991, 1992, 1997 and 2006 allowed the Forest Preserve District to increase its holdings. Today it covers 26,000 acres and 60 forest preserves, which contain seven Illinois nature preserves, two Illinois land and water reserves, and part of one state park.

Habitat Restoration and Wildlife Conservation

In 1988 the Forest Preserve District revised its land management policy and established a goal of preserving 90% of its holdings in a natural state without active development. That number is currently at 89%. Of that 89%, 22% is Class IV habitat, the highest of ecological value.

To reduce and control the spread of invasive terrestrial plants in these natural areas, crews use prescription burns, selective clearing, and mowing. To control invasive aquatic plants they use physical, mechanical, and chemical means.

The Forest Preserve District’s native plant nursery grows 90 different kinds of flowers and grasses using seed harvested from remnant areas throughout the county. It also grows 50 to 60 different types of native trees. Each year crews plant

700 to 1,200 trees from this stock in natural areas or around educational and recreational sites.

At its Urban Stream Research Center — the only facility of its kind in the state — the Forest Preserve District augments populations of common native freshwater mussels by propagating and rearing juveniles before releasing them into historical watersheds. In addition, the center supports the incubation of state-endangered Blanding’s turtle eggs and the rearing of federally endangered Hine’s emerald dragonfly larvae. It is also the hub of the Forest Preserve District’s aquatic invasive species program, which monitors lakes and streams for nonnative zebra mussels.

The Forest Preserve District also owns and operates Willowbrook Wildlife Center, a popular nature center and rehabilitation facility, which provides care and medical treatment to injured and orphaned native wild animals.

Visitor Resources

Each year the Forest Preserve District welcomes more than 4 million visitors. It is the county leader in outdoor recreation but is fundamentally different from a park district. It does not provide playgrounds, athletic fields, or aquatic centers but focuses instead on nature-based outdoor recreational facilities such as trails, fishing piers, off-leash dog areas, campgrounds, and picnic areas.

The Forest Preserve District has 166 miles of trails, and most allow hiking, biking, cross-country skiing and horseback riding. Leashed dogs are welcome in most preserves, and Blackwell, East Branch, Greene Valley, Hawk Hollow, Mayslake, Oldfield Oaks and Springbrook Prairie have off-leash areas.

There are 25 reservable picnic shelters, over 100 parking lots, one family and seven youth-group camping areas, five canoe launches, six model craft areas, an archery range, and a snow-tubing hill. Visitors can rent rowboats, kayaks, and canoes at Blackwell and Herrick Lake or use their own on select lakes at Blackwell, Hidden Lake, Mallard Lake, and West Branch. The Forest Preserve District also operates three golf courses: 9 holes at Green Meadows, 18 at Maple Meadows, and 18 at The Preserve at Oak Meadows.



The Forest Preserve District's 30 lakes and 47 miles of rivers and tributaries are open for fishing (unless posted), and it stocks select lakes with bluegill, channel catfish, crappie, large- and smallmouth bass, muskie, northern pike, perch, walleye, or rainbow trout.

Each year more than 100,000 people join guided and self-guided programs at six education centers: Danada Equestrian Center, St. James Farm, Mayslake Peabody Estate, Kline Creek Farm, Willowbrook Wildlife Center and Fullersburg Woods Nature Education Center. The programs translate key agency expertise in habitat restoration, land preservation and wildlife conservation. Experiences range from passive recreation to special events, family-friendly activities, summer camps, and in-depth special-interest programs on natural and cultural history. Students and Scouts join tailored field trips and in-class presentations, and teachers benefit from professional-development and extension programs.

There are also locations for business meetings, conferences, seminars, weddings, receptions, and casual lunches including the Danada House, Frederick Graue House, Maple Meadows Grill and Pub, Mayslake Peabody Estate, and an indoor arena at St. James Farm.

Infrastructure and Maintenance Obligations

General Use Areas

The Forest Preserve District maintains 9 million square feet of paved parking lots and access roads and 166 miles of trails, which take visitors through natural areas and around recreational sites and education centers. It mows 300 acres of turf and maintains 15,000 trees and 13 acres of landscape bedding in developed areas. It also actively manages the 47 miles of rivers and creeks within its boundaries, mostly by removing debris that blocks their flow.

Structures

The Forest Preserve District actively maintains 230 buildings, 60 shelters, 87 bridges, 450 gates, 60 latrines, 80 wells, and 230 benches in varying states of repair with fewer staff members than in 1992. Each year it adds new infrastructure through its capital improvement program, the acquisition of new property, or intergovernmental agreements.

Numerous structures have historical significance, the most notable being Mayslake Peabody Estate, Graue Mill and Graue House, the Danada House and Farm, and buildings at St. James Farm. It has active agreements with the nonprofit Graue Mill Corporation and Friends of Danada and agreements in place for other historic structures. However, many are unused due to a lack of resources to restore or operate them including the Greene Farm Barn, McKee House and Mains House.



Stormwater Facilities

The Forest Preserve District owns hundreds of wetlands, ponds, and lakes as well as 14% of the county's regulatory floodplain, maintaining all as open space. These areas serve a valuable stormwater management function by holding and retaining runoff, thereby reducing urban flooding. While the majority are natural features, some were built cooperatively with municipalities, the county, and state and federal agencies specifically to mitigate flooding. Additionally, the Forest Preserve District owns or manages six state-regulated dams that hold stormwater to lessen downstream flooding.

Landfills

When the county and Forest Preserve District were governed by the same board, several forest preserve sites contained landfills, which accepted residential and commercial refuse and served the county's solid-waste disposal needs. One operated at Blackwell from 1965 to 1973, one at Greene Valley from 1974 to 1996, and one at Mallard Lake from 1975 to 1999. Over the years the Forest Preserve District acquired additional smaller dumpsites.

Today, none of the landfills on Forest Preserve District property are operational, but the Forest Preserve District still oversees their management as well as the cleanup of contaminated parcels it has acquired over time.

Human Resources

Board of Commissioners

For 87 years the Forest Preserve District was managed by the same board as the county, but in 1996 the state amended the Downstate Forest Preserve Act to allow counties like DuPage to create separate governing bodies. The intent was to mitigate conflicts of interest between development and land preservation.

In 2002 DuPage voters elected their first independent Forest Preserve District board, seven members with one commissioner elected from each of the county's six districts and one president elected by the county at large. That same system of government oversees operations today.

Employees

Ten departments manage the Forest Preserve District's natural areas, facilities, centers, daily operations, and administrative responsibilities: Natural Resources, Resource Management & Development, Community Services & Education, Golf Operations, Law Enforcement, Executive, Community Relations, Finance & Administration, Human Resources and Information Technology.

On average the Forest Preserve District employs 312 people; about 40 are part-time. Approximately 150 seasonal or intermittent employees supplement this headcount. Over 900 volunteers assist staff in various departments.

Financial Resources

Funding for Forest Preserve District operations comes primarily from real estate taxes, but it also has multiple long-term funding sources, such as endowments, nonendowment earmarked funds, proceeds from bonds, and landfill and environmental funds. About 6% of revenues are from visitor permits and fees.

Revenues for fiscal year 2019 include \$50.8 million in property tax revenues; \$8.8 million in grants, intergovernmental reimbursements, and other sources; \$5.3 million from permits and fees; and \$6 million in interest earnings on investments. Its operating budget for calendar year 2019 is \$40,222,225.

