Parks & Recreation Committee
Special Meeting

McHenry Municipal Center
333 S. Green Street
McHenry, IL 60050

December 17, 2018, 5:30 PM
City Hall Classroom

SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

1. Call to Order

2. Public Comment: Any people wishing to address the Committee will be asked to identify themselves for the record and will be asked but are not required to provide their address. Public comment may be restricted to three-minutes for each individual speaker. Order and decorum shall be maintained at public meetings.

3. Approval of past Parks and Recreation Committee Minutes
   a. August 20, 2018

4. Petersen Farm Market Study Presentation

5. Department Updates
   a. Walsh Park Renovation
   b. 2018 Boat Launch Results
   c. Fox Ridge Park
   d. Capital Improvement Submittal

6. Future Meeting Topics

7. Motion to adjourn the meeting
Call to Order: Chairperson Schaefer called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. in the Municipal Center Training Classroom.

Roll Call: Deputy Clerk Meadows called the roll: Members present: Chairman Schaefer, Alderman Devine and Alderwoman Condon. Others in attendance: Director of Parks & Recreation Hobson and Nicole Thompson, Athletic & Aquatic Supervisor.

Public Comment: None

Approval of past Park and Recreation Committee Minutes
   A. August 21, 2017  
   B. October 26, 2017  
   C. November 16, 2017  
   D. April 26, 2018  
   E. July 30, 2018

Chairman Schaefer asked if any of the Committee Members had any comments on any of the past Park and Recreation Committee minutes. The Committee Members offered no comments. **A Motion was made by Alderwoman Condon and seconded by Alderman Devine to approve the minutes A-E as presented.** Roll call: Vote: 3 ayes by unanimous voice vote. 0-nays, 0-abstained. Motion carried.

Walsh Park Donation Update
Director Hobson provided the Committee Members with an update on the redesign of Walsh Park. He reported that he had meet with the donor and discussed the possibility of entering into a license agreement or having the City donate the land to him then he would be the responsible party to completed and pay for all the improvements associated with the redesign of Walsh Park. However, the donor declined the offer.

Director Hobson then discussed the new proposal for the reconstruction of the seawall which includes prevailing wage. The new proposal increased by $20,000 but the other improvement
costs remained consistent with the original proposal bringing the total cost of the project to $139,890.

The new proposal contains two contingencies one for the seawall itself in the amount of $3,700 and the second for the plantings and brick pavers in the amount of $5,412.

Director Hobson reported that he had informed the donor that since the project cost had increased he still thought it was only fair that the City’s exposure cost matches the donor’s exposure cost.

Alderman Schaefer asked if Director Hobson could clarify the differences related to Phase I and Phase II improvements. Director Hobson reported that the Phase I improvements are located on City owned property and the Phase II is located on privately owned property (other than a small section) and will be paid for solely by the donor.

Alderman Schaefer commented on the fact that there is only one quote for the project. Director Hobson noted that due to the fact that this project is a design/build, the donor more than likely has a relationship with the chosen contractor. Alderman Schaefer thought that it might be problematic to present the proposal to the City Council with only one quote. The Committee discussed the need to obtain other quotes prior to presenting this matter to the full City Council.

A Motion was made by Alderman Devine and seconded by Alderwoman Codon to amend their original motion dated July 30th to reflect the following language as recorded in the set forth minutes. A Motion to present to the full City Council a proposal for the Walsh Park redesign including the City’s portion of the prevailing wage cost and the reconstruction of the seawall not to exceed $70,000 along with acceptance of a donor’s matching contribution contingent upon obtaining additional quotes. Roll call: Vote: 3-ayes by unanimous voice vote. 0-nays, 0-abstained. Motion carried.

Petersen Farm Draft Market Study Presentation
Ms. Diane Williams provided the Committee with a presentation on the Petersen Farm Market Study. She discussed the current demographics of the City of McHenry and the demographics of the surrounding communities within a 10-minute and 20-minute drive times.

Ms. Williams discussed the “A Day at Petersen Farm” event. She noted that the visitors interviewed learned about the event with traditional media campaigns such as flyers, word of mouth and newspapers. Ms. Williams recommended in the future increasing the use of technology, particularly mobile phones used to identify entertainment options.
Ms. Williams commented on typical farm programming activities which consist of historical demonstrations, receptions and reunions, gardening classes, a music festival, and community garden plots.

Ms. Williams reported on common interview themes. She stated that the “A Day at Petersen Farm” is regarded by all stakeholders as a great event, well organized and well attended.

Ms. Williams commented on the maintenance of the grounds particularly the barn and other outbuildings. In her opinion there needs to be a more pro-active approach. She suggested developing a capital plan or mid-term strategy plan to stabilize and preserve the farm buildings.

Ms. Williams discussed the peer site assessments. She reported that that there were four similar sites that were identified as peers for Petersen Farm. All four sites are dealing with limited funds and staff resources.

Ms. Williams explored the expansion of partnership options. She recommended partnering with the McHenry’s school district and 4H clubs.

A lengthy discussion ensued that explored ways to improve the farm grounds, expand programming activities, and generate revenue streams.

The Committee Members along with Staff thanked Ms. Williams for her hard work and her time.

**Department Updates**

Director Hobson reported on the Rotary Club’s Blues, Brews and BBQ event. He noted that the event was well received and well attended.

Athletic & Aquatic Supervisor Thompson provided the Committee Members with updates on the season’s aquatic programs and the beach and pool attendance numbers which had increased from last year.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Meadows

Reviewed and approved this ____ day of __________2018.

_________________________________
Alderman Jeffery A. Schaefer, Chairperson
AGENDA ITEM 4 – Petersen Farm Market Study Presentation

There long has been a discussion as to what direction to proceed with the Petersen Farmstead. Earlier this year the city engaged Business Districts Inc. to perform a market study of the property and aide in determining its future programming. The outline of the scope is included below and Diane Williams is going to be presenting the draft of the study.

BDI will complete the following tasks in evaluating the Petersen Farm’s (Farm) best markets and opportunities.

Task 1: Information Review and Reconnaissance.
BDI will conduct a review of all relevant data regarding the Farm. This would include, but not be limited to:

- The Farm’s available fiscal data and current capital improvements plans from the City’s Parks and Recreation department;
- Any recent area tourism and visitor data, including spending patterns, from Visit McHenry County specific to the City of McHenry and nearby attractions;
- All visitor data or attendance counts for the Farm’s recent activities and promotional events within the last five (5) years;
- Past and current marketing or promotional materials for the Farm describing uses or activities held at the Farm within the last five (5) years;
- Any additional City-wide or Parks and Recreation Department studies describing the Farm’s future role;
- Available background regarding the City’s acquisition of the Farm, including any information from the City’s Landmark Commission or the Farm Foundation, describing the consensus vision for the Farm.

During this information assembly process, BDI will use the Experian national demographic database to compile a statistical portrait of population characteristics and spending power for the McHenry region. This data will include convenience and destination drive times, traffic counts, and regional entertainment-related spending. Regional traffic and tourism generators and any other visitor sources and resources will be identified, as described in the next task.

Task 2: Farm Visit, Tour, and Interviews.
With City staff and any invited volunteers, BDI will visit and tour the Farm and conduct up to eight (8) key stakeholder interviews at a nearby location. City personnel will schedule these interviews in advance. During these interviews, BDI will solicit input from the City’s management team (Petersen Park and the Farm), the Farm’s current event and program organizers, Visit McHenry County representatives, The Farm’s current partners, such as the McHenry County Foundation, and local officials. It is assumed that Task 2 work will be conducted concurrent with Task 1.
This interview process have three (3) objectives: to determine key operating strengths and challenges at the Farm; to ascertain market potential according to local constituencies and current partners; and to identify the Farm’s initial market context and attraction power. This market context will also frame the peer site assessment described below.

**Task 3: Past Visitor Polling.**
Using available past visitor contact information from the Farm Foundation and City staff, BDI will develop and conduct a quick poll of past Farm visitors. This poll will be conducted electronically via Survey Monkey. The poll will consist of five (5) questions developed to assess the current visitor experience at the Farm. BDI will require assistance from the City, its Landmark Commission, the Farm Foundation, and other current partners to circulate the poll via electronic and social media.

