



Legislation Text

File #: 24-0472, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED CONTRACT AMENDMENT

Department(s): Department of Resource Management

Vendor: Friends of the Forest Preserves, Inc., Chicago, Illinois

Request: Authorization for the Forest Preserves of Cook County (the "Forest Preserves") to extend and increase contract

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

Original Contract Period: 1/1/2023 - 12/31/2024

Proposed Contract Period Extension: 1/1/2025 - 12/31/2026

Total Current Contract Amount Authority: \$1,170,000.00 (\$1,120,000.00 grant funding received through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 ("ARPA"), plus up to \$50,000.00 contingency)

Original Approval: 12/13/2022, \$1,170,000.00

Previous Increase(s): N/A

This Increase Requested: Not to exceed \$185,894.00 (fully funded by additional ARPA grant funding)

Estimated Fiscal Impact: FY 2025 \$50,000.00 (unexpended contingency, per original approval)

Accounts: ARPA Conservation Corps 51032.521444; Professional Services 51034.520840; and all future Professional Services accounts

Contract Number(s): #74000011530 issued under RFP #22-31-116

Concurrences: The Chief Financial Officer has approved this item. Final amendment is subject to legal review and approval.

The contract-specific Minority- and Women-Owned Business Enterprise goal for this contract was set to zero.

District(s): Districtwide

Summary: On June 11, 2024, the Forest Preserves Board of Commissioners approved the receipt of \$562,833.00 in additional American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 grant funding (Board Item No. 24-0245) to expand Conservation Corps job training and employment programs through 2025. As such, the three (3) contracts for Conservation Corps service

providers awarded to fulfill the ARPA requirements (Board Item Nos. 22-0524, 22-0525, and 22-0526) must now subsequently be amended to extend each contract, and increase the authority awarded to each vendor due to the allocation of these new funds. These programs were solicited via a public Request for Proposal (RFP) process in 2022.

The Forest Preserves Experience program is a summer youth employment program that provides conservation and job skills training to high-school youth, ages 15 to 19, from south and west suburban Cook County whose families are clients of the Housing Authority of Cook County. In 2025, the program is expected to engage approximately ninety-eight (98) youth participants in hands-on conservation activities including, but not limited to, invasive species removal and shoreline clean-up along the Forest Preserves' many lakes and waterways. Participants will gain environmental awareness and basic job skills training supplemented by hands-on nature-based enrichment activities. The program will promote enjoyment and appreciation for nature and teaches participants how healthy forest preserves contribute to their community and quality of life.

Total program costs including this additional contribution are not to exceed \$1,355,894.00, of which the Forest Preserves previously requested and was granted authority to add up to \$50,000.00 of direct match to allow for additional flexibility, if needed. An additional year (2026) was added to the contract in case additional funding becomes available. The Forest Preserves has a separate non-ARPA funded agreement for the same program (Board Item No. 23-0603). Conservation Corps programs advance the goals of the Next Century Conservation Plan by mobilizing people to heal and nurture the lands through a paid conservation corps model.