



Legislation Text

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PROPOSED RESOLUTION

HONORING THE FOREST PRESERVES OF COOK COUNTY FOR RECEIVING THE PUBLIC NATURAL AREAS AWARD FROM THE CHICAGO REGION TREE INITIATIVE'S URBAN FORESTRY AWARDS PROGRAM FOR ITS *TREE PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION SPECIFICATIONS MANUAL*

WHEREAS, in December 2020 the Forest Preserves of Cook County's *Tree Protection and Preservation Specifications Manual* (the "Manual") received the Public Natural Areas Award from the Chicago Region Tree Initiative's Urban Forestry Awards program which celebrates stewardship and advocacy for natural areas on public property; and

WHEREAS, the Forest Preserves' *Manual* is a document that is used to make land use and management decisions that make the preservation, protection, and maintenance of trees a top priority; and

WHEREAS, the development of the *Manual* was made possible in part through a 2018 Urban and Community Forestry Grant, administered by the Morton Arboretum and supported by the USDA Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Program; and

WHEREAS, the Forest Preserves strives to protect an estimated 20 million trees representing nearly 200 species which provide numerous benefits to the residents of Cook County including cleaning air and water, reducing stormwater runoff, limiting erosion, and providing shade and beauty, while also offering food and shelter to thousands of species of wildlife; and

WHEREAS, this *Manual* supports the Forest Preserves' mission to preserve, manage and protect the public lands in its care and ensure that everyone in Cook County has access to healthy and beautiful nature and to the benefits that come with spending time outdoors; and

WHEREAS, the Forest Preserves recognizes that the nearly 70,000 acres of public land in its care face pressures from development both externally and internally, and this *Manual* helps plan for the protection of its trees and forests and ensure that construction contracts and license agreements consider how to protect and minimize harm to trees prior to and while work is being initiated; and

WHEREAS, through this *Manual* the Forest Preserves will be able to increase the survivability of protected trees, avoid damage to trees that are preserved on a site, and improve the coordination of construction projects to minimize conflicts with trees and new construction elements; and

WHEREAS, the *Manual*, developed in collaboration with various Forest Preserves departments, contractors, and partners, allows the Forest Preserves to evaluate land use requests thoughtfully, taking into consideration the short-, medium-, and long-term effects of development on trees and proposing mitigation strategies to limit the harm and destruction of trees that often accompany new development features; and

WHEREAS, the *Manual* allows the Forest Preserves to work with neighboring municipalities, contractors, stakeholders, and with its own staff to ensure it can respond to land use requests wisely and take into account the preservation, protection and maintenance of trees for the benefit of all who call this region home now and in the future; and

WHEREAS, the *Manual* helps advance the Forest Preserves' Natural and Cultural Resource Master Plan, Next Century

Conservation Plan, and Sustainability and Climate Resiliency Plan which all seek to ensure that the Forest Preserves' natural resources will continue to thrive for generations;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Toni Preckwinkle, President, and the Forest Preserves of Cook County Board of Commissioners thank and congratulate the Forest Preserves and its Department of Resource Management for being recognized by the Chicago Region Tree Initiative's Urban Forestry Awards.