



Fox River Corridor Plan from Burtons Bridge to Fox Bluff Conservation Area Visioning Workshop Summary

October 17, 2017

The following is a summary of the results of the public visioning workshop for the Fox River Corridor Plan held on September 21, 2017 at the Lake Barrington Village Hall. More than 50 residents, business owners, County staff, Steering Committee members, and elected and appointed officials participated in the workshop.

During the workshop, participants divided into eight groups in which they responded to a series of questions outlined in a discussion guide. From these questions, participants developed ideas related to access and water-based recreation, flooding, water quality, open space and recreation, bicycling and walking, and economic development. At the close of the group discussion, each of the eight groups wrote three "big ideas" for improving the community on chart paper posted on the wall around the room. A summary of the residents' big ideas is below.

The Big Ideas

Representatives from each group shared their ideas then CMAP staff consolidated the responses into eight categories. Participants voted on their top three ideas. The polling results are as follows:

1. Sediment management & dredging (26.6%)
2. Boater safety education (19.5%)
3. Water quality & environmental education (15.9%)
4. Stormwater Management (14.2%)
5. Keep river as local resource (9.7%)
6. Land reclamation after floods (7.1%)
7. New business exploration (4.4%)
8. Boat/canoe launch on west side of river (2.7%)

Group Summaries

Using booklet guides provided by CMAP staff, groups responded to questions to encourage group discussion. Below is a summary of their responses. A compendium of all comments received during this Visioning Workshop is included at the end this document.

Access and Water-Based Recreation Ideas

How/where would you like to access the river?

- More access via existing marinas, launches.

- More access for non-owners, public for canoeing/kayaking/paddle boards.
More visual access.
- More access on west side of river
- More beaches for public access and boat parking
- No more public access

What types of water-based recreational activities would you like to see more of in the corridor?

- Canoeing/kayaking/paddle boarding
- Concerts
- Fishing
- No additional activities needed/less activities
- Reduced motor boating

Where/how can safety be improved?

- Boater/water safety education initiatives
- Orange flag program/enforcement
- Speed limit enforcement
- Better markers
- Licensing

Flooding Ideas

What/where are the biggest impacts of flooding in the Corridor?

- Closed businesses/loss of business/lost revenue
- Property damage/loss
- River closures
- Environmental impacts/contamination of river water
- Erosion

What actions should counties, villages, and landowners take to reduce flood impacts?

- No new construction in floodplain
- Increase rain gardens, bio swales; reduce impervious surfaces
- Buy out properties impacted by continuous flooding
- Stormwater BMPs
- Open dams down river to relieve flood waters
- Allow land raising with clay instead of black top soil
- Limit seawalls
- Dredging
- Erosion control

Water Quality Ideas

What is your top concern about water quality in the Corridor?

- Pollution/clean drinking water
- Septic overflow/sewage
- Use of fertilizer
- Sedimentation/silt
- Asian carp
- Stormwater run off
- Algae blooms
- Less fish/overfishing/no stocking
- Road salt

What activities would you like to be able to do that are limited by current water quality?

- Swimming
- Fish consumption
- Fishing

What two actions by counties, villages and property owners would make the biggest improvement to water quality?

- Streambank/shoreline restoration and stabilization
- Maintain septic tanks
- Education resources for owners and businesses
- Silt removal/dredging/sedimentation control
- Follow codes

Open Space and Recreation Ideas

Where would you like to see new open space?

- Vacant parcels
- We have plenty/there's enough
- Buy out repeatedly flooded homes for open space
- Headwater areas

What habitat improvements or protections would you like to see?

- Streambank restoration, naturalized buffers
- Beaver control
- Protect conservation land/flood plain
- Stocking fish
- Improve water quality
- Reduce impervious surfaces

What recreation improvements or amenities would you like to see in parks, conservation areas, or forest preserves?

- Trail connectivity
- Launches
- Fishing piers
- Beaches
- Concessions

What are opportunities to engage stakeholders in stewardship of the Corridor?

- Snowmobile Club
- Boating Club (Fleet 17)
- River Clean Up
- Politicians, villages, and municipalities, need to listen to owners
- Who are the stakeholders?
- Notification to Fleet 17, property/business owners

Bicycling and Walking Ideas

What destinations are in or near the Corridor that you would like to bike or walk to the most?

- Need more designated bike trails
- Hickory Nut Grove
- Silver Creek
- Fox Bluff Forest Preserve
- Fox River Grove Park
- Dundee
- None/Already in place

How can the counties and villages make it easier for people to navigate the trail network on foot or bike?

