



LAKE COUNTY FOREST PRESERVES
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Preservation, Restoration, Education and Recreation

DATE: August 26, 2019

MEMO TO: John Wasik, Chair
Planning Committee

FROM: Randall L. Seebach
Director of Planning and Land Preservation

REQUEST: Provide policy direction regarding the potential transfer of District property at Wadsworth Savanna Forest Preserve to the Lake County Division of Transportation (LCDOT) for road improvements to Wadsworth Road and the authority to negotiate an intergovernmental agreement with LCDOT and the Village of Wadsworth regarding certain obligations associated with the road improvements.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION SUPPORTED: Public Access and Connections

FINANCIAL DATA: The estimated value of the 0.6 acres of District property is \$22,000.00, which will be more than offset by the estimated cost of constructing the bike lanes that will benefit the District, which is estimated at \$100,000.00. The District will also receive left and right turn lanes at the entrance to Sedge Meadow Forest Preserve, the value of which has not been determined.

BACKGROUND: The Lake County Division of Transportation (LCDOT) began a Phase I engineering study of the intersection of Wadsworth Road and US Route 41 in 2014. The study has revealed the east leg of the intersection, Wadsworth Road, has contributed to a significant portion of the intersection crashes due in large part to the existing access points. There were 81 crashes recorded on the east leg of that intersection over a typical 5-year period with 54 (67%) occurring at the access drive for the BP gas station and McDonalds on the northeast corner of the intersection. A primary cause of these crashes is the high volume of turning movements in and out of that access drive which is too close to the US Route 41 intersection.

LCDOT's initial plan was to address the entire intersection improvements together. However, because of extensive coordination requirements, environmental clearances, lack of available funding, and other factors, LCDOT has decided to move ahead with an interim project that will more quickly addresses the safety concerns occurring on the east leg of the intersection. LCDOT has identified several solutions to addressing these concerns including: (i) constructing a frontage road on the north side of Wadsworth Road to relocate turning movements further away from the intersection, (ii) aligning the frontage road with the District's existing entrance on the south side of the road, (iii) providing dedicated right turn lanes for Captain Porky's/Shanty and the District's Sedge Meadow parking lot and (iv) providing dedicated left turn lanes for the proposed frontage road and for the District's Sedge Meadow parking lot. LCDOT is requesting fee simple transfer of 0.6 acres of District property on the north side of Wadsworth Road for construction of the frontage road in return for providing the left and right turn lanes for the District's entrance to Sedge Meadow Forest Preserve and providing on-street bike lanes between the District's canoe launch and the Des Plaines River Trail which will be an extension of the District's planned Lyons Woods to Sedge Meadow regional trail. LCDOT is currently negotiating with the Village of Wadsworth (Village) regarding the potential transfer of a portion of the District's 0.6-acre property to the Village for long term maintenance of the frontage road.

Staff is seeking policy direction on the potential fee simple transfer of District property and the authority to negotiate an intergovernmental agreement with LCDOT and the Village that will identify the terms of the transfer, the responsibilities for providing the non-motorized transportation improvements and the future maintenance obligations. If the Committee directs that negotiations proceed, then District staff would bring the negotiated intergovernmental agreement back to the Committee for its review and recommendation. The intergovernmental agreement would not become effective unless approved by the corporate authorities of the District, the County and the Village.

REVIEW BY OTHERS: Executive Director, Chief Operations Officer, Director of Finance, Corporate Counsel.