

DATE: November 6, 2023

MEMO TO: Paras Parekh, Chair
Planning Committee

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

REQUEST: Provide policy direction regarding the potential transfer to the Round Lake Area Park District (RLAPD), of ownership, operation and maintenance of a former portion of the Millennium Trail between Kestrel Ridge Forest Preserve and the RLAPD's Fairfield Park.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS SUPPORTED: Public Access and Connections, Leadership, Organizational Sustainability, Communication

FINANCIAL DATA: There is no financial impact at this time.

BACKGROUND: The section of the Millennium Trail from Fort Hill Creek/Jade Lane north to Fairfield Park (the "Trail Section") was originally constructed in 2010-11. Nearly all of the Trail Section lies within a ComEd transmission line right-of-way (pursuant to a recreational lease with ComEd) or Fairfield Park owned by the RLAPD (pursuant to an easement with RLAPD). The Trail Section ends at Fairfield Park. The original plan was to continue construction of the Millennium Trail north and east from there and reconnect to the ComEd right of way, where it would connect to an existing, older portion of trail. The existing two-inch asphalt pavement within the Trail Section has deteriorated due to age and heavy ComEd traffic in the corridor and is in need of reconstruction.

At its October 31, 2022 meeting, the Planning Committee reviewed a staff recommendation to abandon the Trail Section and change the original routing of the planned Millennium Trail to a new location in which it will be less expensive to construct and maintain, is closer to downtown Round Lake and will connect two forest preserves (Kestrel Ridge and Nippersink). Portions of the new route will also occupy proposed multi-use paths that the Lake County Division of Transportation is required to construct as part of their Cedar Lake Road realignment and Hainesville Road improvement projects. The Planning Committee was in agreement with the revised Millennium Trail routing and authorized staff to meet with RLAPD about the possibility of them taking over the long-term operation and maintenance of the Trail Section.

In July 2023, District staff met with the RLAPD staff and discussed the possibility of the District transferring the ownership, operation and maintenance of the Trail Section to RLAPD. RLAPD staff recently notified District staff that the RLAPD Board had approved the transfer as long as the District reconstructs the Trail Section as discussed above.

Staff is seeking approval to (i) continue discussions with the RLAPD regarding the transfer of ownership, operation and maintenance of the Trail Section and (ii) negotiate an Intergovernmental Agreement that will allow for the assignment of the District's existing ComEd recreational lease to the RLAPD and the extinguishment of the District's existing trail easement with RLAPD through Fairfield Park. If Committee directs that the negotiations proceed, staff would bring the negotiated agreement back to Committee for its review and approval at a future meeting.

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