



**Community
Planning Program**



Chicago Metropolitan
Agency for Planning

**Local Technical
Assistance Program**

**Application form:
Community Planning program and
Local Technical Assistance program**

DEADLINE: Noon on Wednesday, June 26, 2013

This application form is online at www.rtachicago.com/applications. You may submit the form by email to applications@rtachicago.com.

Upon receipt of application, you will receive an e-mail verifying that your application has been received.

1. Name of Applicant:

Governors State University Foundation – Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park

2. Main Contact for Application (please include name, phone number and email):

Geoffrey Bates

3. Type of Applicant (please check any that apply):

Local government

Multijurisdictional group* \longrightarrow Please list the members of the group (including government and nongovernmental organizations):

Nongovernmental organization* \longrightarrow Name of local government partner(s):
_Village of University Park_____

_Village of Monee_____

_Village of Park Forest_____

_Forest Preserve District of Will County_____

*Applications submitted by multijurisdictional groups and nongovernmental organizations must include a letter indicating support from each relevant local government. See the FAQs for more information. Nongovernmental applicants are strongly encouraged to contact CMAP or the RTA prior to submitting their application to discuss their project and the demonstration of local support.

4. Project Type (please check any that apply):

Please check all statements below that describe characteristics of your project. (This will help us determine whether your project is best handled by CMAP or RTA.)

- My project involves preparation of a plan.
- My project helps to implement a past plan.
- My project links land use, transportation, and housing.
- My project has direct relevance to public transit and supports the use of the existing transit system.
- My project is not directly related to transportation or land use, but implements GO TO 2040 in other ways.

5. Project Location:

Please provide a brief description of the location of your project. You may include a map if that helps to describe location, but this is not required. If your project helps to implement a past plan, please include a link to that plan.

The project area is that portion of the Thorn Creek Basin watershed lying in Will County, Illinois in Monee and Crete Townships (T34N-R13E and T34N-R14E). Portions of the area are unincorporated, but most of it lies within the municipal boundaries of Monee, University Park and Park Forest.

6. Project Description:

Please tell us what you would like to do in your community, and what assistance is needed. If you have more than one idea, please submit a separate application for each project. Please be specific, but also brief (less than two pages per project idea)—we simply want to have a basic understanding of what you want to do. CMAP and RTA staff will follow-up with you if we need any additional information to fully understand your proposed project.

(Please include any additional information that is relevant, preferably by providing links to online documents.)

Governors State University (GSU) seeks to work in concert with neighboring governmental and environmental organizations to create a comprehensive **Green Infrastructure Plan** for the region. By engaging the villages of Monee, Park Forest, and University Park, by enlisting support from the Thorn Creek Woods Management Commission, and with the expert assistance of the Forest Preserve District of Will County, we will provide leadership as the region addresses issues surrounding responsible and sustainable land and water use.

CMAP's **GO TO 2040** comprehensive regional plan states that "prosperity is driven largely by a combination of infrastructure, overall business environment, workforce, and amenities." This application addresses four of the six criteria established by the plan to preserve and build our status as an attractive area for workers and businesses to settle as we encourage prosperity in the region:

- *A robust, diverse business community, skilled labor force, and excellent higher education system.*

The area surrounding GSU is bouncing back from the economic downturn. Businesses are opening and new construction is underway. The Village of Park Forest was established with diversity - both economic and ethnic - as founding principles, and has recently adopted a communitywide

Sustainability Plan. GSU is undergoing a transformation, admitting its first freshman class and opening on-campus residence halls in 2014. Fall, 2012 enrollment at the university revealed a diverse student population: 47% of students were characterized as non-white. The university is halfway through a \$25.5M science wing renovation which will result in state-of-the-art facilities. Its environmental biology department is respected throughout the region. This Plan will assist in the recovery of the area in a responsible and holistic manner.

- *Modern, well-maintained infrastructure, including transportation, energy, telecommunications, and water.*

This application addresses issues surrounding water: its use, its distribution, and its impact on human beings both as a necessity of life and as a force of nature.

The Plan will develop proposals to implement the Northern Illinois Planning Commission's 2005 Thorn Creek Watershed Based Plan, which stated: "prevention is key to maintaining the integrity of Thorn Creek, especially in protecting undeveloped portions of the watershed, the headwaters and the remaining associated wetland complexes, and natural features, and the stream corridor itself. Ordinances that manage development practices, protect sensitive soils and natural features, and require the use of best management practices (BMPs) should be adopted and enforced by all entities making development decisions."

- *A healthy environment with ample open space and parks for recreation.*

As the central player in the geography of the region, GSU occupies an important place in the consideration of open space. With a campus of 750 acres, it is the "missing link" between Thorn Creek Woods Nature Preserve (1,000 acres), Thorn Creek Headwaters Preserve (430 acres) and other public open-space. By incorporating input from villages, municipalities, park districts, and nature preserves, the plan will paint a picture that demonstrates the physical interconnectivity of open land - areas which transcend political boundaries - and the potential benefits of cooperative planning between and among all of these entities. Development of the Plan will utilize the Chicago Wilderness Sustainability Watershed Action Team and methodology. GSU possesses the unique perspective on the quality of life benefits of a holistic and integrated approach to open-space and natural resource preservation, education, recreation, sustainable development, tourism and economic development, and culture and the arts – a perspective that creates the central vision for the project.

- *Active institutions for arts and culture, along with other amenities for a high overall quality of life.*

As noted above, GSU's active participation is central to a comprehensive **Green Infrastructure Plan**, but it also occupies a leading place in the arts and culture of the region. With over 100 acres of its campus devoted to the internationally acclaimed Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park (NMSP), the university provides virtually unlimited access to many important works by significant sculptors of the late 20th and early 21st Century, including Mark diSuvero and Martin Puryear, both of whom were awarded the National Medal of Arts by President Obama. The NMSP organization presents activities and events throughout the year which offer hands-on experiences of the park, its landscape, and its artworks in new or unexpected ways. In addition, the university's Center for the Performing Arts brings nationally recognized performances to the region at a reasonable price. Its *One More Night* series is an initiative of the Chicago Community Trust. Over the past 2 years, The Visual Arts Gallery at GSU has presented a series of exhibitions with the theme *Ways of Making* which bring important artists from Chicago and beyond to exhibit work that explores a variety of

approaches to media. The school will initiate its "Living with Art" program with the arrival of freshmen in 2014. President Elaine Maimon's recent op-ed in the Northwestern Indiana Times stated unequivocally, "True to our mission and history, GSU is committed to art as pervasive, not peripheral . . . Art is not a frill; it is an essential part of the curriculum — and of life."