**Task 4: Initial Study Update and Documentation.**
BDI will present preliminary market study results from Tasks 1-3 to City staff, the City’s Landmark Commission, Farm Foundation representatives, other stakeholders, such as Landmarks Illinois, and any invited guests. This progress report will describe the Farm’s markets, potentially viable programs and/or uses, visitor attraction opportunities, and relevant trends with implications for the Farm. These preliminary results will provide the basis for implementation of study recommendations. BDI will provide a memorandum, documenting these preliminary results, not to exceed four (4) pages to the City, the Farm Foundation, and Landmarks Illinois. This memorandum will be submitted in a PDF format.

**Task 5: Peer Sites Assessment.**
BDI will identify up to five (5) farmsteads or like sites with market characteristics and ownership resembling those of the Farm. This Task will examine how these similar properties fund, program, promote, and manage their site currently. How each site’s vision for the future, including their plans for public engagement, relevant programming, sustaining visitor numbers, and facilities maintenance, will be components of this assessment.

**Task 6: Competitive Review.**
BDI will identify the local and regional market strengths and challenges for the Farm, its current programs, and likely market position. This will include the implications of each of these strengths and challenges for the Farm’s short-term and long-term future. Relevant trends specific to local historic sites will also be considered as part of this review.

**Task 7: Opportunity Analysis.**
Applying the market data, trends, and best practices, BDI will analyze the Farm’s best market supported opportunities to develop relevant and compelling programs and to generate supplemental revenues to support these activities. Opportunities will include, but not be limited to, identifying new potential partners, interpretive options, possible uses that may include contractors, tenants, or temporary uses, promotion and special events, operating
efficiencies, possible funding sources, and visitor growth tactics. The market and/or financial rationale will be indicated for each opportunity, providing the City, its landmark Commission.

**Task 8: Study Documentation.**
BDI will prepare a written report documenting likely markets and recommending future actions. An initial draft will be submitted to the City, the Farm Foundation, and Landmarks Illinois. Any suggested changes will be incorporated into a final report document (in PDF format) to the City and to Landmarks Illinois.
# Table of Contents

Executive Summary ............................................................................................................... 2  
Market Review .................................................................................................................. 4  
Competitive Review .......................................................................................................... 6  
Quick Poll Results ........................................................................................................... 9  
The Farm’s Opportunities for the Future ........................................................................... 13  
Appendices ....................................................................................................................... 17  
  
- Appendix 1: Interim Report 
- Appendix 2: Quick Poll Results 
- Appendix 3: Selected Funding Resources
Executive Summary

The City of McHenry’s Parks and Recreation Department (City) retained Business Districts, Inc. (BDI) in March 2018 to examine Petersen Farm’s markets and best opportunities for the future. This project is preparatory to the development of a Master Plan for Petersen Farm (Farm). The project’s scope of work consisted of four (4) task sets: research about the Farm’s history and operations; research about best practices at similar sites elsewhere; market and competitive research and analysis; and input from the Farm’s key constituencies and partners.

The results of this work are summarized in this report’s final section describing the Farm’s opportunities and how this project work can be integrated with the Farm’s Master Plan process. These opportunities represent initial steps for City officials, the Colby-Petersen Farm Foundation (Foundation), and the City’s Landmark Commission in anticipation of Master Plan implementation. As noted in this study’s Interim Report, all of the participants in this project want to see the Farm ‘up, restored and active,’ as observed by one project interviewee.

The key opportunities identified in this project were initially described in the Interim Report. While effectively recommendations, or ‘next steps,’ these opportunities build on the Farm’s current positive attributes and its future potential. Additional opportunities for the Master Plan process are also described. Overall, work at the Farm will take place over time and will require small steps to start. Staff at many of the peer sites examined for this project stated that it took a decade to fully activate their site. Consequently, any future Master Plan implementation will also be long-term and dependent upon available resources--fiscal and partnerships.

The key opportunities are:

- The Farm’s key stakeholders—the City, the Foundation, and the City’s Landmarks Commission—should reconfirm their roles and responsibilities for the Farm’s future.
- The City and/or the Foundation should join the national and regional networks of related sites.
- The City’s Parks and Recreation Department should contact regional graduate programs to identify students that may be interested in preparing the Farm’s Master Plan as a Master’s thesis. Two (2) programs are suggested.
- City and Foundation representatives should meet with key partners to identity two (2) simple actions requiring minimal expense to expand their existing programs at the Farm. These actions could be structured as pilot programs, if necessary.
- In collaboration with the City, the Foundation should initiate one specific fundraising initiative to rehabilitate one outbuilding at the Farm. The Foundation should seek out area fund raising expertise to begin this process.
• For the upcoming Master Plan process, developing a consensus vision for the Farm will serve as the basis for the Farm’s interpretative options, programs, and final plan, future visitor growth, and related funding opportunities.

All project interviewees, Farm partners, and visitors believe that the Farm is a real asset to the City of McHenry. These same constituencies believe in the Farm’s great potential to serve McHenry residents and area visitors and to provide unique experiences for a larger audience. For the City, the Foundation, and their partners, focusing on the future and laying the foundation for successful Master Plan implementation begins now.
Market Review

The current markets for the Farm were described in the Interim Report. (See Appendix 1.) These markets include: the City of McHenry: a 10-minute drive time from the Farm: a Custom Market, based upon 2017 visitor zip code data collected at ‘A Day at Petersen Farm,’ and a 20-minute drive-time. The market demographics and a map of the Custom Market are displayed below in Chart 1 and Figure 1.

Chart 1: Market Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>McHenry's Petersen Farm</th>
<th>City of McHenry</th>
<th>10-Minute Drive Time</th>
<th>Custom Market: 2017 Survey Respondents</th>
<th>20-Minute Drive Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>26,903</td>
<td>23,044</td>
<td>98,722</td>
<td>118,511</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Households</td>
<td>10,095</td>
<td>8,837</td>
<td>35,994</td>
<td>43,919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Household Size</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>2.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Family Households</td>
<td>7,571</td>
<td>6,865</td>
<td>28,926</td>
<td>35,106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Family Households</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td>77.7%</td>
<td>80.4%</td>
<td>79.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees</td>
<td>12,506</td>
<td>10,748</td>
<td>36,283</td>
<td>54,733</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Age</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>40.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Bachelor’s Degree or Greater</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
<td>28.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Household Income</td>
<td>$85,276</td>
<td>$78,098</td>
<td>$96,524</td>
<td>$92,666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Household Income</td>
<td>$68,223</td>
<td>$64,917</td>
<td>$76,008</td>
<td>$73,818</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Recreation-Related Spending per Household</td>
<td>$1,640</td>
<td>$1,596</td>
<td>$1,782</td>
<td>$1,722</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All of these markets are sufficient to support a range of activities at the Farm. Family households in each market comprise at least 75% of among their total household numbers, and all markets have growing Latino populations. The same data also indicates that the City of McHenry’s population is projected to increase by nearly 9% by 2022. For the Farm’s future, these same markets represent an opportunity to attract more City residents and area families to one of McHenry’s most significant places. In addition to the market demographics shown in Chart 1, household spending categories on entertainment are displayed. This category of consumer expenditures includes fees and admissions for recreational activities, hobbies and personal interest activities, and purchases related to recreation, personal interest, and hobbies. This per household spending on related leisure activities in each market again indicates support for potential programming at the Farm.
Competitive Review

As both a City park facility and a historic site, the Farm’s potential is affected by market trends influencing both types of uses. Visits to U. S. historic sites of all types grew at 1% annually from 2013 to mid-2018. Broader market trends impacting visits to historic sites include increases in disposable income and in domestic travel. While these trends present opportunities for local, regional, and national historic sites, available funding for site maintenance and capital improvements remains challenged. Nationally, the market-related factors identified for successful historic site operations include: attracting local support and patronage; continuously educating the broader community about the site, its importance, and its programs; and raising revenues from additional and diverse sources.¹

In addition to historic sites, National Recreation and Park Association data (engagement survey data published December 2016)² indicates that Americans, on average, visit their local park facilities an estimated 29 times per year. This same data indicates that the most frequent visitors to these facilities are parents of children, Millennials, and Latinos. Visits most often involve family activities, and visitors’ preferred activities represent some type of experience, such as being outside or for a learning experience. Given the Farm’s markets and demographics, visitor growth, assuming suitable programming, would be market-supported.