Standard & Poor's gave the Forest Preserve District a AAA-bond rating on new debt issuance and reaffirmed the agency's AAA rating on existing bonded debt. Under this assessment, the Forest Preserve District has maintained a "strong" rating — the highest possible — defined by Standard & Poor's as indicative of "practices that are strong, well embedded and likely sustainable."

In the past, the Forest Preserve District issued bonds to acquire land, restore native habitats, and maintain and develop trails and other recreational facilities. The most recent voter-approved referendum in 2006 authorized the sale of \$68 million in bonds, which contributed to the purchase of 360 acres at 14 locations.





Need for a 2019 Master Plan

Overview

The last time the Forest Preserve District completed a master plan was 27 years ago in 1992. Before then the agency was guided by its 1966 Land Acquisition Master Plan, which it amended in 1976.

The 1992 plan recognized that continued county development meant the era of major land acquisitions was drawing to a close. It instead focused on developing recreational facilities; rehabilitating existing facilities; and restoring, operating, and maintaining natural areas.

Improvements, changes, and investments over the past 27 years have created an early 21st century Forest Preserve District now in need of a master plan of its own.

Land Acquisitions

Since 1992 the Forest Preserve District has grown by 3,300 acres, increasing almost every preserve and introducing the 103-acre Oldfield Oaks, 135-acre Night Heron Marsh, 595-acre St. James Farm, 120-acre Des Plaines Riverway, 50-acre Brush Hill, 57-acre Medinah Wetlands and 375-acre Dunham forest preserves. In 2016 Goodrich Woods, Pioneer Park, Burlington Park and West Branch Riverway, all owned by the Forest Preserve District but operated by Naperville Park District, returned to Forest Preserve District control.

Natural Resource Restoration

Since 1992, in addition to routine natural resource management efforts, there have been multiple major endeavors.

The Forest Preserve District removed or modified dams at Churchill Woods, Warrenville Grove, McDowell Grove and The Preserve at Oak Meadows, which not only improved water quality but also created wetlands and restored surrounding floodplains, providing better habitat for wildlife and stormwater-management features for county residents. The dam removal at McDowell Grove in particular was the result of the larger multiyear Kerr-McGee Kress Creek/West Branch DuPage River Region 5 Superfund Site cleanup.

To return natural twists and turns to waterways deepened and straightened by farmers decades ago, the Forest Preserve District remeandered 2 miles of Spring Brook at Springbrook Prairie and 2.3 miles of Spring Brook at St. James Farm and Blackwell. It restored valuable wetlands along Brewster Creek at Pratt's Wayne Woods and at the West Branch DuPage River and Klein Road fen at West Branch.

At Waterfall Glen, the Forest Preserve District created critical rivulet habitat for the federally endangered Hine's emerald dragonfly and returned kettles — rare seasonally wet breeding habitats for salamanders and other amphibians — at Kettle Woods.

As a result of its natural resource efforts, the Forest Preserve District received state nature preserve designation at Pratt's Wayne Woods, Des Plaines Riverway, Meacham Grove, Swift Prairie, and Springbrook Prairie and state land and water reserve designation at Belleau Woods and Springbrook Prairie.

To support some of the rare wildlife that relies on the high-quality natural areas it maintains, since 1992 the Forest Preserve District has hatched over 3,000 state-endangered Blanding's turtles for release into the wild and raised 4,000 freshwater mussels for release into the West Branch DuPage River and its tributaries.

Access

Since 1992 the Forest Preserve District increased access to several preserves by constructing or expanding trails and parking lots.

A boon to trail fans, the Forest Preserve District added over 100 miles of trails for hikers, bikers, horseback riders, and cross-country skiers at Blackwell, Churchill Woods, Cricket Creek, Danada, East Branch, Fullersburg Woods, Greene Valley, Hawk Hollow, Herrick Lake, Hidden Lake, McDowell Grove, Mallard Lake, Mayslake, Medinah Wetlands, Meacham Grove, Oak Meadows, Oldfield Oaks, Pratt's Wayne Woods, St. James Farm, Salt Creek Park, Salt Creek Marsh, Songbird Slough, Spring Creek Reservoir, Springbrook Prairie, Timber Ridge, Warrenville Grove, Waterfall Glen, West Branch, West Branch Riverway, West DuPage Woods, Willowbrook, Winfield Mounds, Wood Dale Grove and York Woods.

Much of its work focused on completing regional trails, such as the Danada-Herrick Lake Regional Trail, Salt Creek Greenway Trail, Southern DuPage Regional Trail, Centennial Trail and Veteran's Memorial Trail. It also built segments of the East Branch DuPage River Trail, North Central DuPage Regional Trail and West Branch DuPage River Trail.

To accommodate an increase in trail users and visitors in general, the Forest Preserve District built parking lots at Cricket Creek, Danada, Greene Valley, Mallard Lake, Mayslake, Meacham Grove, Oldfield Oaks, Pratt's Wayne Woods, St. James Farm, Spring Creek Reservoir, Springbrook Prairie, Timber Ridge, Waterfall Glen, and West Branch and expanded existing lots at Blackwell, East Branch, Fullersburg Woods, Green Meadows, Herrick Lake, Hidden Lake and Willowbrook.

Recreational Amenities

Blackwell, Hidden Lake, Herrick Lake, Mallard Lake, Spring Creek Reservoir and Springbrook Prairie all received new picnic shelters. Blackwell became the site of the Forest Preserve District's first permanent archery range and received a new youth-group campground and major improvements to its family campground.

The Forest Preserve District built a model airfield at Springbrook Prairie and relocated the Pratt's Wayne Woods field to Stearns Road. After closing the landfill at Greene Valley, improvements at the hill gave visitors a scenic overlook and a airfield for model gliders and sailplanes. Cricket Creek gained a model boat area.

Developments for water-based activities included new canoe launches at Churchill Woods, Cricket Creek, Fullersburg Woods, Salt Creek Greenway, Salt Creek Park, McDowell Grove and Warrenville Grove. A boat launch was built at Blackwell, and boat-rental buildings were constructed at both Blackwell and Herrick Lake.

The Forest Preserve District once operated several dog "training" areas, but as the interest in dog parks grew it converted the sites to general "off-leash" areas. Today it operates seven. It completed improvements at Blackwell and East Branch and built new areas at Mayslake and Oldfield Oaks. It relocated the off-leash areas at Springbrook Prairie and Greene Valley to other locations within those preserves, and moved the Pratt's Wayne Woods area to Hawk Hollow.

Education Centers

Shortly after acquiring Mayslake Forest Preserve in 1992, the Forest Preserve District installed life-safety improvements and expanded parking. It later converted part of the third floor of the retreat wing into a storage area for its artifacts collection. After numerous attempts to repurpose the vacant friary, the Forest Preserve District demolished the structure. At Mayslake Hall itself, it completed restorations at the library, solarium, spiral staircase, dining room, breakfast porch and courtyard facade.

At Kline Creek Farm the Forest Preserve District constructed an award-winning visitor center and later a honey processing building and several sheds. At Fullersburg Woods it remodeled the teacher resource center and installed new exhibits in the visitor center. Downstream along Salt Creek, it restored the Graue House and completed major structural improvements at Graue Mill.

