



**Request for Statements of Interest
For Reuse of**

**Oak Cottage
23W171 Hobson Road
Naperville, IL 60540**

Issued: June 16, 2025

Due Date: October 16, 2025

Purpose and Objectives

The Forest Preserve District of DuPage County is seeking expressions of serious interest from any party interested in reuse of Oak Cottage located at 23W171 Hobson Road in unincorporated Naperville, Illinois. Built in 1850, Oak Cottage is located within Greene Valley Forest Preserve, near the Greene Farm Barn at the corner of Hobson and Greene Roads. The house has been vacant since 1983 and is in need of rehabilitation and a new use.

The Forest Preserve District has determined that use of the house would provide limited benefits to the agency. Therefore, the Forest Preserve District is seeking an individual or organization with expertise and capacity to develop and implement a reuse strategy for the building that aligns with the Forest Preserve District's mission. All uses will be subject to certain terms and conditions that will ensure the preservation of the historic exterior and keep the surrounding land under Forest Preserve District control.

The Forest Preserve District intends to administer a two-step process in order to ensure a successful partnership. The first step is the issuance and evaluation of a Request for Statement of Interest, which is being initiated with this request. The second step, which will be initiated after evaluating the submitted statements, will require successful respondents to engage professionals to complete tasks and items such as a feasibility study, business plan, as well as due diligence including architectural and engineering plans for the proposed adaptive re-use, a detailed funding strategy and evidence of the establishment of a dedicated and formal support group for the project.

As the first part of the two-step process, this Request for Statements of Interest is being issued strictly for the purpose of gaining knowledge of parties with historic preservation, planning, economic or community development expertise and the capacity to secure financial resources needed, with a serious interest in meeting these objectives.

Background Information

Oak Cottage is located at 23W171 Hobson Road, in unincorporated Naperville, near the corner of Hobson and Greene Roads within Greene Valley Forest Preserve. Historically, the house has been part of a larger complex of farm structures, which currently includes the Greene Farm Barn. The house is approximately 2,440 square feet with a first and second floor, along with a 520 square foot unfinished basement.

The property is currently zoned R-2 Single Family through DuPage County. The property is currently tax-exempt, but depending on the proposed use, tax-exempt status may be affected.

Oak Cottage was built in 1850 by William B. Greene, and it stayed in the family's possession until 1983 when it was acquired by the Forest Preserve District. Prior to District ownership, the Greene Family constructed several additions to the house. Since 1983, the house has been vacant, and the District performs regular maintenance on the house.

In 2023, the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County's Board of Commissioners approved the Greene Valley Forest Preserve Master Plan. The Master Plan called for 1) performing a study on the

Oak Cottage to document the structure's history and condition and 2) determining a defined time-frame (3 years or less) for a third-party partner to identify a purpose and a means to utilize and maintain the existing Oak Cottage and to issue a request for third-party statements of interest.

Property Description and Condition

In accordance with the 2023 Greene Valley Forest Preserve Master Plan, the Forest Preserve District commissioned a Cultural Resources Report for the house which was completed 2025. This study documents the structure's history and condition including its historical context, development, use and physical condition. It also contains an evaluation of its significance and treatment recommendations. The report is attached for reference to this Request for Statements of Interest.

In general, the report describes the house being an Upright and Wing type house, in the Greek Revival style. While several additions were constructed over the years, the original portion of the house is of balloon-frame construction.

The condition assessment indicated several conditions that should be remediated to prevent further damage from occurring, but do not pose an immediate threat to the integrity of the structure. Conditions were noted with the masonry including cracking, settlement, biological growth and open and deteriorated mortar joints in the foundation; deteriorated mortar joints and minor displacement in the chimney; and biological growth on the concrete window wells. Biological growth and/or staining were noted on the roof. Deterioration of exterior wood trim, peeling and flaking paint on exterior wood surfaces, and deterioration of window glazing putty was noted. Interior finish conditions noted included cracked, deteriorated and missing plaster at walls and ceilings, prevalent paint failure throughout the house, signs of past water infiltration (not active), water damage and deterioration of the second floor bathroom (not active), peeling wallpaper, and biological growth on plaster walls and ceilings.