McHenry’s primary tourism sites are located outside of the City limits. They include Stade’s Farm and Market, the McHenry County Conservation District’s Glacial Park, and Moraine Hills State Park. Other County agricultural sites open to area residents and visitors have specific missions or purposes—educational, experiential, or as private sector businesses. (Other agricultural tourism sites in Chicago’s other collar counties conduct similar mission-specific activities.)³ According to Visit McHenry County (VMC), the county’s outdoor, agricultural, and conservation sites are the most important visitor attractions. The agricultural tourism season in the County begins in May, with autumn as the primary tourism season. VMC staff indicates that the winter visitor numbers are beginning to increase. The overall economic impact of tourism in the County, according to the Illinois Office of Tourism, is about $300 million in visitor spending. Having an in-City facility that attracts even small numbers of tourists would be important to McHenry’s image.

Defining the Farm’s competitive context also requires an examination of the Farm’s strengths and challenges as a historic site and a municipal park facility. These market-related strengths and challenges include:

³ In addition to the Peer sites reviewed in Appendix 8 (this project’s Interim Study Update), BDI also conducted research into these additional Chicago area farm sites. These farm sites are both publically and privately owned and have diverse missions: Primrose Farm, St. Charles; Prairie Crossing, Grayslake; Wagner Farm, Glenview; Perry Farm, Bradley; Garfield Farm, Campton Hills; Volkening Farm, Schaumberg; All Grass Farms, Algonquin; Heritage Prairie, Elburn; Blackberry Farm, Aurora; and Soulful Prairies, Woodstock.
Strengths

- Consensus exists among City officials and the Farm’s stakeholders about the Farm and its opportunities. All believe that the Farm is a unique historic resource and an important community asset with great potential.
- Related to the above point, the possibility for expanded partnerships with current Farm partners and the interest of potential new partners, such as McHenry’s school districts, can increase Farm programming and usage and serve as the basis for attracting additional resources and visitors.
- The Farm’s readily accessible and visible location and proximity to other McHenry recreational options can continue to enhance its local profile.
- The City’s projected population growth and the Farm’s current ability to attract visitors from a wider area can serve as the basis for developing quality, interpretive programs creating positive visitor experiences and memories.
- ‘A Day at Petersen Farm’ remains very successful and is the Farm’s signature activity. It typically attracts at least 1,200 attendees annually. Like other annual festivals with long histories, the organizers have the opportunity to periodically evaluate the event to develop new or different experiences as the Farm’s audiences and programs expand and change.

Challenges

- Broader changes to the role of agriculture in American life are also evident in McHenry County. Whether local or elsewhere, potential visitors and younger staff at sites similar to the Farm now demonstrate ‘low agricultural literacy.’ How the Farm is interpreted and programmed will need to excite and educate future audiences and respond to their distinct needs, in response to these social changes and future trends.
- Historic farmsteads include barns, fields, outbuildings, houses, equipment, and furnishings, much like the Farm. Identifying those Farm stories that resonate with visitors and how those stories integrate with all of the Farm’s physical assets must be the basis for interpretation. Avoiding nostalgia while creating a relatable visitor experience represents another facet of how the Farm needs to be interpreted in the future.
- Visitors, as noted in this study’s quick poll results and comments, also recognize the Farm’s need for physical improvements in order to develop their preferred programs or events. City officials, the Foundation, and the Farm’s program partners acknowledge this need for capital improvements to the Farm’s buildings and grounds.
  - Adequate and reliable funding sources for the above physical improvements, sustained Farm maintenance, and future program and visitor growth (including potential revenue generating programs) need to be identified.
  - Much of the Farm’s current volunteer leadership is connected to the Farm in a very personal way. Both the Foundation and the City’s

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Landmark Commission consist of a group of dedicated volunteers who have contributed time and resources to the Farm since it’s acquisition by the City. In advance of and during the recommended planning process for the Farm, the Foundation can start building its organizational capacity to assume a pro-active fundraising and ‘friend raising’ role. This will be critical to ensuring the adequate funding and volunteer resources for the Farm’s future.

Implications for the Farm’s Future

Work supporting the Farm’s strengths and gradually mitigating the site’s challenges will be a long-term process for the City, the Foundation, and their partners. The Farm’s peer sites (also parks) typically have taken nearly a decade to fully activate their farm sites. From a market perspective, the Farm has access to a sufficient potential visitor population from McHenry and the surrounding communities. From a competitive perspective, the Farm’s story and location can provide that unique experience to residents and visitors. The Farm’s setting near McCullom Lake and Petersen Park contribute to that same experience. Focusing on the Farm’s story and how to interpret that story through programming will be key over the long-term and will be defined in a Master Planning process. To activate the Farm, to engage visitors (including those less familiar with farming), and to address the challenges described above will effectively take commitment, time, and resources.
Quick Poll Results

To understand the Farm’s general visitor experience, a quick poll was developed to understand how volunteers and past visitors engage with the Farm. This quick poll was conducted from August 2 to September 17, 2018. The City of McHenry, the City’s Landmark Commission, the Foundation, and the McHenry County Farm Bureau circulated the quick poll link via electronic and social media. In circulating the quick poll, past visitors to the Farm were asked to respond to the poll’s ten (10) questions. The quick poll received 126 responses, and 99%+ respondents answered each question.

Detailed quick poll results are available in this report’s Appendix 2. The final poll question (Question 10) allowed respondents to provide comments about the Farm. These comments have been provided to City staff and are also included in Appendix 2. Summary data is presented below. In both the detailed and summary data, these quick poll results identify what respondents think, not why they think the way that they do. The results should be considered indicative only. The questions were structured to gain insight into what programs could succeed at the Farm, based upon the experiences of visitors and volunteers at the Farm.

Summary Results

Three (3) of the questions identify characteristics of the respondent pool. The age of respondents (Question 8) is shown in Chart 2 below. Using U. S. Census Bureau population by age categories, the respondents’ percentages by age are compared with the percentages in the City’s total population and the Farm’s Custom Market. Overall, the quick poll respondent pool skews older—relatively common for these types of surveys or polls. The respondents’ age group 25-34 roughly correlates with the population percentages of the City and Custom Market.

Chart 2: Age of Respondents (Question 8)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Quick Poll %</th>
<th>City Population %</th>
<th>Custom Market %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 20</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>25.4%</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 to 24</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 34</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 to 44</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 to 54</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 to 64</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 65</td>
<td>35.8%</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 7 asked for each respondent’s zip code. This data is displayed in Chart 3.
Slightly more than 72% of the quick poll respondents reside in either the 60050 or the 60051 zip codes, followed by the Woodstock/Bull Valley and Wonder Lake residents. This echoes the results of the 2017 visitor zip code data collected at ‘A Day at Petersen Farm.’ Within that 2017 data, 65.4% of visitors were from the McHenry area. Both sets of responses also indicated diverse zip codes from McHenry and Lake County and out of state.

Question 5 responses indicated that 88.9% of quick poll respondents had attended ‘A Day at Petersen Farm.’ Question 1 responses noted that 74.2% of respondents visited the Farm 1-3 times within the last two (2) years. Based upon these past experiences at the Farm, respondents were then asked in Question 6 if they would participate in certain types of programming at the Farm. Their identified programming interests are shown in Figure 2.
In addition to the types of programs listed in the question, respondents suggested additional ideas for several types of children’s programming. The multiple education options for future Farm interpretation are most notable.

Question 2 asked respondents to identify how they heard about the Farm. These results are presented in Figure 3 below.
Most respondents heard about the Farm from Friends, followed by an area organization or Farm event flyers. Among the respondents citing an area organization, the McHenry Garden Club was prominently mentioned within the comments. Thirty-five (35) respondents provided comments. Among those, eleven (11) noted that they had some personal connection to the Farm or the Petersen family, or grew up nearby.

Implications for the Farm’s Future

As with this project’s interviewees, quick poll respondents view the Farm as one of McHenry’s most important and historic places. It is considered a true community asset, described in the quick poll comments as a ‘treasure.’ These respondents are interested in additional activities, particularly for children, at the Farm. Multiple comments also supported necessary improvements to the Farm’s buildings. Finally, many respondents suggested multiple programs to better utilize the Farm as a valued City asset and important place.