The Forest Preserve District renovated several animal habitats and rehabilitation spaces at Willowbrook Wildlife Center and built an enclosure specifically for sandhill cranes. As part of the first phase of improvements of center's 2011 master plan, it constructed a new support building and expanded the parking lot. It also added a flight cage for rehabilitating birds.

At the Danada House, the Forest Preserve District renovated the interior, constructed an atrium, and installed ornamental gardens. It built a modular office at the Danada Equestrian Center as well.

After taking possession of St. James Farm in 2007, the Forest Preserve District added an entrance drive, parking lot, and municipal water and sewer connections for improved public access. The completion of renovations at the indoor riding arena in 2018 allows for additional programming at the site.

Golf

All three courses saw significant changes since 1992.

The Forest Preserve District expanded the parking lot at Green Meadows in 2004 but left the remainder of the site relatively unchanged. At Maple Meadows, it completely reconfigured the course and built a new clubhouse.

Oak Meadows received a new cart storage building in 2002 but lost its clubhouse to a lightning-ignited fire in 2009. In 2016, the Forest Preserve District began a major two-year renovation of the course, taking land from Maple Meadows' adjacent "East 9" to create a reconfigured award-winning 18-hole layout re-named "The Preserve at Oak Meadows." It built a new halfway house in 2018 and began work on a new clubhouse in 2019, which it expects to open in 2020.



Support Buildings

In 2000, the Forest Preserve District moved its administrative headquarters from Glen Oak to a new building at Danada.

At Blackwell, it added a sign shop to its facilities management operations in 2003 and opened a new fleet services building in 2017 to replace the one at Churchill Woods. In 2011, it built the one-of-a-kind Urban Stream Research Center near the West Branch DuPage River.

Guard residences were common at several preserves, but since 1992, the number has dropped from 17 to eight to increase operational efficiencies.



Landfills

As a legacy from the days when the Forest Preserve District and county boards were combined, the Forest Preserve District oversees the management of several closed landfills, two that were still in operation in 1992.

It recently undertook several major environmental projects to more effectively remove landfill gases and leachate, stabilize streambanks, and improve cover systems to better protect human health and the environment.





The Master Planning Process

After 25 years of dramatic changes, the Forest Preserve District board approved the development of a new master plan.

A workgroup of 12 employees with a combined 196 years of experience with the Forest Preserve District helped guide the process. Its members were from the Resource Management & Development, Community Services & Education, Natural Resources, and Community Relations departments. The group met regularly and was integral in designing the planning process; coordinating meetings; developing surveys; analyzing results; and eventually formulating the plan's final goals, objectives, tactics, projects, initiatives and other considerations for board approval.

In the end, the workgroup received comments and opinions from more than 6,500 people.

Meetings

Between August and November 2017 with assistance from a consultant, the workgroup held meetings and workshops for the public, volunteers, employees, commissioners, and special-interest groups.

Public Opinion Meetings

Public meetings brought residents into the planning process, promoted surveys and additional components, and provided a quick overview of community concerns.

Dates and Locations

After developing a format and hosting two test meetings, the Forest Preserve District hosted one meeting in each of the county's six voting districts using the same agenda.

District 1		
Sept. 19, 2017	7 – 8:30 p.m.	Itasca Community Library in Itasca
District 2		
Sept. 26, 2017	7 – 8:30 p.m.	Mayslake Peabody Estate in Oak Brook
District 3		
Oct. 30, 2017	7 – 8:30 p.m.	Indian Prairie Public Library in Darien
District 4		
Oct. 25, 2017	7 – 8:30 p.m.	College of DuPage in Glen Ellyn
District 5		
Oct. 18, 2017	7 – 8:30 p.m.	Naperville Municipal Center in Naperville
District 6		
Oct. 3, 2017	7 – 8:30 p.m.	West Chicago Park District ARC Center in West Chicago

Agenda

- Arrival greetings and refreshments
- Request to participate in cumulative voting activity before the group discussion
- Welcome and introduction by the Forest Preserve District president and the commissioner from the relevant district
- Staff explanation of the master plan process
- Staff-moderated discussion of four questions with replies written and displayed on flip charts for participants' review
- Opportunity for general comments (also displayed on flip charts)
- Reminder to call or email Forest Preserve District staff with comments and ideas not expressed at the meeting

Results

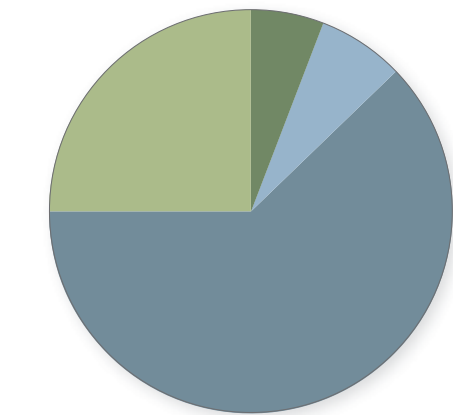
The meetings had 188 attendees, who gave 911 comments, as summarized in the pie charts on the next page, related to the four discussion questions. In addition, at the end of each meeting, participants could share comments on any topic. The five topics below summarize those comments.

	Percent of All Comments
Better communication, outreach and transparency	29
Preserve improvements, programs and amenities	23
General, favorable comments about the Forest Preserve District	20
More collaboration, cooperation and coordination	15
More land acquisition and natural resource restoration	13



Question 1

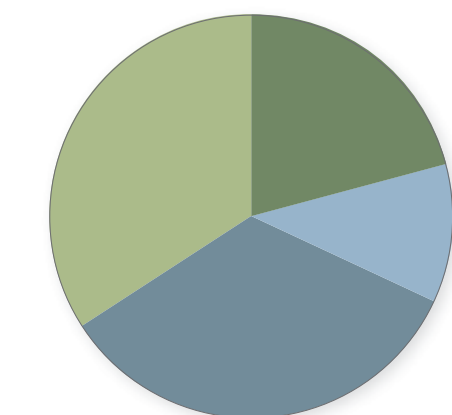
How do you use the forest preserves?



- 62% To participate in an outdoor activity
- 25% To visit an education site, attend a program or event
- 7% To volunteer or spend time with family and friends
- 6% To spend time in nature or passively enjoy the benefits of open space

Question 2

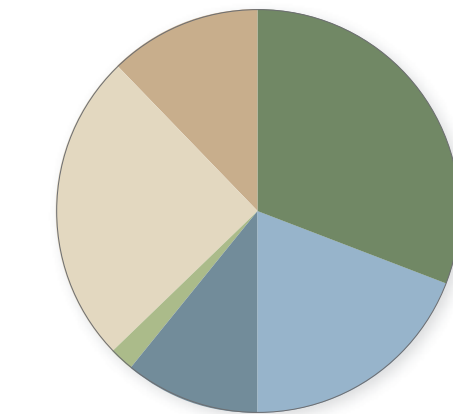
What do you like about the forest preserves?