The report includes a Preliminary Structural Analysis whose aim was to determine if alteration would be necessary to accommodate a potential occupancy change, specifically for public use. The most likely new use assumed for the house would fall into the classification of Assembly Group A-3 per the International Building Code Section 303.4. This occupancy classification includes "other assembly uses not classified elsewhere in Group A", which are uses like art galleries, libraries and museums.

The preliminary structural analysis includes the most common, typical conditions, but is not exhaustive of all conditions in the house. In general, the report indicated that most areas do not require additional strengthening or support for that use, but some would be needed for the stairs, east bedroom and east room. For any use proposed by interested parties, a more exhaustive structural analysis would be required to address specific conditions proposed by the new use.

Historic Significance

The report included an evaluation of the house's Significance and Integrity based on the Forest Preserve District's Policy on the Management of Historical and Cultural Resources. The report

states that there are several interior and exterior elements that contribute to the historic character of Oak Cottage, and several physical features contribute to the integrity of Oak Cottage.

Estimated Rehabilitation Costs

The report then outlined several treatment options for the house. The “Rehabilitation” option aligns with the purpose of this Request for Statements of Interest, which is for the house to be adapted for a mission-aligned purpose. Costs for Rehabilitation ranges from \$279,000 - \$354,000. Importantly, however, these costs do not include all necessary new or upgraded utility connections that would be required for use of the house like water, sewer, gas, telecommunications and electric. These costs may add an additional \$200,000 – \$500,000 to the project depending on local requirements. This also does not include any costs for increasing the energy efficiency of the house through measures like energy-efficient windows or additional insulation. These items would have additional cost impacts on the project.

Statement of Interest – Required Information

The Statement of Interest must contain the following information:

1. Proposed Reuse.

The proposed use and how the facility will be operated must be clearly outlined in the response to this Request for Statements of Interest. It must describe how the proposed use advances the Forest Preserve District’s mission and how it will preserve the historic character of the structure.

2. Partners.

Describe the involvement and level of commitment of any planning, preservation or funding partners. Include letters of support and commitment. It should not be assumed that the Forest Preserve District will provide any funding or resources for the project.

3. Commitment to Feasibility Study and Business Plan.

Describe how the reuse feasibility study and cost estimates will be conducted and funded and how the business plan will be completed. Discuss how partnerships and financing will be obtained within (3) years in order to implement the plan.

4. Proposed Timeline.

If selected, the respondent will be required to enter into a preliminary agreement with the Forest Preserve District that will have clearly outlined milestones that must be achieved in order to move the project forward. Coordination with the Forest Preserve District will be required while developing the business plan in order to ensure that the project continues to align with the Forest Preserve District’s mission. Upon successful completion of the terms of the preliminary agreement, the respondent will be required to enter into a separate agreement for construction, operations and maintenance of the property. Provide a detailed timeline with clearly identified intermediary steps that will achieve full realization of the project including the following milestones:

- a. Milestone #1: Submit Statement of Interest – October 16, 2025
 - b. Milestone #2: Notification of successful respondents – by December 31, 2025
 - c. Milestone #3: Complete Feasibility Study, Cost Estimates and Business Plan - October 16, 2026
 - d. Milestone #4: Complete due diligence including Architectural and Engineering Plans - October 16, 2027
 - e. Milestone #5: Secure all funding to complete the project - April 16, 2028.
 - f. Milestone #6: Obtain approval from the Forest Preserve District's Board and enter into an agreement for adaptive reuse of the property - June 16, 2028.
5. Funding Sources and Strategies.
- Describe proposed funding partners, sources and strategies to cover rehabilitation costs, adaptive reuse costs, operations costs and ongoing maintenance. It should not be assumed that the Forest Preserve District will provide any funding or in-kind services to cover any of these activities.
6. Comments.
- Provide any other concerns or comments that could help secure funding or partners.