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5 Respondent comments were also evenly divided about the proposed solar farm for the Farm—half were positive; half negative. The underlying issue may be how to design, introduce, and manage a reliable revenue source to support physical improvements at the Farm. The design of the solar farm could create an area of visitor interest for Petersen Farm.
The Farm’s Opportunities for the Future

The underlying objective at any historic place is to make memories and cultivate a singular experience. For the Farm, this means creating a compelling and appealing historic farm site. The objective at any park district facility is to be attractive to ‘green space’ users, provide strong programs, and enhance the community’s overall quality of life. Both objectives, depending whether you view the Farm, as a City park or as a historic site, can co-exist at the Farm. The Farm’s opportunities fit within these broader objectives. The opportunities detailed below represent actions that will capitalize on the Farm, as a local asset.

At places, like the Farm, inertia can often become the default position in relationships among a site’s major stakeholders. The City of McHenry, like many area municipalities, faces significant fiscal and staffing constraints. Limited capital funding and staff time is available for improving and managing the Farm’s buildings and grounds. The Foundation wants a Master Plan for the Farm in advance of any formal fund raising effort. As noted below, a Master Plan for the Farm is needed, but small actions, such as targeted fund raising, can also occur. The City’s Landmark Commission is both a Farm steward and responsible for Citywide historic preservation efforts. Educating McHenry residents about the City’s most significant places, including the Farm, will complement City and Foundation work at the Farm.

The opportunities identified in this study require actions by these major stakeholders. These actions will necessarily be small and incremental to start. But actions are needed to ensure that the Farm can capitalize on its promise. To start, five (5) initial opportunities were identified in this study’s Interim Report. These actions represent a ‘back to basics’ approach to guaranteeing the Farm’s future by solidifying Farm relationships and focusing on small, low cost actions that will position the Farm and its key stakeholders for their future work.

1. The Farm’s key stakeholders—the City of McHenry, the Foundation, and the City’s Landmarks Commission—should reconfirm their roles and responsibilities for the Farm’s future. Each entity believes that the Farm is important, but clarity about those roles and responsibilities is needed. Based upon the background review for this project, the documented roles for each entity are:
   a. City’s Parks and Recreation Department: To provide varied recreation programs, well-maintained facilities, and open space designed to effectively provide quality leisure time for all community residents.
   b. Foundation: To preserve and develop an educational facility promoting the City’s agricultural heritage at Petersen Farm, and as a 501(c)(3) public charity, raise funds to support Petersen Farm.
   c. City’s Landmarks Commission: To encourage preservation of the City’s historic structures and sites important to McHenry’s heritage and to encourage preservation through ongoing Commission activities.
Out of this reconfirmation, each group should understand the limitations and expectations of the others. Reconfirming these roles and responsibilities could be part of a more formal, facilitated session, or a scheduled meeting to directly discuss each stakeholder’s concerns. Any results should encompass an understanding of each stakeholder’s expectations and limitations, and how the actions described below can be completed.

2. The City and/or the Foundation should join the Midwest Open Air Museum Coordinating Council and the Farm-Based Education Network to become part of the national and regional network of related sites.

3. The City’s Parks and Recreation Department should contact Loyola University’s graduate level Public History program or University of Illinois-Chicago’s graduate level Planning programs to identify students that may be interested in preparing the Farm’s Master Plan as a Master’s thesis.

4. City and Foundation representatives should meet with their partners at McHenry County College (MCC) and McHenry County Farm Bureau and 4-H to identify two (2) simple actions requiring minimal expense to expand their existing programs at the Farm. These actions could be structured as pilot programs, if necessary. This same discussion should also encompass potential funding options and volunteer interest.

5. The Foundation should initiate one specific fundraising initiative to rehabilitate one outbuilding at the Farm. For example, many stakeholders cited the barn as a possible special event venue, or another outbuilding may represent an easier first project. (The City has current plans to improve one building at the Farm.) The Foundation can work with City staff to determine which building. Then, the Foundation can access area fund raising experts or seek assistance from the Community Foundation of McHenry County. With this expertise, the Foundation can increase its fundraising confidence and skills. The Foundation, also with City assistance, should consider developing a sponsorship program.

Item 4 above describes the opportunity to expand partnerships with MCC and the Farm Bureau and 4-H; all are interested in working with the City and the Foundation to activate the Farm. During this study process, other local entities expressed an interest in partnering with the City and the Foundation on programs at the Farm. These partnership opportunities were noted in the Interview section of Interim Report and are listed below. Other partnership opportunities likely exist, and the City and the Foundation can consider other ongoing and ad hoc partnerships that apply local expertise with minimal resource commitments by either the City or the Foundation’s volunteers. (The Peer Sites section of the Interim Report also cites some partnership examples and ideas.)
McHenry’s school districts, specifically classroom units on local history, nature and conservation, science, and the high school’s entrepreneurship program.

- Local daycare facilities and local home schooling parent groups for events such as ‘A Day at Petersen Farm.’
- Multiple respondents to the Quick Poll identified as members of the McHenry Garden Club. Their comments indicated an interest in expanding the Farm’s garden programming. This expansion could potentially be conducted in partnership with MCC’s horticulture and Master Gardener programs and other entities, such as a local food pantry or school groups.
- Other area Garden Clubs could be additional partners in the above efforts.
- MCC’s recent urban agriculture work on local food systems may be an emerging opportunity.
- Ad hoc collaborations with County conservation sites and Moraine Hills State Park.
- Organizations, including crafters and collectors, which regularly participate in ‘A Day at Peterson Farm’ could offer programs at the Farm.
- The Farm’s oak savanna presents an opportunity to work with the McHenry County Land Conservancy.
- Engaging youth groups, including those connected to the Farm (4-H and Scout and Explorer groups), for a wide range of volunteer or service work will build local affinity for the Farm. High school students with community service requirements represent another potential group. Future Farmers of America chapters from nearby school districts may also have an interest.
- Given McHenry’s large 4-H participation, increased 4-H and U of I extension programming presents an important short-term option. Beekeeping and similar low impact programs were noted as partnership possibilities.

As with all of the agricultural heritage sites examined for this study, the funding mismatch between revenue sources, operating costs, and local needs is and will remain an ongoing issue. Similar sites owned and operated by separate taxing districts (either park or forest preserve districts) face similar obstacles, though their tax levy typically supports general operations. City officials understand the need for physical improvements at the Farm. After routine capital budgeting for the Farm site, City staff should discuss the upcoming five-year plan with the Foundation. With this information, the Foundation can identify a specific fundraising need and identify their process to achieve that goal.

Funding the Farm’s improvements will always require more dollars, whether through the City’s capital budget process or from fundraising. Consequently, additional funding sources, including grants and sponsorships, for specific Farm projects or programs will need to be pursued. Other revenue options, such as the possible solar farm, could be developed as a feature to contribute to the Farm’s programming in environmental education. The Farm’s partners can also assist with funding options. The McHenry County Farm Bureau and extension office have significant expertise about grant programs.
available from the U. S. Department of Agriculture. As discussed at the presentation of this study’s Interim Report, a selected list of possible funding sources is provided in Appendix 3.

The development of a Master Plan for the Farm will be critical to identifying the Farm’s interpretive options and their implications for visitor growth. This Master Plan process should:

- **Formulate a Vision.** Each of the Farm’s key stakeholders has a different role and responsibility for the Farm. Reconfirming those roles, as noted above, is the first step. A formal Master Plan process should identify a consensus vision for the Farm for the next ten (10) or twenty (20) years. The Farm is considered a valued community asset. What can it become? How can the City and the Farm’s many partners make this long-term vision become reality?

- **Develop Interpretative Options.** How the Farm’s story is interpreted and presented as a historic farm site and park facility has a direct impact on site programming, on future visitor attraction, and how both are conducted. This also includes the kinds of promotions or special events held at the site and how those activities also support the site’s vision and interpretive plan. Policies regarding how potential site users, such as contractors, tenants, or temporary users, support the interpretation of the Farm’s story.

- **Address Future Visitor Growth.** The Farm’s visitor market potential exists. Local and area markets have sufficient populations and numbers of family households. City staff, the Foundation, and the Landmark Commission can begin now to enhance their use of electronic and social media to attract visitors to events at the Farm. As with shoppers using Google searches to find stores or restaurants near them, historic site visitors, including families, obtain their information about area events from a wide range of non-traditional media. As with the other opportunities noted, taking the interim steps to increase and diversify communications about what is happening at the Farm will prepare for future Master Plan implementation.

- **Consider Funding and Operations.** While some initial funding options are described here, the Master Plan process will refine those options that will make sense for the Farm’s vision and interpretation. Varied revenue sources—fees, rental income, grants, in-kind, donations, and City dollars—will be needed to sustain the Farm’s operations.