- 34% Good sites, amenities, programs, events and outdoor activities
- 34% Protection or restoration of open space or natural resources and broader community benefits
- 21% Ease of access, good distribution and equity, safe and well maintained
- 11% Aspects about the Forest Preserve District as an organization

Question 3

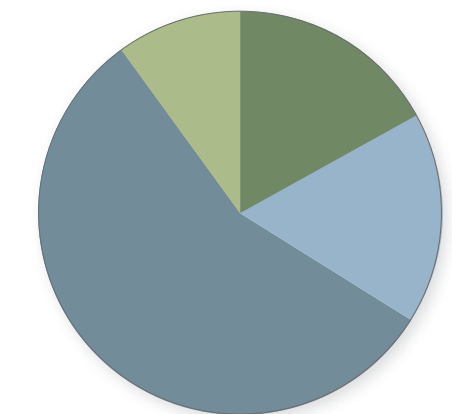
What don't you like about the forest preserves?



- 31% Not enough or need improved recreation facilities, sites, amenities, access and programs
- 25% Aspects about the Forest Preserve District as an organization, its policies and restrictions
- 19% Insufficient or unclear communication, outreach and public information
- 12% Not enough maintenance or specific maintenance procedures
- 11% Too much development or not enough natural resource restoration
- 2% Conflicts between user groups

Question 4

What would you like to see in the future at the forest preserves?



- 56% Better access, preserve improvements, amenities, maintenance, programs and security
- 17% Better outreach, communication and promotion
- 17% More land acquisition, natural resource restoration and scientific research
- 10% Better transparency, collaboration, partnerships and policy changes

Volunteer Opinion Meetings

Because its volunteers are highly engaged individuals quite familiar with the agency, the Forest Preserve District felt it was important to provide separate meetings so they could be involved in the planning process. The meetings allowed volunteers to share their ideas and experiences; highlighted surveys and other additional components; and gave the Forest Preserve District additional insight into community concerns.

Dates and Locations

The Forest Preserve District hosted three volunteer meetings using an agenda similar to that from the public meetings.

Nov. 13, 2017	1 p.m.	Mayslake Peabody Estate in Oak Brook
Nov. 14, 2017	1 p.m. and 6 p.m.	Forest Preserve District Headquarters in Wheaton

Results

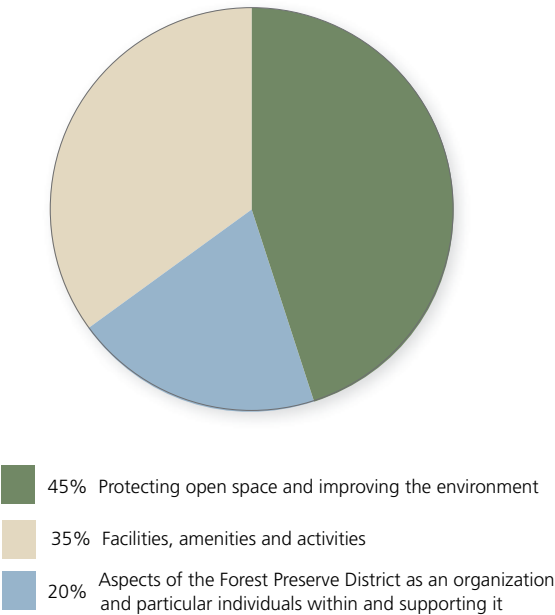
Sixty-two volunteers attended the meetings and provided 559 comments on three discussion questions, as summarized in the pie charts on this page. The 18 volunteers who participated in the public test meetings provided an additional 128 comments.

Similar to the public input meetings, at the end of each meeting participants could comment on any topic. The four topics below summarize those comments.

	Percent of All Comments
Better communication, policies and procedures, staff and volunteer concerns	58
More land acquisition and natural resource restoration	22
Preserve improvements, programs and events	13
General, favorable comments about the Forest Preserve District	7

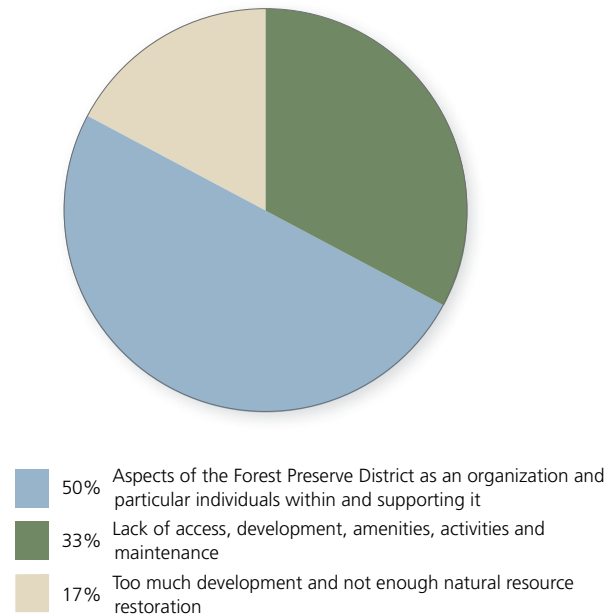
Question 1

What do you like about the forest preserves?



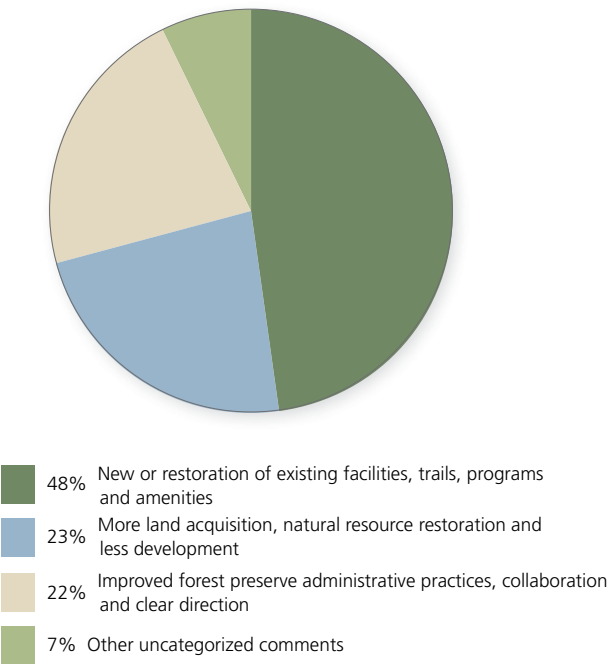
Question 2

What don't you like about the forest preserves?



Question 3

What would you like to see in the future at the forest preserves?



Staff Workshop

On Aug. 24, 2017, 51 employees attended a workshop at Mayslake Peabody Estate from 8 to 11:30 a.m. They were divided into six groups and asked to provide their thoughts, as summarized below, on four questions.

Question 1

What do I really value about being a staff member at the District? How does that translate into overall District values?

- The mission of the District
- Being a public servant
- Working conditions and fellow employees
- Fulfillment of my professional goals

Question 2

What are the opportunities for staff to contribute to make the District stand out to county residents?

- Customer service/daily interactions with the public
- Improved marketing
- Community outreach
- Collaboration between agencies
- Good appearances/high level of maintenance/public perception
- Assess, improve and innovate
- Internal cooperation

Question 3

What are the upcoming challenges for the District and how can staff help?

- How to maintain more with less
- Need better technology
- Need better external communications
- Need better internal communications
- Be cutting edge and proactive
- Low staff morale and changing leadership
- Need to stay on mission
- Better implementation of 90/10 policy
- No “park district” type development
- Potential consolidation with the county

Question 4

What priorities should we as staff hold in high importance moving into the future?

