

APPENDIX C

EXCERPTS FROM WILL COUNTY LAND RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PLAN OUTLINING VISION, GOALS, STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ASSIGNED TO THE COUNTY

LAND RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PLAN STRUCTURE AND CONTENT

The county Board approved a set of general principles to guide regional planning work in June 2001. The County Board approved the completed Land Resources Management Plan, on April 18, 2002. The Plan includes the following published elements:

- Policy Gateway
- Open Space Element
- Forms and Concepts Handbook

The *Policy Gateway* presents the overview of the Plan's driving concepts in the following sections:

- The Future of Regional Planning in Will County
- The Planning Process
- Understanding the forces and Trends Shaping Community's Supply and Demand of Land
- Community Values
- Goals and Strategies
- Land Resource Management: Development Forms and Use Concepts
- Open Space Plan
- 2020 Transportation Framework Plan
- Historic Preservation Plan
- Stormwater Management Plan
- Implementation Summary

The *Open Space Element* specifies the detailed open space plan driven by the concepts stated in the *Policy Gateway*.

The *Forms and Concepts Handbook* describes specific development forms to be encouraged for the future general character of large areas of the county that will achieve the goals stated in the *Policy Gateway*. (This is a very detailed element of the plan to guide Planning Staff and the public in formulating specific development plans.)

QUOTES FROM THE *POLICY GATEWAY*

The Future of Regional Planning in Will County (pgs2-3)

There is a clear recognition by the County's citizens that regional coordination is a critical issue for the future.

How then can we achieve the kinds of regional coordination that are needed while still recognizing the need and the right for local authority. The key is to identify these respective roles and responsibilities and proceed with this clear understanding in a cooperative way. This Land Resource Management Plan establishes the framework for this new approach. Specifically:

- *This Plan presents a regional vision for the general form and shape of future growth.*
- *This Plan identifies guidelines for various development "Forms and Use Concepts" to be used by the County in its development review process, and which can be incorporated into local community plans and regulations, as those communities see fit.*

- *This Plan identifies the County as a leader on countywide issues such as regional open space planning, transportation planning, storm water management, and regional geographic information systems.*
- *This Plan recognizes that site-specific land use decisions are the responsibility of the individual jurisdictions in which the land is located.*
- *The Plan encourages new non-rural growth and development to occur in and around existing service areas, which by definition means that most new urban or suburban development is encouraged to occur in municipalities.*
- *This Plan positions the County as a regional forum, facilitator, and as a problem solving mechanism.*

Goals and Strategies (pgs 10,11)

Guiding Principles

- *No single jurisdiction can effectively manage Will County's land resources at the exclusion of other entities. This means that the hallmarks of County planning must be cooperation, collaboration, coordination, and communication.*
- *The most desirable form of County development is a compact one that directs development into and around existing communities and service areas, with substantial open space permanently preserved throughout the County.*
- *The County recognizes and respects the autonomy of municipalities to make site-specific decisions and encourages urban development to occur within municipal boundaries.*
- *The County should focus its planning on regional needs, including overall land use patterns, open space preservation, transportation, storm water management, and other planning issues that transcend local jurisdiction boundaries.*
- *The County should serve as a coordinating, problem-solving and facilitation forum for inter-jurisdictional planning problems.*

Growth and Community Character (Pg 12, 13)

Goals (Pg 12)

- *Future growth will occur in a geographic pattern that allows for public services and infrastructure to be provided in an efficient and fiscally responsible manner.*
- *Growth will be managed in such a way that the environmental integrity of Will County will be respected and preserved.*

Strategies (Pg 13)

- *Urban growth and development will be directed into areas within, or in proximity to existing infrastructure-serviced areas.*
- *Land that is within or contiguous to existing urban service areas (i.e., sanitary sewer and water service areas) should be discouraged from developing at rural densities, reserving those areas for more intense uses to better utilize land resources.*

Intergovernmental Cooperation (Pg14)

Goals (Pg14)

- *Will County and its cities and townships will work together in a collaborative manner to insure coordinated regional planning, while respecting the autonomy of individual jurisdictions to make site-specific land use decisions*
- *Will County and its cities and townships will collectively plan for, and address matters of regional concern that transcend political boundaries, including those related to regional land use patterns, infrastructure, open space, and environmental issues.*

Strategies (Pg14)

- Will County will generally encourage urban development to occur within current or future municipal boundaries, and will encourage municipal boundaries to grow in an efficient way based on available public services and environmental suitability of land for development.
- The County should develop a mechanism whereby the role of the County in land resource management, relative to other jurisdictions, is articulated and agreed to.

Open Space and Environmental Preservation (Pg15, 16)

Goals (Pg 15)

- The preservation of open space will be coordinated with environmental preservation; environmentally sensitive features, such as stream corridors, will also serve as part of the open space network.
- The preservation of open space and stream corridors will be coordinated with countywide storm water management plans.