To capitalize on the Farm’s strengths, strategically expanding the current work at the Farm can begin a focus on the future. Creative responses to any perceived constraints will be required. The Farm is uniformly considered as a great place and important to the City of McHenry’s history. It has the appropriate partnerships in place to grow. Taking action in advance of Master Plan completion will prepare the City, the Foundation, the Landmark Commission and their partners to expand the Farm’s attraction power and foster the Farm’s success over many years.
Appendices

Appendix 1: Interim Report
Appendix 2: Quick Poll Results
Appendix 3: Selected Funding Resources
McHenry’s Petersen Farm: Markets and Opportunities
Interim Study Update and Documentation

August 2018
# Table of Contents

Introduction ............................................................................................................................................. 2
Current Markets: Petersen Farm ........................................................................................................ 3
Interview Summary ........................................................................................................................... 6
Peer Site Assessments ...................................................................................................................... 7
Preliminary Competitive Sites Assessment ....................................................................................... 14
Preliminary Opportunities ................................................................................................................ 14
Introduction

The City of McHenry’s Parks and Recreation Department (City) retained Business Districts, Inc. (BDI) in March 2018 to examine Petersen Farm’s markets and best opportunities for the future. This project is preparatory to the development of a Master Plan for Petersen Farm (Farm). The following is an interim report of study results.

Project tasks completed include: review of relevant background data about Petersen Farm’s history and current programming; analysis of Farm-specific market data; interviews with 14 individuals representing multiple Farm stakeholders and partners; and research into site markets and programming at similar sites to Petersen Farm. In addition, preliminary data assessing competitive sites is briefly described. Finally, preliminary recommendations to capitalize on the Farm’s opportunities conclude this interim documentation.

Project work to be completed includes the results of a recent visitor quick poll, currently in process, the final competitive site review, and the final recommendations focused on the Farm’s best market-supported opportunities. These recommendations will emphasize what work can be readily accomplished, given current funding and staffing.

For the City, the Colby-Petersen Farm Foundation (Foundation), and other stakeholders, the consensus goal for the Farm is to have it ‘up, restored and active,’ as stated by one interviewee. Every stakeholder and partner indicated this similar objective, most indicating a willingness to help. Achieving this goal will take time and multiple incremental steps. The final opportunities and recommendations, confirmed at the conclusion of this project, will provide a practical path, or task set, to move the Farm’s programming forward over time to achieve that consensus goal.
Current Markets: Petersen Farm

Key market geographies for the Farm are displayed in Chart 1 below. The center point for each drive time market is Petersen Farm. The Custom Market map, shown in Figure 1, is a visual representation of Chart 2’s zip code data.

Chart 1: Market Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>McHenry's Petersen Farm</th>
<th>City of McHenry</th>
<th>10-Minute Drive Time</th>
<th>Custom Market: 2017 Survey Respondents</th>
<th>20-Minute Drive Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>26,903</td>
<td>23,044</td>
<td>98,722</td>
<td>118,511</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Households</td>
<td>10,095</td>
<td>8,837</td>
<td>35,994</td>
<td>43,919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Household Size</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>2.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Family Households</td>
<td>7,571</td>
<td>6,865</td>
<td>28,926</td>
<td>35,106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Family Households</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td>77.7%</td>
<td>80.4%</td>
<td>79.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees</td>
<td>12,506</td>
<td>10,748</td>
<td>36,283</td>
<td>54,733</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Age</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>40.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Bachelor’s Degree or Greater</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
<td>28.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Household Income</td>
<td>$85,276</td>
<td>$78,098</td>
<td>$96,524</td>
<td>$92,666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Household Income</td>
<td>$68,223</td>
<td>$64,917</td>
<td>$76,008</td>
<td>$73,818</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hispanic Ethnicity 14.5% 15.0% 11.1% 11.9%
Not of Hispanic Ethnicity 85.5% 85.0% 88.9% 88.1%


Chart 2: 2017 ‘A Day at Petersen Farm’ Visitor Zip Codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visitor Zip Codes</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Zip</th>
<th>#</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>McHenry</td>
<td>60050</td>
<td>52</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McHenry Township</td>
<td>60051</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wonder Lake</td>
<td>60097</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodstock/Bull Valley</td>
<td>60098</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crystal Lake</td>
<td>60014</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Others (1 each)</td>
<td>60014</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Day at the Farm Visitor Data, 2017; BDI.
The four (4) markets displayed above include the City of McHenry; a 10-minute drive time from the Farm; a custom market based upon 2017 ‘A Day at the Petersen Farm’ (‘A Day at’) visitor responses about their zip codes, and a 20-minute drive time. A map of the custom market is Family households in each market are 75% or more of total households. The Latino population exceeds 10% on all markets with the largest population within a 10-minute drive of the Farm. Chart 3 indicates that the dominant zip codes for the ‘A Day at’ visitors are 60050 and 60051— from the City of McHenry and McHenry Township. Given the Farm’s status as a City-owned property, serving City residents will continue to be important to the Farm’s success. Attracting from these geographies with new programming can generate much needed affinity for the Farm and potential access to additional resources.

The Farm’s 2017 visitor survey results provided indicative data about how attendees learned about the ‘A Day at’ event. Chart 3 shows how the responding visitors learned about the event:
Chart 3: How Visitors Learned about ‘A Day at Petersen Farm’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How Visitors Learned about Day at the Farm</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flyers</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word of Mouth</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Day at the Farm Visitor Data, 2017; BDI.

Overall, some type of traditional media was the primary way that attendees learned about the event. These varied media continue to work because the ‘A Day at’ event has experienced over a decade of success. For the future, multi-generational families increasing use technology, particularly mobile phones, to identify entertainment options. Making event information more available on more platforms will be important as the Farm enhances its activities and programs.

In the 2017 survey of ‘A Day at’ visitors, 103 of the 105 survey forms included programming suggestions for the Farm. Those activities receiving 60 or more suggestions are shown in Chart 4.

Chart 4: Suggested Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Farm Programming Suggestions (Top 5)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suggestions</td>
<td>#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical craft demonstrations</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receptions and Reunions</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardening classes</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music festival</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community garden plots</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Day at the Farm Visitor Data, 2017; BDI.

The ideas noted represent typical programs offered at sites with similar characteristics to the Farm. Descriptions of how sites organize and offer these types of programming are noted in the Peer Site Assessments.

Overall, the Farm’s markets are sufficient to support increased visitor numbers and programming. The demographic data, cited above for this report, projects that the City of McHenry’s total population will increase by 8.8% by 2022. To market the Farm to the Custom Market, more activities targeted to families with children and introducing the broader community to this unique local resource must occur.
Interview Summary

As noted in the Introduction, 14 interviews were conducted as part of this initial project research. This summary includes shared observations of multiple interviewees.

Common Interview Themes

• ‘A Day at Petersen Farm’ is regarded by all stakeholders as great event—well organized and well attended. The event’s primary audience, families with young children from McHenry and nearby towns, represents the Farm’s future.
• The ongoing site maintenance at the Farm, particularly for the barn and other outbuildings, needs to be more pro-active. A capital plan or mid-term strategy to stabilize and preserve the Farm buildings needs to be developed, and funding sources identified.
• Too much attention is focused on the farmhouse versus the Farm as a whole. The site’s best opportunities are with the larger site and what can be done there, such as restoring the barn for special events.
• The Landmarks Commission’s role is difficult to distinguish from that of the Foundation, but their defined roles regarding the Farm appear very different.
• The Farm’s base of volunteers and partners needs to grow. This will be critical for future leadership at the Farm, for providing additional resources (people and financial) for the Farm, and for developing the necessary visitor experience to appeal to changing audiences that lack a direct connection to the Farm.
• Petersen Farm cannot operate as a historic site open daily. It should emphasize pre-arranged events or educational partnerships, similar to the successful ‘A Day at Petersen Farm,’ expanded gardens, family events, or school group visits.
• Ensuring that the Farm achieves its maximum potential as a resource and how to get there with limited City resources (staff and dollars) will remain problematic. Inertia about what to do and how to do things at the Farm is another aspect of this issue. Overall, more action and less discussion are needed to assure the Farm’s future.