- Conservation
- Stay on mission
- Educate the public
- Staff development/improve morale
- Internal communications
- High level of facility and infrastructure maintenance
- Customer service
- Be innovative
- Improve technology
- Improve efficiency
- Community outreach
- Make the forest preserves more accessible



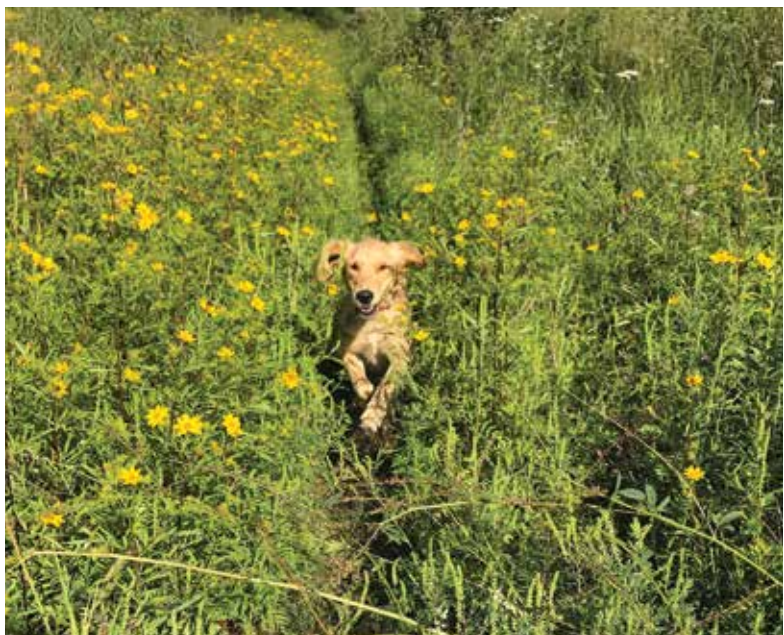
Commissioner Vision Sessions

A series of sessions allowed Forest Preserve District commissioners to give individual opinions and name short-term priorities. Commissioners have a keen awareness of the Forest Preserve District as a whole as well as vested interests in the individual districts they represent. Discussions centered on trail expansion, the desire to finish projects before launching new ones, and the need to keep the Forest Preserve District on solid financial ground. Commissioners also wanted the agency to focus on increasing visitation and evaluating existing structures to improve use and efficiencies.

Meetings for Special-Interest Groups

To gather additional anecdotal information, the Forest Preserve District held nine meetings for people interested in off-leash dog areas, historic and cultural resources, outdoor recreation, programs for visitors with special needs, and other special aspects.

Fifty-one people attended, and almost every group stressed the need for the Forest Preserve District to provide natural resources for the physical and psychological well-being of county residents and visitors. Other suggestions included continuing and improving partnerships; increasing and improving programs, amenities, and trail connectivity; and improving accessibility.



Surveys

Public Surveys

The Forest Preserve District conducted a random-sample survey and a community survey using questions crafted by the workgroup and other employees. It produced and promoted the survey materials and collected the responses.

For the random-sample survey, the Forest Preserve District randomly pulled 5,000 addresses from all DuPage County households and then recruited volunteers to collate and prepare materials for mailing. It also purchased 5,000 emails associated with DuPage County residents and sent surveys to those individuals as well.

Anyone could complete the community survey, which the Forest Preserve District posted on its website and provided as printed copies at its education centers.

Public Research Group's *Community Survey and Assessment Report*, which is part of the master plan appendix, summarized the responses.

- Ninety percent of respondents believe the protection of natural areas is the most important purpose of the Forest Preserve District.
- Nearly one out of two visits a preserve at least once a month. Only 11% have never been to a forest preserve.
- The most common activities are using the trails (76%), enjoying nature (63%), and sitting or relaxing (40%).
- Most are happy with the way forest preserves are now and prefer the Forest Preserve District focus on maintaining what it already has.
- The majority (83%) drive to a forest preserve. Of those, 65% drive 3 to 10 miles.
- The top reason the Forest Preserve District should acquire more land is to protect sensitive natural areas. The second is to preserve open space. The top type of land the Forest Preserver District should acquire is high-quality natural areas.

Respondents also ranked what they thought the Forest Preserve District should focus on over the next five years.

1. Restore existing prairies, woods, wetlands, lakes or streams
2. Maintain or improve existing forest preserve buildings, parking lots or outdoor recreation areas
3. Build new connections between existing trails
4. Acquire more land
5. Build new trails
6. Maintain or restore historic buildings or structures
7. Build new forest preserve buildings, parking lots or outdoor recreation areas

Volunteer Survey

The Forest Preserve District crafted another survey to gather opinions from its more than 900 volunteers. The format was similar to the community survey but contained more open-ended questions plus one on volunteers' perceptions of forest preserve visitor interests.

It sent the survey to all volunteers on Nov. 17, 2017, emailing most but sending paper copies to people without email addresses on file. It received 172 completed surveys (163 online and nine mailed). Public Research Group's *Community Survey and Assessment Report*, which is part of the master plan appendix, summarized the responses.

- There were three top responses to the question, "What would you like to do, see or see more of in DuPage forest preserves?"

Restoration of natural areas	54%
Trails	38%
Flush restrooms	27%
- The top reason the Forest Preserve District should acquire more land was to preserve historic buildings. The second was to preserve open space. The top type of land the Forest Preserver District should acquire was high-quality natural areas.
- Volunteer survey respondents also ranked what they thought the Forest Preserve District should focus on over the next five years.
 1. Restore existing prairies, woods, wetlands, lakes or streams
 2. Maintain or improve existing forest preserve buildings, parking lots or outdoor recreation areas
 3. Build new connections between existing trails
 4. Acquire more land
 5. Maintain or restore historic buildings and structures
 6. Build new trails
 7. Build new forest preserve buildings, parking lots or outdoor recreation areas

Employee Survey

Recognizing the distinct perspective dedicated staff brings to any master planning process, the Forest Preserve District crafted a survey specifically for its 300 employees. The format was similar to the community survey but contained more open-ended questions plus one on employees' perceptions of forest preserve visitor interests.

The Forest Preserve District sent the survey to all employees on Nov. 17, 2017. It emailed most but sent paper copies to employees who did not have email access. It received 178 completed surveys (171 online and seven printed). Public Research Group's Community Survey and Assessment Report, which is part of the master plan appendix, summarized the responses.

- There were three top responses to the question, "What would you like to do, see or see more of in DuPage forest preserves?"

Restoration of natural areas	54%
Flush restrooms	34%
Drinking water	31%

- There were three top responses to the question, "If you have regular interactions with visitors, what do they tell you they'd like to see more of at DuPage forest preserves?"

Flush restrooms	39%
Restoration of natural areas	34%
Drinking water	29%

- The top reason the Forest Preserve District should acquire more land was to preserve open space. The second was to preserve historic buildings. The top type of land the Forest Preserver District should acquire was high-quality natural areas.
- Employee survey respondents also ranked what they thought the Forest Preserve District should focus on over the next five years.
 1. Restore existing prairies, woods, wetlands, lakes or streams
 2. Maintain or improve existing forest preserve buildings, parking lots or outdoor recreation areas
 3. Build new connections between existing trails
 4. Acquire more land
 5. Build new trails
 6. Maintain or restore historic buildings and structures
 7. Build new forest preserve buildings, parking lots or outdoor recreation areas



Cumulative Voting

Over a 10-week period, the Forest Preserve District held cumulative voting activities to engage the public and gauge which categories people felt it should focus on over the next five years: trails; the preservation of historic buildings and sites; prairie, woodland and wetland restoration; nature centers and programs; and recreation.

