



AGENDA MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 5, 2025

TO: Forest Preserve District Executive Committee

FROM: Benjamin Haberthur, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Presentation and Approval of the 2026 Update to the 2015 Comprehensive Master Plan

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the Committee with information to consider the approval of the *2026 Update* to the *2015 Comprehensive Master Plan*.

BACKGROUND:

The District has been utilizing a holistic master-planning process for more than 20 years. With a focus on collaboration with residents, board members and staff, this planning has enabled the District make continual progress towards meeting our mission-driven goals. During this time frame, master planning has led to the protection of an additional 11,000+ acres of land, and the actualization of millions of dollars in natural areas restoration, site development, facility construction, and large, capital infrastructure projects.

A new, 10-year, adaptive-strategy master plan, known as the District's *2035 Plan*, is in the final stages of review. However, successful passage of the 2024 Land Acquisition & Preserve Improvement Referendum necessitated additional revisions to the document, to ensure that it serves as the framework for future developments.

Therefore, an extra *2026 Update* to the *2015 Comprehensive Master Plan* has been prepared as an interim master plan, to ensure no lapse in planning coverage, and so financial reports associated with the *Master Plan* are current and reflect the 2025/26 Fiscal Year.

The *2026 Update* contains financial reports on the District's Land Acquisition and Construction & Development funds, and highlights the top 20 upcoming capital projects. The plan also features details on some of our most exciting referendum promises — including a new wildlife-viewing platform at Muirhead Springs Forest Preserve, expansion of the bison-reintroduction project at Burlington Prairie Forest Preserve, and engineering and construction of a new Urban Ecology Field Station in Aurora.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

All capital projects detailed in this plan are subject to the District's purchasing policy and will be brought to the board on a case-by-case basis for funding. There is no cost associated with the adoption of this planning document.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the board approve the *2026 Update* to the *2015 Comprehensive Master Plan*, as presented.

ATTACHMENTS:

2026 Update to the 2015 Comprehensive Master Plan