Evaluation Criteria

1. Mission Alignment of proposed reuse

In order to evaluate if a plan is mission-aligned, the Forest Preserve District will refer to the Downstate Forest Preserve Act as well as the Forest Preserve of DuPage County's Mission, Vision and Purpose outlined in its 2014 Strategic Plan, and the Goals outlined in its 2019 Master Plan.

The Downstate Forest Preserve Act (70 ILCS 805/7b), allows the Forest Preserve District to issue a license "...for any activity reasonably connected with the purpose for which the Forest Preserve District has been created".

2014 Strategic Plan Mission, Vision and Purpose

Mission: 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.

Vision: The Forest Preserve District of DuPage County is a nationally recognized conservation agency that envisions a community in which all citizens share a connection with nature and an appreciation for cultural history.

Purpose: Our purpose is to acquire, preserve, protect, and restore the natural resources in DuPage County while providing opportunities for people to connect with nature.

2019 Master Plan Goals

Goal 1: Preserve, protect and restore open spaces.

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

Goal 3: Improve preserves to increase access, use, efficiency and productivity.

Goal 4: Refocus resources by reducing infrastructures and tasks not related to the mission.

Goal 5: Foster community engagement and increase awareness of the Forest Preserve District.

Goal 6: Use effective and innovative methods to execute the master plan while continuing on sound financial footing.

2. Strategy to retain the historic character of the house.
3. Evidence of commitment by partners to fund and support the development and implementation of the plan.
4. Commitment to and strategy to complete the feasibility study, cost estimates and business plan and to perform due diligence.
5. Commitment to and detail regarding timeline to meet interim deadlines and complete the project.
6. Anticipated future impact on resources of the Forest Preserve District.

Schedule

Item	Date
Posting Date	June 16, 2025
Site visit and Presubmittal conference (in person and nonmandatory)	July 16, 2025
Deadline for questions	September 16, 2025
Statements of Interest due (4 months after issuance)	October 16, 2025
Notification of successful respondents	By December 31, 2025

Site Visit and Presubmittal Conference (nonmandatory)

Date and time	July 16, 2025, 9:00 – 11:00 am
Location	23W171 Hobson Road, Naperville, IL 60540 (in person)

Submittal Requirements

Submit the Statement of Interest including the information required above electronically to:
jortega@dupageforest.org.

All submittals must be received by 2:00 pm on October 16, 2025. No responses will be accepted after the deadline.

All questions and comments during the posting period should be addressed to Jessica Ortega, Manager of Strategic Plans & Initiatives, at jortega@dupageforest.org.

Attachments and links:

Oak Cottage Cultural Resource Evaluation:

[https://www.dupageforest.org/hubfs/DuPage2022/What%20We%20Do/Master%20Plan%20and%20Capital%20Projects/Project%20Related%20PDFs/Oak%20Cottage%20Cultural%20Resource%20Evaluation%20-%20Final%20Report%20-%20March%207%202025%20\(1\).pdf](https://www.dupageforest.org/hubfs/DuPage2022/What%20We%20Do/Master%20Plan%20and%20Capital%20Projects/Project%20Related%20PDFs/Oak%20Cottage%20Cultural%20Resource%20Evaluation%20-%20Final%20Report%20-%20March%207%202025%20(1).pdf)

Strategic Plan: <https://www.dupageforest.org/hubfs/DuPage2022/About%20Us/Strategic-Plan-2014.pdf>

2019 Master Plan:

<https://www.dupageforest.org/hubfs/DuPage2022/What%20We%20Do/Master%20Plan%20and%20Capital%20Projects/Project%20Related%20PDFs/2019-12-17-Master-Plan-final.pdf>

Ordinance #15-014 Policy on the Management of Historical and Cultural Resources:

https://dupageforest.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=1&clip_id=989&meta_id=30475