Each participant received 10 tokens and “voted” for categories by placing the tokens in ballot boxes representing each category. The participant could place all 10 chips in one box to show strong support for a single category or could divide them among the boxes in any way. The master plan workgroup tested the activity twice before its formal rollout.

Dates and Locations

People could participate at the meetings in September, October and November and at six public events.

Kline Creek Farm Country Fair		
Sept. 2 and 3, 2017	10 a.m. – 4 p.m.	
St. James Farm Dairy Day		
Sept. 9, 2017	10 a.m. – 2 p.m.	
Graue Mill Corn Fest		
Sept. 10, 2017	10 a.m. – 4 p.m.	
Mayslake Peabody Estate		
Sept. 23, 2017	9 a.m. – 2 p.m.	
Danada Fall Festival		
Oct. 8, 2017	11 a.m. – 4 p.m.	
Fullersburg Woods Halloween Walks		
Oct. 29, 2017	11 a.m. – 4 p.m.	

Results

The summary below is of the 3,016 individuals who participated in the activity.

Trails	24%
Prairies, Woodlands, and Wetland Restoration	22%
Nature Centers and Programs	18%
Recreation	18%
Preservation of Historic Buildings and Sites	18%

Emails

To receive comments from people unable to participate in any other master plan outreach activities, the Forest Preserve District set up a special email address and posted it on the master plan page of its website. It accepted emails through April 30, 2018. Responses fell into five main categories.

	Emails	Percent of All Received
Miscellaneous (spam, duplicates, test emails, questions or comments about meetings or surveys, etc.)	17	39
Trail development or improvements	14	32
Off-leash dog area improvements	6	14
Outdoor recreation facility improvements	4	9
More land acquisition or natural resource restoration	3	7



Peer Agency Comparisons

The master plan workgroup studied Cook, Kane, Lake and Will county forest preserve districts to gain an overview of their offerings and to identify possible areas improvement in DuPage forest preserves.

Protecting and Conserving Land

- DuPage is at or near the forefront when measuring protected acreage; 13% of county land is forest preserve.
- Along with Kane, DuPage has the most restrictive land management policy; 90% of protected land must be undeveloped.
- DuPage is below average in the percent of forest preserve land protected as a state nature preserve or land and water reserve; only 11% of DuPage forest preserve land has that designation.

Education and Recreation

- DuPage forest preserves rank second highest after Lake for miles of trail per square mile of land at 0.5 mile per square mile.
- DuPage forest preserves have the most off-leash dog areas.
- DuPage forest preserve equipment rentals align with those of its peers.
- Although Cook has the most golf courses at 10, DuPage aligns with Kane and Lake with three each.
- Although DuPage does not offer single-track mountain biking trails, neither does Lake or Will. (Cook and Kane do).
- DuPage forest preserve camping options align with those of its peers, although Cook also offers cabins.
- The number of DuPage forest preserve education sites and centers aligns with its peers. DuPage, Cook and Will each have six; Kane and Lake both have four.

Distinctive Features

- The Forest Preserve District has several offerings that its peers do not, including an archery range, a wildlife rehabilitation center (Willowbrook Wildlife Center), a historic farmstead operated as a living history farm (Kline Creek Farm), and a board separate from the county.



National Trends and State and Regional Priorities

National Trends

To gain a broader perspective about recreational trends across the country, the master plan workgroup reviewed research on participation rates in outdoor recreation activities: which are highly ranked, which are growing or decreasing in popularity, who participates in each, and why they do. These metrics helped formulate the master plan's goals and objectives.

Outdoor Foundation Research

The Outdoor Foundation is a nonprofit established by the Outdoor Industry Association, which, according to its website, is "a membership-driven trade organization for the outdoor industry" and "a force for the industry in recreation and trade policy, sustainable business innovation and increasing outdoor participation."

2018 Outdoor Participation Report

Between 2016 and 2017, the number of outdoor participants grew by 1.7 million. In 2017, 146.1 million Americans (49.0% of the population) participated in an outdoor activity at least once. Of those, 20% did so at least twice a week. The biggest motivator was exercise.

Adults with children in their households participated in outdoor activities at higher levels than those without.

Sixty-three percent of outdoor participants traveled 10 miles or less for outdoor recreation.

Eighty percent of people who participated in outdoor activities wanted to do so more often.

When considering outdoor activities alone, running, jogging, and trail running were the most popular followed by freshwater, saltwater, and fly fishing; road, mountain, and

BMX biking; hiking; and car, backyard, backpacking, and RV camping. For youth between the ages of 6 and 17, the most popular activities were road, mountain, and BMX biking; running, jogging, and trail running; freshwater, saltwater, and fly fishing; car, backyard, backpacking, and RV camping; and hiking.

Sports and Fitness Industry Association Research

The Sports and Fitness Industry Association is a trade association of leading industry sports and fitness brands, suppliers, retailers and partners. Its mission is to "promote sports and fitness participation and industry vitality" by focusing on core product areas for the industry.

The master plan work group looked at two of the association's reports.

2016 State of the Industry Report

Nationally, walking for fitness and running or jogging were the two most popular fitness activities but were trending downward. This decline correlated with increased interest in alternatives such as hiking, yoga, and swimming, which all saw significant increases because they "fit well with Americans' desires for flexible fitness."

Running and jogging were most popular among Generation X and Millennials, but their popularity dropped off dramatically with Baby Boomers.

The top aspirational activities across all ages took place outside (camping, fishing, biking, birding, wildlife watching, etc.)

According to the report, "Generational physical activity rates appear to understandably be geared toward different ends as people age; we see a notable contrast among Boomers' relatively strong participation rates in well-being-focused fitness outlets to Gen Z's more team- and socially-focused sports."

The greatest increase in participation between 2012 and 2015 was in water sports with Millennials most likely to participate in stand-up paddle boarding, sailing, and surfing. Stand-up paddle boarding and adventure racing were the



top two fastest-growing sports, and the top 10 fastest-growing revealed “a robust interest in class-based fitness activities with strong social aspects.”

Winter sports (cross-country and downhill skiing, sledding or tubing, snowboarding and snowshoeing) showed the second-greatest participation increase, gaining the most in all age categories between 2016 and 2017.

The top two barriers to trying a new activity were not having someone to try it with and not having a friend to take them along. “First time participation really depends on who you are doing it with more than if you have the time.”

2017 Tracking the Fitness Movement

Americans tended to be their most active when young. Those activity levels tapered as people aged, but only a small percentage of the active population had a tendency to drop out entirely, indicating that activity levels established in youth tended to persist over a lifetime. (Supporting research from the Outdoor Foundation showed that people introduced to the outdoors as children were more likely to participate in outdoor activities as adults than those who were not.)

Participation in sports in general was higher among people with higher incomes, largely due to available leisure time, high equipment costs, and participation fees, but outdoor sports remained highly popular across all income levels because they are relatively accessible from a financial point of view.

