



Legislation Text

File #: 17-0388, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED CONTRACT

Department(s): Resource Management

Vendor: Friends of the Forest Preserves, Chicago, Illinois

Request: Authorization for the Forest Preserve District of Cook County to enter into and execute

Good(s) or Service(s): Forest Preserve Experience Program

Contract Value: Not to exceed \$100,000.00 per year, or \$500,000.00 over the five (5) year term

Contract period: 1/1/2018 - 12/31/2022

Estimated Fiscal Impact: FY 2018 \$100,000.00, FY 2019 \$100,000.00, FY 2020 \$100,000.00, FY 2021 \$100,000.00, FY 2022 \$100,000.00

Accounts: Intern Programs 51009.521525, Habitat Enhancement 51009.521452, Habitat Restoration 51009.521444, Grant and Mitigation Accounts: 51010.29982 and 51010.22522

Contract Number(s): 17-31-117

Concurrences:

The Chief Financial Officer and Chief Attorney have approved this item.

District(s): Districtwide

Summary: Contract 17-31-117 consists of a variety of Conservation Corps internship programs focused on ecological restoration throughout the Forest Preserves of Cook County (the "Preserves"). The Conservation Corps co-facilitates innovative job training and employment programs that provide participants with paid, hands-on experiences in conservation that train the next generation to restore and be responsible stewards of the land. The Preserves issued a Request for Proposals, and received a total of nine (9) proposals from three (3) vendors for this project.

The Preserves assembled a review panel consisting of various Preserve staff that considered Friends of the Forest Preserves' proposal one of the most responsive including particular strengths in experience, match contribution, program scalability, and performance capacity as it relates to the work requested in the proposal. The Forest Preserve Experience program is a summer youth employment program that will provide conservation and job skills training to high-school youth, ages 15 to 19, from south and west suburban Cook County. This five (5) week program will engage approximately fifty (50) youth participants and nine (9) adult field leaders annually in hands-on ecological restoration activities including, but not limited to, invasive species removal, tree mulching, and shoreline clean-up along the Preserves' many lakes and waterways. Participants will receive extensive environmental education and job skills training supplemented by nature-based enrichment activities which promote forest preserve awareness, and teaches participants how healthy forest preserves contribute to their community and quality of life.

The Preserves believe it is critical to engage individuals from Cook County's diverse communities in conservation jobs at

the Preserves. Conservation Corps programs have been very successful in engaging participants from a wide range of socioeconomic backgrounds, ages and ethnicities. Corps demographic data from 2007 to 2016 show that on average 54% of participants were African American, 23% Caucasian, 18% Latino, 3% biracial, and 2% Asian.

Total project costs are \$131,986.00 annually, with \$25,000.00 in investment by the Preserves leveraging \$106,986.00 in partner match. The overall annual contract authority was increased in anticipation of additional funding opportunities. This program advances the goals of the Next Century Conservation Plan.