- Connect existing facilities
- Bike lanes on streets
- Maps
- Facebook page/social media/online map access

Economic Development Ideas

What new businesses, activities or events would you like to see in the Corridor?

- Canoe/Kayak/Paddling outfitters & rentals
- Outdoor concerts
- Camping
- Restaurants
- Bait shop
- None needed

How can the counties and villages make it easier for residents and visitors to find attractions in or near the corridor?

- Wayfinding/signage
- Marketing/media publicity
- Improve boat access
- Public education
- Event venue on river

Appendix. Comments Received

Below is a list of received comments 'as is.' Check marks (✓) indicate duplicate responses.

Access and Water-Based Recreation

How/where would you like to access the river?

- Non-owners of property would like canoe access and visual access. No wake zones in relation to boat launches at Rt 14
- More access for paddlers at conservation properties
- Motor boating access – plenty
- Better advertised (Fox Bluff FP, Fox River Grove, Port Barrington)
- No more public access
- Too much river traffic
- River too narrow
- Erosion an issue (shoreline)
- Public boat ramp
- Marinas
- Fishing piers
- Restaurants
- Paddle boats, kayak SUP launch
- West side of river by Lyons Prairie & Marsh or near Cary
- Access for kayaks, canoes, paddle boards
- Current public access at existing marinas, businesses. No additional boat launches are required
- At an existing ramp/marina
- Fox 14(2)
- Broken Oar
- Turnkey
- No Wake
- Pt. Barrington Marina
- FRG Park
- Lake Co Preserve

What types of water-based recreational activities would you like to see more of in the corridor?

- Canoeing/kayaking ✓
- More beaches for public access and boat parking
- Already too dangerous – too many motor boaters
- More concerts along water-like Port Edwards
- None as far as boating
- Kayaking should be south of Algonquin Dam
- Fishing
- More paddle boards ✓
- Small power boats
- No additional water based activities are required
- We have enough activity/maybe we need less activity?

Where/how can safety be improved?

- No wake at boat launch at Rt 14
- Education for inexperienced boating
- Orange flags need to be advertised and used only when towing someone
- Entire orange flag program needs more education and outreach
- 25 MPH after dark not enforced well
- Better markers
- Public education about water✓
- Sports activities
- License all boat operators
- Mandatory boater safety (required for rentals)✓

Flooding

What/where are the biggest impacts of flooding in the Corridor?

- Rawson Bridge Road
- Septic fields/well damage, reduced property values, recovery costs
- Closed business
- Traveling around is a problem during times of flooding
- River closed to boaters
- We're against it!
- Algonquin Dam flood gates have improved situation – answered smaller flooding situations
- Personal property damage
- Road closures
- No ability to use our river
- Loss of business/loss of use
- Loss of personal property
- Area = Bridges
- Lack of control of the flood gates i.e. being proactive with the gate openings in Algonquin when heavy rainfall occurs in Wisconsin or the northerly portion of the system
- Loss of trees which hold sediment
- Contamination of river water
- Lost boating time
- Property damage
- Loss of revenue

What actions should counties, villages, and landowners take to reduce flood impacts?

- No new construction in floodplain
- Purchase and removal of homes in the floodplain that repeatedly flood
- Implementation of stormwater BMPs such as permeable pavement
- Streambank restoration
- Dredge river
- Leave wetlands alone
- Do not allow development on wetlands

- Limit seawalls
- Increase rain garden, bio swales
- Reduced impervious surfaces
- Buy out \$ for houses that continually flood
- Stop the drop (raindrop) where it drops
- Rain gardens
- Stormwater BMPs
- More proactive vs reactive when future weather becomes known
- See if villages below (down river) can open dams to relieve flood waters
- Landowners need to be allowed to raise their land with clay rather than black top soil, which quickly washes away or compacts during floods. Raising of land cannot be arbitrary.
- Need more natural areas
- No development in low lying areas
- FEMA buyouts
- Dredging
- Erosion control

Water Quality

What is your top concern about water quality in the Corridor?

- Erosion
- Address and promote less polluting motors
- Drinking water
- Educating people about wells, septic into river, washing machines into water/river
- Port-a-potties left in flood plains during flooding on empty lots – who’s responsible?
- Fertilizer on grass
- Sedimentation ✓
- Asian Carp – invasive species
- Septic overflow
- Stormwater run off
- Clean up algae
- Less fish/overfishing/no stocking
- Silt that is coming from Wisconsin and farmland
- Control sewage along the river
- Contaminated water runoff
- Pollution
- Road salt

What activities would you like to be able to do that are limited by current water quality?