Conclusion

Based on this research by Outdoor Foundation and the Sports and Fitness Industry Association, it is important for the Forest Preserve District to reach users when they are young so they can build affinities that will last a lifetime. By continuing to provide outdoor activities with growing popularity — hiking, trail running, biking, camping, fishing and water sports — the Forest Preserve District can position itself as an increasingly important community asset.

State and Regional Priorities

Illinois’ 2015 – 2019 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan states that forest preserves are important because they provide outdoor recreation opportunities near the state’s most populated areas. They complement the state’s offerings because they provide places for outdoor recreation while preserving natural resources and having strong conservation- and education-based missions.

The plan also outlines priorities for recreational providers such promoting physical activity, providing access to outdoor recreation, stewarding natural resources, providing conservation education, developing greenways, and revitalizing land for open space.

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning’s ONTO 2050 encourages agencies to use sustainable management practices on agricultural land and to protect and expand open space to enhance stormwater management. It encourages voluntary buyouts from property owners in high-risk flood areas and the acquisition of high-quality natural areas. It also urges raising funds through open space referenda and working with stakeholders to establish land reserves and land trusts to protect open space and natural resources.

To improve mobility, the plan encourages investments in safe bike and pedestrian pathways that lead to desired destinations by completing the agency’s Regional Greenways and Trails Plan.

In 2015 the DuPage County Division of Transportation started to create its Long Range Transportation Plan, and as outlined in public-meeting exhibit boards, several preliminary goals of the plan affect the county’s forest preserve. For instance, the plan calls for improving connectivity between bus, rail, and bike paths; promoting access to these improvements; and increasing economic vitality by promoting local and countywide first- and last-mile network improvements.

Analysis

Public outreach and survey efforts and reviews of research, national trends, and state and regional priorities indicate strongly that the Forest Preserve District should invest in and improve existing natural resources and mission-aligned facilities and experiences.

Natural Resources

In public, volunteer, and special-interest-group meetings, a recurring theme was a desire for the increased restoration and protection of land and natural resources. In surveys, the top priority was the restoration of existing prairies, woodlands, wetlands, lakes, and streams. Anecdotal information from the employee survey related that visitors often express a desire for additional restored natural areas. All measuring devices revealed communitywide support for the Forest Preserve District's mission.

In line with public opinion, state and regional agencies recognize the role forest preserve districts play in stewarding natural resources and revitalizing open spaces. These agencies consider it a priority, as noted particularly by the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning and the state's Illinois Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.

Nature and Outdoor Recreational Experiences

Improved nature and outdoor recreation experiences was a recurring theme in public, volunteer, and special-interest-group meetings, and all surveys ranked "maintain or improve existing forest preserve buildings, parking lots, or outdoor recreation areas" just behind the restoration of natural resources. (Support for new facilities was not as strong.) Anecdotal information from the employee survey in particular related visitor interest in improvements such as flush restrooms and drinking water.

A review of research by the Outdoor Foundation showed that 49% of Americans participate in outdoor activities

throughout the year and that people introduced to the outdoors as children were more likely to participate in outdoor activities as adults. Illinois' Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan recognized the role forest preserve districts play in providing outdoor recreational opportunities.

Trails

Prominent components of nature and outdoor recreational experiences were maintained and improved trails. In surveys, connecting existing trails was the third-highest priority for the community and employees and second-highest for volunteers.

In a review of national research, the highest-ranked sports were running, jogging and walking for fitness. Running, jogging and trail running were the most popular outdoor activities overall. The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan cited trails along greenways in particular, which the Forest Preserve District is positioned to provide, and the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning touted bike and pedestrian pathways as key to increased mobility regionwide. DuPage County's Long Range Transportation Plan recognized bike and pedestrian paths as important components when offering residents options for transportation.





Goals, Objectives and Tactics

After analyzing existing Forest Preserve District conditions; information from the robust opinion-gathering process; national, state, and regional trends; and peer agencies, the master plan workgroup drafted a set of goals, objectives and tactics that will serve as the decision-making framework over the next five years.

After incorporating feedback from the Forest Preserve District's Board of Commissioners, the workgroup crafted a final version, which was approved by the Board of Commissioners on Feb. 12, 2019.

Goal 1

Preserve, protect and restore open spaces

- Objective 1.1 Allocate additional resources to maintain existing high-quality natural areas and create new ones
 - Tactic 1.1a Focus on priority projects that will have the greatest positive effects on natural areas
 - Tactic 1.1b Use volunteer support to restore natural areas
 - Tactic 1.1c Focus law enforcement training and responsibilities on protecting high-quality natural areas
 - Tactic 1.1d Continue to reduce mowed turf areas by converting them into natural ones
- Objective 1.2 Promote the recovery of threatened and endangered species
 - Tactic 1.2a Continue to propagate threatened and endangered species, partnering with organizations where appropriate
 - Tactic 1.2b Provide the public with information on threatened and endangered species and related recovery programs and integrate that information into educational programs
 - Tactic 1.2c Increase efforts to find and record threatened and endangered species in new locations
 - Tactic 1.2d Maximize existing and pursue additional laboratory space available for the species recovery program
- Objective 1.3 Collaborate with other organizations to further countywide restoration of natural areas
 - Tactic 1.3a Pursue partnerships and agreements with government agencies, advocacy groups and other organizations to restore natural areas and promote the importance of restoration efforts
 - Tactic 1.3b Pursue management partnerships with organizations that neighbor the forest preserves
 - Tactic 1.3c Pursue partnerships that create stewardship sites suitable for long-term management by volunteers
 - Tactic 1.3d Communicate with landowners adjacent to the forest preserves to promote the fact that flora, fauna and hydrologic systems do not have boundaries
- Objective 1.4 Focus future potential land-acquisition efforts on high-quality natural areas from willing sellers
 - Tactic 1.4a Identify and characterize all public land and privately held natural areas
 - Tactic 1.4b Create a new framework for evaluation

Goal 2

Help people cultivate a lifelong enthusiasm for nature by offering meaningful, first-rate outdoor recreation and learning experiences

- Objective 2.1 Improve the preserve experience by modernizing amenities
 - Tactic 2.1a Develop a plan that identifies new and refurbished amenities and ones to be removed
 - Tactic 2.1b Provide new amenities for convenience or comfort
- Objective 2.2 Create trail links that connect key recreational sites and regional trails to major residential, commercial and institutional areas
 - Tactic 2.2a Develop an overarching vision for the Forest Preserve District's trail system
 - Tactic 2.2b Create a trail plan that identifies and prioritizes opportunities for trail connections, partnerships and funding
- Objective 2.3 Complement and expand existing recreational offerings with increasing participation rates and more social interaction
 - Tactic 2.3a Increase and improve places for water-based activities, where appropriate
 - Tactic 2.3b Improve existing campgrounds
 - Tactic 2.3c Develop agreements with other organizations to deliver recreational programs to an expanded audience
 - Tactic 2.3d Use nontraditional buildings as centers for educational nature programs and for expanded, more diverse recreational activities
 - Tactic 2.3e Develop a special needs recreational plan
- Objective 2.4 Enhance and promote unstructured nature exploration
 - Tactic 2.4a Develop web content and signs to support the value of unstructured outdoor play
 - Tactic 2.4b Explore options for creating designated nature play spaces in the preserves
 - Tactic 2.4c Promote the forest preserve system as a destination for nature play