New and Expanded Partnership Options

• A partnership with McHenry’s school districts should be developed. Programs suggested included the grade school district’s classroom units on local history, nature and conservation, and science, and the high school’s entrepreneurship program. With over 5,000 children in McHenry District 15, this partnership would also target the Farm’s most logical audience. Partnership options also exist with surrounding school districts.
• In addition to local schools, partnerships with local daycare facilities were suggested for future children’s activities or visits.
• McHenry County College’s (MCC) horticulture program is another potential larger partner and source of volunteers. Expanding the related Master Gardener program at the Farm, including a plan for any food grown in garden, is an example. This effort could be part of engaging the
schools or even providing produce for a local food pantry. Local Garden Clubs could be additional partners in these efforts. Also, an emerging opportunity is with McHenry County College’s urban agriculture work on local food systems.

- The Farm need better links to area and regional trails (Prairie Path), County conservation sites, and Moraine Hills State Park.
- Organizations that participate in ‘A Day at Peterson Farm’ could be more involved with the Farm and encouraged to offer more programs. Crafters and collectors were noted in particular.
- The Farm’s oak savanna presents an opportunity to work with the McHenry County Land Conservancy.
- Engaging youth group, including those connected to the Farm (4-H and Scout and Explorer groups), for a wide range of volunteer or service work will build local affinity for the Farm. Given McHenry’s large 4-H participation, the potential exists for increased 4-H and U of I extension programming. Beekeeping and similar low impact programs were noted as possibilities. The McHenry County Farm Bureau and extension office could assist with grants, such as those available from the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Future Farmers of America chapters from nearby school districts may also have a role.
- Funding the Farm’s improvements will require more dollars and people. Additional funding sources, including grants and sponsorships, for specific Farm projects or programs should be pursued. Creative funding options, such as the possible solar farm, should also be considered.

The Farm’s Future

- All major stakeholders, particularly the City and the Foundation, need to revisit their roles and/or missions specific to the Farm. They need to think differently about the site and its opportunities.
- City budget constraints will continue to affect the capital expenditures and programming at the Farm. Identifying people and funding resources must begin to build the site’s capacity for effective programs that create affection for the Farm. This will create an enhanced amenity for McHenry and indirectly impact McHenry’s economic growth and attraction power.
- A Master Plan for the Farm needs completion. But establishing new or expanded partnerships and identifying and developing more resources can start now.
- The Farm embodies the richness of the McHenry area’s agricultural story. Learning what parts of the story will resonate with residents and visitors and how to translate the story into a unique experience will need to inform any Farm programming or activities.

Peer Site Assessments

After considering 15 total sites, four (4) farm or similar sites were identified as peers for Petersen Farm. This peer research examined how these farm sites were funded, programmed, managed and promoted. Management for each site was interviewed to discuss which programs are attracting the greatest interest and attendance at their facilities and their future plans. One (1) peer site is municipally owned and programmed by the municipal parks department, similar to that of Petersen Farm. Either county or municipal park districts (separate taxing bodies) own the remaining sites. All four (4) facilities are dealing with limited fiscal and staff resources. Each farm site emphasizes their agricultural story, but site interpretation and programming is targeted to the needs of their community and nearby area. Current site operations for each peer site are described below.
These peer assessments will be useful to the City and the Foundation for one primary reason—the scope of their work and their comprehensive approach to programming generates ideas transferable to the Farm. These ideas may require implementation at a simpler or smaller scale, but they serve as examples of the many ways to interpret local farming history. Most of these programs are inexpensive to implement when organized with strong and engaged partners.

**Salomon Farm, Ft. Wayne, IN:** Salomon Farm (SF) shares a similar story with Petersen Farm. It was donated to the City’s Parks department in the late 1990s with certain stipulations regarding its preservation and operation, such as a period of significance identified as the 1920s-1940s. The farmstead is located in a residential area and is the only city park in that sector of Ft. Wayne.

The site’s two largest income sources are event rentals of its 1873 barn and farm camps scheduled for six (6) weeks each summer from 9-4 daily. The barn was improved right after the City’s acquisition of SF for an estimated $500,000. This restoration required that the barn be jacked up for foundation repairs. (Like many historic farm outbuildings, the original foundation was fieldstone.) As part of the restoration, one section of fieldstones was preserved as an educational tool. The barn is not climate controlled and is used from May through October. Barn rentals are $700 per event, and the City permits tents and on-site catering for events for additional fees, primarily permitting. The Farm Camp started with 20 children in the early 2000s and now serves 200. The camp represents about 45% of income generated for SF, costing $90 per child per week. Programming is organized and specific to children ages 4-17. Pre-school and young children participate in gardening and growing exercises. For example, the youngest children plant zinnias and learn about plants. They also learn about the farm animals housed at SF for the summer. Activities advance to beekeeping for ages 12 and above. The high school aged campers are referred to as farmers in training. Volunteer gardeners and these older campers grow the produce and operate SF’s Wednesday farmers market, completely set up by the campers.

SF also hosts one major special event, Harvest Fall Festival. This 2-day event is held each fall and typically attracts about 5,000 total visitors. All of SF’s partners contribute to the festival activities, including farm equipment clubs, demonstrating and operating equipment, and fiber arts demonstrations and vendors. Festival activities generally compare earlier and current agricultural practices. Smaller scale special events, such as school field trips, are scheduled based upon school district interest. Minor events attract anywhere from 50-200 participants.

Though no separate non-profit fundraising entity exists, SF relies heavily on volunteers and partnerships to support their year-round park programming. SF staff refers to them as the ‘lifeblood’ of their site, given the staff responsible for SF also manages four (4) other parks. One Parks staff member works steadily to identify those organizations or groups that may be interested in partnering with SF.

Volunteers are often affiliated with many of the partner organizations. Partners are diverse and include:

- Collectors, including regional tractor clubs and antique farm machinery clubs;
• Crafts, including a blacksmith forge, and fiber arts groups, who also sell goods and conduct demonstrations. The collectors and crafters also participate in and volunteer at SF events and offer classes on site;
• Garden clubs and the area's Master Gardeners who volunteer to support all growing programs, including the camps and farmers market. These same garden volunteers also serve as camp counselors;
• Area Future Farmers of America (FFA) chapters who also serve as volunteers and site interns;
• A local farmer who provides farm animals for the summer, and volunteers care for the animals during their time at SF;
• The City’s youth centers in underserved neighborhoods enable children to attend farm camp and gain a farm experience with the assistance of grant funding. SF plans to expand this program and to work with the City’s conservatory staff on an urban gardening program with current and new neighborhood partners;
• A local hospital which has agreed to a partnership organized around healthy eating, and staff intends to pursue a USDA grant for program funding;
• Within the City, Parks department staff relies on their City marketing and public information colleagues to sell sponsorships and provide media support and on the City’s public works crews for ongoing maintenance.

SF staff’s outreach work has helped attract resources to the site. Examples include:
• Private funding for a $50,000 building to (primarily) house the farm camp, allowing the camp program can increase its numbers. This building includes a teaching kitchen (not commercial)\(^1\) for demonstrations by local chefs.
• Purdue University extension has been very supportive, providing important technical expertise in accessing USDA funding for SF’s programs, particularly for farm to school programming.

In contrast to other farms sites, SF does not have a friends group raising money to support programming at their location. Parks staff indicates their primary challenge is continuously educating the public that SF is a City park facility available to all; the perception exists that it’s a separate farm operation.

**Fischer Farm, Bensenville, IL:** After a 1999-2000 local battle to save Fischer Farm (FF), control of the farm site was assumed by the DuPage County Forest Preserve District (DCFPD). The Bensenville Park District (BPD) currently operates Fischer Farm (FF) as a leasehold from the County; actual site ownership is retained by the DCFPD.\(^2\) BPD is a separate taxing district within DuPage County. All improvements and site-related work require prior approval of the Forest Preserve District. FF is 5 acres and includes the farmstead and schoolhouse, also managed by BPD’s FF staff. One BPD staff member, with a public history background, is responsible for the Farm’s budgets and programs. This same staff member prepared FF’s Master Plan in 2011. The site’s long-term goal is to become a living history farm and an accredited museum. In

\(^1\) SF event caterers with Board of Health approvals can use this kitchen.
\(^2\) DCFPD operates 2 other farm sites, Mayslake and Kline Creek, and the Board decided to approach the BPD to operate and program the site. According to FF staff, their ongoing relationship is strong.
addition to its farming story, FF’s land includes an original farm seedbed and Fischer Woods, one of northeast Illinois’ most unique wetland ecosystems.