Strategies (Pg15, 16)

- Will County will develop and implement a long range plan for a countywide system of linked open spaces and conservation, building on the preservation efforts of the Forest Preserve District of Will County and other regional open space planning efforts.
- The County will develop improved stream protection and setback standards, and will encourage the preservation of stream corridors as part of a countywide open space network and storm water management system.
- The County recognizes that much of the local parks and open space planning will occur at the municipal level, and respects the importance of local governments to plan parks and open space systems that meet their community's needs.
- The County will explore a mix of tools and mechanisms to finance and preserve open space, including outright land acquisition.

Infrastructure (Pg18, 19)

Goals (pg18)

- New urban development in Will County will be served with adequate infrastructure, including sanitary sewer, potable water, storm water control and management system, roads and other utilities.

Strategies (Pg19)

- Will County should play a major role in the process of delineating and amending Facility Planning Areas, and should collaborate with Will County municipalities in regional coordination of FPA boundaries by providing information, mediation and facilitation.

QUOTES FROM THE OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

A Vision for Will County's Open Space System (Pg5)

The vision for a successful open space system in Will County includes:

- *An integrated network of public and private open spaces. This network will be achieved by preserving open space in individual developments and providing connections among subdivisions and to other protected open spaces throughout the County, such as municipal parks, and County-owned forest preserves.*

- Preservation of riparian corridors and other environmentally sensitive areas, agricultural districts, and overall rural character.
- Coordination with infrastructure systems and environmental management within Will County, such as through stormwater management efforts and protection of water supply intake areas.

Open Space System Initiatives (Pg6)

The following initiatives are recommended to guide the future protection of open space in Will County:

Initiative #2 (Pg 8)

- Establish riparian buffers around all stream corridors in Will County to protect water quality and prevent streambank erosion.
- While the County's Stream and Wetland Protection Ordinance prohibits development activity within 75 feet of streams, lakes, ponds, and wetlands, the designation and management of riparian buffers around all stream corridors will serve to effectively protect surface waters from the impacts of development or other land use practices.
- NIPC Greenways plan shows all stream corridors in Will County as proposed greenways. Establishing riparian buffers along stream corridors and coordination with landowners will also help ensure the long-term implementation of the regional Greenways Plan.

Criteria for Identifying Lands for Inclusion in the Open Space System (Pg 15)

Criteria #1 (Pg15)

Connectivity

- Connecting existing park and open space lands across the County through a countywide trail network is critical to the creation of a continuous open space network. This will aid in the creation of recreational trails and greenways and will create uninterrupted habitat corridors to benefit Will County's wildlife.

Criteria #3 (Pg 16)

Protection of Water Resources

- All lands within Will County sit within one of three major watersheds: the DesPlaines, the Kankakee, and the Chicago. The natural hydrological features within these watersheds (rivers, streams, wetlands, floodplains, hydric soils, etc.) are critical components of the County open space system, as they contribute to safe drinking water supply and support important natural communities, habitats, and corridors. Identifying the hydrological features in Will County is an important first step, but implementing measures to protect water quality through stormwater management techniques and providing water-based recreation opportunities are important to preserving overall ecological health and quality of life for residents.

Wetlands, Hydric Soils, Floodplains, River & Stream Corridors (Pg16)

- Floodplains are significant areas that are vulnerable to development within the County. Because floodplains and floodways provide important habitat and a buffer for flooding events, they are important components of the open space network. Additionally, floodplains and floodways offer corridors for public access and greenway connections and have been the focus of efforts recently administered by NIPC and the OpenLands Project.

Water Quality (Pg17)

- Impairment caused by urban runoff, agricultural runoff, and many other common sources can be partially abated by increasing open space lands and greenways.

Stormwater Management (P 17)

- 1998 Will County Stormwater Management Plan states that almost 50% of mapped floodplain is potentially available for development. Thus, incorporating these lands into the open space network could help prevent future stormwater management and flooding problems.

Implementation

Public Acquisition

Action: (Pg 22)

- Continue support of the Forest Preserve District's current acquisition initiatives and encourage partnerships to expand the program.

Other Regulatory Action: (PG 33)

Action: (Pg 33)

Strengthen the existing Stream and Wetland Protection Ordinance. The following changes will be made to Will County's Stream and Wetland Protection Ordinance to strengthen protection of these sensitive resources:

- Increase the required setback from 75 feet to 100 feet for perennial stream sections and main channels.
- Expand setback protections to address non-designated (e.g., intermittent streams and smaller channels) that are determined to have significant value. These resources need to be identified on a map.
- Establish a requirement for a minimum buffer adjacent to watercourses within which naturally occurring riparian vegetation is to be maintained.

Coordination (Pg36)

Action: (Pg36)

Designate a lead entity to coordinate countywide open space conservation efforts.

- To assist in this process, it is recommended that Will County designate a lead entity to coordinate the efforts to achieve a countywide open space system. The [lead entity's] mission would be to coordinate efforts to implement the countywide open space system, including maintaining regular contact with the appropriate public and private entities, identifying funding sources, etc.