Goal 3

Improve preserves to increase access, use, efficiency and productivity

- Objective 3.1 Improve education centers and recreational sites
 - Tactic 3.1a Evaluate existing plans for education centers and recreational sites to capitalize on opportunities and remedy deficiencies
 - Tactic 3.1b Create a comprehensive identification, regulatory, way-finding and interpretive sign plan
 - Tactic 3.1c Develop a vision and plan to renew exhibits at the education centers
- Objective 3.2 Evaluate and invest in maintenance and operations buildings as well as infrastructure
 - Tactic 3.2a Make structures more energy efficient
 - Tactic 3.2b Improve program support buildings and structures to increase efficiencies
 - Tactic 3.2c Manage nonlandfill-related disturbed areas and regional infrastructure obligations (dams, storm sewers, detention basins, reservoirs, etc.)
- Objective 3.3 Modify forest preserve facilities to accommodate a diverse range of users
 - Tactic 3.3a Update ADA Transition Plan and identify priorities, schedules and required re-sources
 - Tactic 3.3b Provide amenities for people with special needs
- Objective 3.4 Maintain environmental protections at landfill sites and implement compatible uses for related open spaces when feasible
 - Tactic 3.4a Protect human health and the environment at the landfills by effectively managing leachate, landfill gases and cover systems
 - Tactic 3.4b Prepare long-term maintenance and end-use plans for each landfill
 - Tactic 3.4c Prepare a feasibility study of recreational opportunities for each site
 - Tactic 3.4d Complete required tasks for projects under regulatory oversight
 - Tactic 3.4e Provide annual reports for each landfill



Goal 4

Refocus resources by reducing infrastructures and tasks not related to the mission

Objective 4.1	Evaluate and eliminate infrastructures and buildings that do not actively support significant operations	Objective 4.3	Refine programs to reflect the Forest Preserve District's mission, research in natural resources and expertise
Tactic 4.1a	Inventory and evaluate all nonhistoric buildings and create an end-use plan for each	Tactic 4.3a	Increase STEM program presence within local and regional learning communities
Tactic 4.1b	Prepare annual reports on all Forest Preserve District-owned, -operated or -leased buildings and facilities	Tactic 4.3b	Eliminate or refocus programs also offered by neighboring agencies or groups
Tactic 4.1c	Evaluate land holdings and identify ways to reduce nonmission-driven maintenance and operations at each	Tactic 4.3c	Partner with local park districts and businesses to offer recreational and learning programs
Tactic 4.1d	Evaluate infrastructures and eliminate or re-tool surpluses to minimize maintenance and operations	Tactic 4.3d	Evaluate programs at Willowbrook Wildlife Center to refocus them on the re-habilitation of conservative, rare or less-common species, not common, overpopulated or invasive ones
Objective 4.2	Reevaluate operations to increase efficiency and productivity and to reduce the maintenance of areas not critical to the mission	Tactic 4.3e	Increase the number of nature-based programs at the golf preserves
Tactic 4.2a	Explore cooperative agreements to increase efficiency, productivity and reduce maintenance	Objective 4.4	Evaluate and make recommendations for historic holdings
Tactic 4.2b	Increase or reconfigure deficient parking areas and remove or re-purpose surplus ones	Tactic 4.4a	For each historic holding, assess its value to the Forest Preserve District's mission; the effects of its projected revenues and maintenance and operations costs; and any interest it receives from support groups
Tactic 4.2c	Re-evaluate standard design guidelines and modify to balance cost, benefits, aesthetics and energy efficiencies	Tactic 4.4b	Re-evaluate and propose changes to the Policy for the Management of Historical and Cultural Resources to define a decision-making process
Tactic 4.2d	Continue using procedures and technologies to find or increase efficiencies that improve productivity	Tactic 4.4c	Identify and evaluate structures over 50 years old and develop an end-use goal for each
Tactic 4.2e	Develop a long-term maintenance plan to address building and facility deficiencies that identifies priorities, schedules, funding strategies and needed resources		
Tactic 4.2f	Create a storage plan that consolidates items in storage and eliminates buildings where appropriate		
Tactic 4.2g	Re-evaluate, modify and develop maintenance standards based on use, visibility and cost		

Goal 5

Foster community engagement and increase awareness of the Forest Preserve District

- Objective 5.1 Engage and seek continual feedback from the public and internal and external stakeholders
 - Tactic 5.1a Foster community engagement by being a leader in the restoration of natural resources, protection of open space and preservation of native wildlife
 - Tactic 5.1b Expand and evolve use of social media
 - Tactic 5.1c Explore and implement new technologies to enhance audience insights and communicate with visitors
 - Tactic 5.1d Annually share the progress of the master plan with internal and external stakeholders
 - Tactic 5.1e Increase dialog between the Forest Preserve District and the public about on successes, initiatives, ongoing projects and public safety
 - Tactic 5.1f Give greater weight to projects that affect the public most when considering major changes or expenditures
 - Tactic 5.1g Host meetings with key communicator groups to cultivate relationships
 - Tactic 5.1h Increase the presence and visibility of staff at Forest Preserve District and community events and in professional organizations
- Objective 5.2 Evaluate marketing strategies and promote consistent branding
 - Tactic 5.2a Evaluate the cost, use and effectiveness of printed materials
 - Tactic 5.2b Employ creative marketing campaigns and methods
 - Tactic 5.2c Use web analytics to reorganize website content based on viewership and evaluate new ways to present printed content online
 - Tactic 5.2d Conduct communication surveys for all stakeholders
 - Tactic 5.2e Promote and package fee-based, instructor-led experiences
 - Tactic 5.2f Explore ways to engage culturally diverse audiences

Goal 6

Use effective and innovative methods to execute the master plan while continuing on sound financial footing

- Objective 6.1 Develop a long-term financial plan consistent with funding availability and financial projections to implement the master plan
 - Tactic 6.1a Seek alternative sources of revenue
 - Tactic 6.1b Continue responsible spending
 - Tactic 6.1c Update the capital improvement plan
 - Tactic 6.1d Establish a dedicated fund for building and infrastructure maintenance
 - Tactic 6.1e Annually re-assess the amount of funds needed to cover landfill maintenance and potential future liabilities
 - Tactic 6.1f Minimize the reliance on landfill interest earnings to subsidize the annual operating budget
 - Tactic 6.1g Utilize existing bond fund proceeds and consider reasonable and responsible issuance of new debt to fund major capital and natural-resource-management projects when appropriate to achieve objectives
 - Tactic 6.1h Develop strategies to use future golf operations profits and landfill interest earnings to supplement capital and natural-resource-management initiatives
 - Tactic 6.1i Consider cost recoveries and effects on the public, operations and maintenance when prioritizing projects
- Objective 6.2 Formulate short-term financial plans that incrementally implement master plan goals
 - Tactic 6.2a Create and approve three-year budgets that take master plan priorities into consideration
 - Tactic 6.3a Revisit plan goals regularly to remain focused on priority projects
 - Tactic 6.3b Recognizing the dynamic nature of outside funding opportunities, reprioritize master plan initiatives as needed
 - Tactic 6.3c Use a tracking mechanism to measure performance against approved goals and regularly update commissioners and senior staff



Appendix