Farm programming began with one event in 2001, when ongoing building restoration began. FF opened to the public in 2011 and initiated much of its current programming then. Key events include the Easter Egg Hunt, October’s Heritage Day, and Discovery Camp held in the summer. Heritage Day, like ‘A Day at,’ includes a wide range of activities—hayrides, visits with FF’s chickens and sheep, traditional crafts, children’s activities, and food. Attendance was lower in 2017 due to bad weather. Discovery Camp is part of the Park District’s summer camp program. Campers, aged 6-10, care for the chickens and sheep at FF, assist volunteers with outdoor projects, and participate in activities held at several park district facilities. Other programs scheduled at FF include video and photo shoots (professional and family), Civil War Weekend (re-enactment), Hands On Arts, and an annual quilt show.

In marketing to visitors and through partner entities, FF focuses on residents within their district boundaries. FF information is readily available on the BPD website and social media. FF’s unique character is also communicated on the website. Information about all programming is included in the seasonal guide sent to all BPD households. Banners for FF’s major events are displayed in the Village of Bensenville, and flyers are sent to residents in neighboring communities. FF also maintains and communicates regularly with a targeted email list.

FF’s partnerships include:
- DCFPD, providing rangers and other staff to interpret FF and conduct nature hikes;
- Elmhurst History Museum, conducting joint field trips to the Museum, the Fischer Schoolhouse, and FF.
- Loyola University Graduate Program in Public History that provided student assistance to structure FF programming and serves as a Master Plan implementation resource.
- Two (2) local school districts, conducting field trip tours and serving as a venue for the 5th grade community service days. On those days, students work with FF and DCFPD staff and volunteers on ecosystem restoration.
- Friends of FF Foundation, formed in September 2017. The Board was formed with a core group of FF volunteers, including individuals with financial and fundraising expertise, the organizer of DCFPD’s Kline Farm program, and an educator. The Board has started to recruit additional Board members from among volunteers and district residents. All bring specific expertise to the organization. To date, the Friends have raised nearly $100,000 in donations and sponsorships for programming and for increased building accessibility. The Friends group intends to initiate a capital campaign in 2019.
- Crafters, including quilters and other area clubs that participate in FF special events.

Volunteers remain important to ongoing operations. FF provides an online volunteer application and screens volunteer applications for FF-specific needs. Despite being a separate taxing district, supplemental funds are needed for ongoing maintenance and to support specific programs. The fundraising success of the new Friends group has been important. Funding sources have included:
- Fees from admissions and rentals. Despite the smaller amounts, admission fees represent a regular budget line item. Facilities rental fees for private events, such as weddings and birthday parties, are part of this revenue stream.
- Illinois Department of Natural Resources grant in 2015. This $108,000 grant was used for facility restoration at FF.
FF staff indicates that their primary issue is getting their work done, including Master Plan implementation. Limitations exist on what can be done by one staff person and committed site volunteers.

Gale Woods Farm, Minnetrista, MN: Gale Woods Farm (GWF) is in its 15th year and is operated by the Three Rivers Park District (TRPD). This separate park district encompasses much of Hennepin County, excluding the Twin Cities. Of the peer sites examined, GWF is the largest at 410 acres and offers the most diverse range of activities. There are no historic buildings at GWF. An interpreted farm site is located elsewhere in Hennepin County (in Shakopee). GWF staff describes their work as intentional in presenting a working farm. From staff’s perspective, GWF is a working farm and educates visitors; they do not provide ‘agricultural entertainment.’

Current activities and programs are:

- **Product sales.** Produce grown in the 3-acre garden and fruit produced from GWF’s 60 fruit trees are sold to CSAs and donated to a free farmers market in the area. Meat bundles produced from the beef, sheep, hogs, and chickens are sold to local school districts and local restaurants.
- **Cross country runs.** Local high schools use the site’s paths for practice runs.
- **Event space.** GWF has a rental pavilion that typically hosts about 75 weddings annually. Staff noted that bookings have declined in the last two (2) years to about 40 each year.
- **School field trips.** GWF hosts classroom field trips in the spring and the fall.
- **Summer camp.** Camps last ten (10) full weeks each summer. The partnership with local school districts, described below, is crucial to how GWF serves its broader district and at-risk youth.
- **Winter educational sessions.** A series of classes on varied topics, including gardening, environment, culinary, and fiber arts (using wool from GWF), are offered to adult learners, preschools and daycare, and home schooled children.
- **‘Meet the Animals.’** This drop-in program, offered from April through September for 2 ½ hours each Saturday morning, introduces families with younger children to GWF’s animals. Volunteers present slightly different programs each week, reflecting what may have changed at GWF. This program generates 20,000 visits per year.

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3 CSA, or Community Supported Agriculture group.
• Youth farmer program. These high school students work the produce garden with GWF’s staff and gardening volunteers. This program, structured for 6-10 at-risk youth, provides workforce skills in horticulture.
• New efforts supporting food security. While GWF’s core food-related work indirectly addresses food security issues in their district’s disadvantaged communities, an emerging program is supporting community gardens in local communities.

In all of the various programs, paid staff or volunteers, including the high school students noted, do the labor. Additional corporate contributors, such as Target, have provided volunteers for specific tasks, events, or activities. WRPD actively recruits volunteers, and current volunteers recruit many new volunteers to the district. Overall, annual volunteer hours at GWF average 5-6,000 hours. In addition to active volunteer outreach, GWF has established some additional partnerships:
• In addition to the school-related programs noted above, GWF also works with individual local schools to support schoolyard gardens and collaborate with teachers on garden education.
• GWF has worked informally with the University of Minnesota’s Sustainable Agriculture program.
• The site has been less successful working with the regional Master Gardener program.
• TRPD has a separate Foundation, a 501(c)(3) public charity, to raise funds to support park district programs. GWF works with the Foundation and school district to provide financial subsidies for registrations and fees to ensure that children through high school age can attend GWF programs. The Foundation also works with GWF staff and neighborhood organizations to conduct outreach for this same program.
• GWF staff is also active with the Vermont-based Farm-Based Education Network, a national network of interpreted and publicly held agricultural sites.

The park district tax levy supports GWF’s work and district work needed at all facilities. At GWF, programs typically cover about 50% of their operating costs through sales, fees, or rentals. Fees are typically $5.00 or less for admissions. Other fees are charged for camps and school groups. The site’s two largest events in the spring and the fall are free and sponsored by area farm supply companies.

Kline Creek Farm, West Chicago, IL: Kline Creek Farm (KCF) is a unit of the DuPage County Forest Preserve District, or DCFPD. Located in West Chicago, KCF is part of DCFPD’s larger Timber Ridge Forest Preserve site. The Farm is about 200 acres and includes restored and recreated buildings as part of the farmstead. KCF opened in 1989.

KCF is interpreted as an 1890s farmstead, and programming is structured to support that vision. The Timber Ridge visitor center presents seasonal exhibits about 1890s farming and agricultural practices. The site’s function fits with broader DCFPD objectives for their properties. For KCF, the surrounding area has transformed from farms and cultivation to subdivisions. KCF represents the history of the people who lived in the area and how they farmed. Draft horses, beef
cattle, chickens, and sheep are located at the site. The draft horses do much of the larger farm planting and harvesting. The site also illustrates how and where food originates. Beekeeping and the role of bees are part of how KCF educates about food issues.

KCF’s audience attraction efforts are geared to reach families with younger children, ages 3-11. KCF is generally open five days per week. Mornings typically attract mothers with the youngest children, and activities then include story times and collecting eggs from KCF’s chickens. Older children visit in the afternoon, and they participate in farm chores or craft-related sessions. KCF’s fastest growing audience is recent immigrants to the area, primarily Eastern European immigrants, but visitors include immigrants from all parts of the world. Attendance from West Chicago’s large Latino population is less than expected, and additional outreach is planned to that community. Other major programs and activities include:

- **A Day at the Farm.** Structured as a school field trip, students learn about and experience farm life during the 1890s.
- **Harvest Festivals.** KCF holds two (2) annually, both with multiple activities around the corn harvest in the fall and the second in the spring for lambing and sheep shearing.
- **Holiday Festivals.** Special celebrations, emphasizing family activities, are organized for the winter holidays and for the 4th of July.
- **Summer Camp.** For 7-12 year olds, this camp allows children to serve as farmhands for a day and learn about farming practices and how farm families lived.
- **Private hayrides.** These group events (for 15+) are scheduled through DCFPD and tour the KCF and the surrounding Timber Ridge preserve.
- **Scouts and Youth Groups.** Tailored events and education sessions (active and self-guided) are conducted regularly.
- **Farmhouse Tours.** These sessions focus on specific topics, such as canning or crafts, versus tours.

