



Legislation Text

File #: 22-0363, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED GRANT AWARD

Department: Department of Planning and Development

Grantee: Forest Preserves of Cook County

Grantor: Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Request: Authorization to accept grant

Purpose: Authorization is sought for the Forest Preserves of Cook County (the "Forest Preserves") to accept and enter into an agreement with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) for Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) grant funding for an outdoor recreation project at Beaubien Woods in Chicago, Illinois in Cook County.

Grant Amount: \$1,150,000.00

Grant Period: Two (2) years from date of full contract execution

Fiscal Impact: Not to Exceed \$3,054,500.00 (\$1,154,500.00 50% match + \$575,000.00 25% contingency + \$1,325,000.00 anticipated underground utility services to the site). Estimated impact without contingency and underground utility services: FY2023 \$577,000.00 and FY2024 \$577,500.00

Accounts: Consulting Services 51009.520830, 51010.520830, 51028.520830, 51010.520830 and 51009.520831; Land Improvement 51009.560019, 51010.560019, 51028.560019, 51030.560019 and 51031.560019; Property Maintenance and Operations 51009.560105, 51010.560106, 51028.560105, 51030.560106 and 51031.560105; and future Construction and Development accounts

Concurrences:

The Chief Financial Officer has approved this item. Final grant agreement is subject to legal review and approval.

District(s): 4, 5

Summary: The Forest Preserves has been awarded an OSLAD grant that will support outdoor recreation activities in Beaubien Woods, a 279-acre forest preserve in Chicago in southeast Cook County, Illinois. Proposed improvements include reconstruction of existing boat launch ramps and onshore fishing boardwalk, an accessible canoe/kayak launch system, a new program shelter and interpretive signs, and a comfort station and trail connection to the adjacent neighborhood of Altgeld Gardens.

In addition to improving access to fishing, paddling and bird watching along the river, these amenities would enhance the

heritage tours and water trail experience. Beaubien Woods is an important natural and cultural site in the Calumet region in South Cook County where a growing number of organizations are offering information and tours focusing on nature and Black history. In July 2020, Openlands released an African American Heritage Water Trail brochure and began partnering with other organizations to lead tours. Local historians also conduct regular tours with groups from local park districts, schools and churches starting at the Beaubien Boat Launch and stopping at nearby points on the former underground railroad.

The grant will fund 50% of the estimated \$2.3 million total cost of development, excluding major underground utility work. The Forest Preserves would provide a 50% match and additional 25% contingency and the anticipated cost of major underground utilities.