

Village of Glen Ellyn

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PARK DISTRICT**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 23, 2022**VILLAGE OF GLEN ELLYN PARTNERS WITH GLEN ELLYN PARK DISTRICT
TO DEVELOP DOWNTOWN EVENT AREA AND OPEN-SPACE PARK**

Glen Ellyn, IL – The Village of Glen Ellyn is in the process of purchasing the former US Bank property located at 453 Forest Avenue in Downtown Glen Ellyn and partnering with the Glen Ellyn Park District to develop the area into a multi-use event and Downtown park/open space, to be utilized by the entire Glen Ellyn community.

The Village will purchase the property, approximately 45,000 square feet, located at the corner of Forest Avenue and Duane Street, for \$1,650,000. The Village will partner with, and lease the space to the Park District, through a future intergovernmental agreement that will provide for the development of the area into a Downtown open land park and event space directly south of the Glen Ellyn Train Station.

The Park District's plan is to transform this site and expand Prairie Path Park into a dynamic open space within the heart of Glen Ellyn's Downtown. The site will create a "front yard" for commuters, Prairie Path users, Downtown residents, and the entire Glen Ellyn community. The project will also fulfill an initiative driven by the Village's Downtown Plan and Comprehensive Plans, which call for the addition of green space within the Downtown area. Development of the site will also serve as a catalyst for improvements to adjacent properties and bring new events to the area.

"This investment in the Village's Central Business District by both the Village and Park District will enhance how and where events are carried out in the Downtown area," said Village President Mark Senak "This will also drive additional activity and visitors to support our Downtown businesses."

The Park District's early conceptual plans for the space include 9,000 square feet of greenspace, the integration of the existing Prairie Path Park, and a potential permanent stage and support facility, among other enhancements.

"This is a win-win for the community," said Park District Executive Director Dave Harris. "The availability of this land is a once-in-a-generation opportunity that allows the District to address its goal of reducing park "deserts" — that is, areas that do not have adequate parks nearby like Downtown — while also adding to and expanding opportunities for public recreation that will benefit Glen Ellyn residents as a whole for years to come."

The Village and Park District have a long history of partnering together on collaborative projects. Both agencies are committed to working to enhance and improve open space and recreational opportunities within Glen Ellyn. The model for this intergovernmental agreement is similar that which was established for Village Green Park on Lambert Road, also owned by the Village, and leased to the Park District.

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In addition to the US Bank property, the agreement would develop a framework to improve and enhance both Panfish Park and Manor Woods, a response to feedback driven by the community.

“Over the last few years, the Park District and Village staffs, at the direction of their elected leaders, have been discussing opportunities and ways to share costs and services more efficiently and effectively,” said Franz. “This partnership will maintain and enhance open space and recreational opportunities at both Panfish Park and Manor Woods and allow for three parks and open spaces to flourish through investment and improved planning and management.”

The framework would call for the sale of Village-owned property in Manor Woods to the Park District, and an investment in Panfish Park by both the Park District and Village that would improve the look and feel, increase amenities, and redevelop the playground.

“Given the Park District’s potential to bring economies of scale, its ability to seek grants and effectively manage and maintain properties, they are the most effective agency to manage park assets,” said Village Manager Mark Franz. “In short, it is in the community’s best interest to shift these assets to the Park District.”

To learn more about the project as it develops, please visit www.glenellyn.org.

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