- Swimming ✓✓✓
- Fish consumption (due to pollutants) ✓
- Fishing
- Dredging and allowing homeowners to blow our sediment by their piers

What two actions by counties, villages and property owners would make the biggest improvement to water quality?

- Streambank/shoreline restoration to reduce erosion✓
- Improve habitat
- Provide naturalized buffers
- Maintain septic tanks
- Keep septic tanks properly pumped
- Education about what property owners and businesses can do to help improve water quality
- Stormwater tagging (drain to river)
- Stormwater runoff
- Shoreline protected better/stabilized
- Silt removal
- Dredging and no additional fees by FWA
- Water runoff filters (natural areas)
- Follow codes
- Dredging
- Sedimentation control

Open Space and Recreation

Where would you like to see new open space?

- Vacant parcels
- We have plenty/there is enough✓
- Unknown
- Buy out repeated flooding homes for open space
- Headwater areas where the rain water enters the system
- Within the corridor there are minimal areas to increase open space
- Open space is currently abundant
- Bicycles in trails
- Could use more as long as people don't lose their property
- Protect nature
- Original hanky panky bay

What habitat improvements or protections would you like to see?

- Streambank restoration, naturalized buffers, beaver control
- More beavers
- Protect existing conservation land - flood plain – absorbs flood
- Surrounding communities should reduce impervious
- Increase erosion control
- Dredging, shoreline stabilization, corridor connections
- Shoreline restoration
- Stocking fish
- There are enough areas designated at this time
- Improve water quality

- Erosion control, Kazimour Dr corner

What recreation improvements or amenities would you like to see in parks, conservation areas, or forest preserves?

- Trail connectivity including long distance connections (e.g. silver creek to Prairieview Nature Center and Fel Pro to Silver Creek)
- Coordination with volunteer groups
- Paddling launches – public needs to learn about what amenities are already available in corridor.
- Pretty ok already Grassy Lake FP, new golf course!
- Fishing piers, beach areas
- Markers that mark the sandy areas for beach or sand bar type areas
- Small boat launches/kayaks
- Improve what exists
- Biking trails
- More natural space (don't condemn houses)
- Food trucks
- Concessions

What are opportunities to engage stakeholders in stewardship of the Corridor?

- Snowmobile Club
- Boating Club (Fleet 17)
- River Clean Up
- Politicians, villages, municipalities, need to listen to owners
- Who are the stakeholders?
- Notification to Fleet 17, property/business owners

Bicycling and Walking

What destinations are in or near the Corridor that you would like to bike or walk to the most?

- Too dangerous to hike on roads without designated bike trails – more designated bike trails
- Bike lanes on road corridors – Hickory Nut Grove Road
- None
- Already in place
- None of the above.
- Bicyclists should pay a license fee in Illinois.
- Silver Creek
- Fox Bluff FP
- FRG Park
- Dundee

Which existing trails need improvements the most?

- Connecting trails to existing parks
- Rouge trails

How can the counties and villages make it easier for people to navigate the trail network on foot or bike?

- Connect existing facilities (see attached map titled "Trail Connectivity")
- Bike lanes on streets
- Maps
- Maps online
- FB page/social media
- Conservation maps

Economic Development

What new businesses, activities or events would you like to see in the Corridor?

- Canoe/Kayak rentals ✓✓✓
- Paddling outfitters
- Outdoor concerts
- Camping ✓
- Restaurants ✓
- Bait shop
- Not needed, as there are no available sites to consider new businesses
- Let free enterprise start their own businesses

How can the counties and villages make it easier for residents and visitors to find attractions in or near the corridor?

- Marketing
- Wayfinding/signage ✓✓
- Posters at train stations
- Event place on river
- Would be nice to take boat to ski jump
- Improve boat access
- Public education
- Websites ✓
- Brochures
- Social media ✓
- Media publicity/radio

Big Ideas

Big Idea #1

- Dredge ✓✓
- Dredging and erosion control. Limit seawalls.
- Sediment management
- Dredging & shoreline restoration
- Let free enterprise dictate what business is needed

Big Idea #2

- Educate folks about what amenities already exist
- Keep as local resources
- Status quo is ok, particularly for access (doesn't need to be a tourist destination)
- More public education
- Boater education
- Landowner land reclamation
- Dredge the river/water quality
- Erosion control

Big Idea #3

- Water quality education for riparian owners and everyone beyond watershed
- More attention to storm drainage
- Voluntary buyout of flood prone areas (leave as open space)
- Buoy markers for safety
- Small boat/canoe launch
- Boating safety training education only
- Boater education✓