KCF’s key partners are:

- **College of DuPage (COD).** Considered one of their strongest partnerships, KCF staff currently works with 2 COD professors—a biology professor on food-related issues and program development, and an agriculture professor on beekeeping, including joint lectures with KCF staff.
- **Local grade schools:** KCF provides some in-school programs, in addition to onsite programs for school groups. Current partnership work focuses on science coursework. The recent interest among middle school students is about industrial revolution themes specific to their history curriculum. All of the student programs at KCF are structured to meet school district curricula requirements.
- **Local food pantry.** Surplus produce grown at the KCF is donated to the local food pantry. Volunteer help, solicited via social media, harvests the produce.
- **Similar entities.** Through KCF’s involvement in the Midwest Open Air Museums Coordinating Council (MOMCC), the site routinely works with other area open-air museums, including Volkening Heritage Farm (Schaumburg), Primrose Farm (St. Charles) and groups, such the DeKalb Area Agricultural Heritage Association, Inc. This networking serves as a source of ideas for education and activities and identifying operating solutions.

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4 MOMCC is the Midwest affiliate for the Association for Living History, Farm, and Agricultural Museums, a nationwide organization.
Admission is free, and activity fees are minimal. Current fees include $5 student registration fees. Class fees are $50-$100. KCF had a separate Friends group during the first ten (10) years of operation. Their fund raising efforts are now the responsibility of the DCFPD Friends.

KCF staff indicates that their major challenge is demographics. An aging population combined with smaller households and household numbers requires a focus on both their school programming and on a larger public audience. Visitor interests have also changed. KCF’s farmhouse tour is no longer popular and is conducted less frequently. Volunteers (numbering about 100) are now younger with more frequent turnover, though are generally more engaged based upon their visitor experience.

**Preliminary Competitive Sites Assessment**

According to Visit McHenry County (VMC), area outdoor, agricultural, and conservation sites are important visitor attractions. The agricultural tourism season in the County begins in May, with autumn as the primary season. VMC staff indicates that the winter visitor numbers are beginning to increase. Overall, the economic impact of tourism in the County, according to the Illinois Office of Tourism, is about $300 million in visitor spending.

McHenry’s primary tourism sites are located outside of the City limits. They include Stade’s Farm and Market, the McHenry County Conservation District’s Glacial Park, and Moraine Hills State Park. Other County agricultural sites open to area residents and visitors have specific missions or purposes—educational, experiential, or as private sector businesses.

For the Farm’s future, marketing to area visitors for specific events may serve as one component of overall Farm marketing. VMC is unfamiliar with the Farm and what is offered there. Identifying additional programming will be key to having a ‘product’ available for marketing to a larger audience. Increased site capacity to accommodate larger visitor numbers, whether residents or tourists, will be required to ensure a positive experience.

**Preliminary Opportunities**

The objective at any historic place is to make memories and cultivate a singular experience. For the Farm, this means creating a compelling and appealing farm site. To start, these five (5) initial opportunities represent a ‘back to basics’ start to guaranteeing the Farm’s future by solidifying Farm relationships and focusing on actions that will raise the Farm’s local profile.

1. The Farm’s key stakeholders—the City of McHenry, the Foundation, and the City’s Landmarks Commission—should reconfirm their roles and responsibilities for the Farm’s future. Each entity believes that the Farm is important, but clarity about those roles and responsibilities is needed. Based upon the background review for this project, the documented roles for each entity are:
a. City’s Parks and Recreation Department: To offer varied recreation programs, well-maintained facilities, and open space designed to effectively provide quality leisure time for all community residents.

b. Foundation: To preserve and develop an educational facility promoting the City’s agricultural heritage at Petersen Farm, and as a 501(c)(3) public charity, raise funds to support Petersen Farm.

c. City’s Landmarks Commission: To encourage preservation of the City’s historic structures and sites important to McHenry’s heritage and to encourage preservation through ongoing Commission activities.

Out of this reconfirmation, each group should understand the limitations and expectations of the others.

2. The City and/or the Foundation should join the Midwest Open Air Museum Coordinating Council and the Farm-Based Education Network to become part of the national network of related sites.

3. The City’s Parks and Recreation Department should contact Loyola University’s graduate level Public History program or University of Illinois-Chicago’s graduate level Planning programs to identify students that may be interested in preparing the Farm’s Master Plan as a Master’s thesis.

4. City and Foundation representatives should meet with their partners at MCC and the McHenry County Farm Bureau and 4-H to identity two (2) simple actions requiring minimal expense to expand their existing programs at the Farm. These actions could be structured as pilot programs, if necessary. This same discussion should also encompass potential funding options and volunteer interest.

5. The Foundation should initiate a specific fundraising initiative to rehabilitate one outbuilding at the Farm. For example, many stakeholders cited the barn as a possible special event venue, or another building may represent an easier first project. By accessing known, area fund raising experts or with assistance from the McHenry County Community Foundation, the Foundation can increase its fundraising confidence and skills. The Foundation, also with City assistance, should consider developing a sponsorship program.

Additional opportunities and recommendations will be included in the final project documentation. After incorporating the results of the remaining project tasks, this initial list of opportunities may be refined or expanded. As appropriate, market and financial reasoning will be added to these opportunities to assist the City as it identifies priorities.
Appendix 2: McHenry’s Petersen Farm: Quick Poll Results

Overview

This summary provides the results of a quick poll, conducted from August 2, 2018 to September 17, 2018 and circulated to Farm volunteers, partners, and past and recent visitors to McHenry’s Petersen Farm. A total of 126 responses were received, and any comments provided by respondents were positive. The purpose of this quick poll was to identify how respondents engage with the Farm, whether as volunteers or visitors. Most important, these results are indicative only. These quick poll results identify what respondents think, not why they think the way that they do.

The quick poll consisted of ten (10) questions, and most questions were structured to consider current Farm activities and possible or future programs. Three (3) questions asked respondents their age, zip code, and household type. The final question (Question 10) asked respondents to provide any additional thoughts about the Farm. These Question 10 comments have been provided separately to City staff and are included in this summary. The quick poll results, as presented below, begin with a table displaying the overall responses to each question, followed by an analysis of the responses and key observations based upon the analysis.
Question 1: In the past two years, how many times did you visit McHenry's Petersen Farm?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choices</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-3 times</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6 times</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 or more times</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Answered: 124
Skipped: 2

74.19% of respondents visited 1-3 times.
12.10% visited 4-6 times.
13.71% visited 7 or more times.

![Bar chart showing the distribution of responses.](chart.png)
Observations:

- Nearly 75% of respondents visited the Farm have visited the Farm less frequently. The second largest visitor percentage is for those with 7 or more visits, likely including volunteers and City officials and the City’s Landmark Commission (meets at the Farm).
**Question 2: How did you hear about Petersen Farm?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choices</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friend(s)</td>
<td>32.5% 41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles in local press</td>
<td>19.0% 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From a flyer about an event at Petersen Farm</td>
<td>25.4% 32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media posts</td>
<td>23.8% 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of McHenry’s website</td>
<td>6.3% 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local schools</td>
<td>1.6% 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local or county-wide organizations</td>
<td>25.4% 32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>19.8% 25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Answered**: 126  
**Skipped**: 0
Observations:

- The Other category, as described by individual respondents, included those with a personal connection to the Petersen family, participants or vendors at Farm events, members of the City’s Landmark Commission, driving by the Farm regularly, and three (3) distinct individual responses.
- In describing how they heard about the Farm, the combined percentage of from social media posts and from the City’s website (30.1%) indicates that more active use of electronic and social media will be important.
• As noted in the Interim Report, McHenry’s schools present an opportunity to access and communicate with the Farm’s largest target audience, family households.
Question 3: How many people accompanied you on your most recent visit to Petersen Farm? (Please select all answers that apply.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choices</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I visited by myself.</td>
<td>9.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 people</td>
<td>39.68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4 people</td>
<td>27.78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 4 people</td>
<td>11.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I visited with a bus tour.</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I visited with a youth group, such as Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts.</td>
<td>0.79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I visited with my family.</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>7.14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Answered 126
Skipped 0
**Observations:**

- Several comments in the Other category indicated visits by larger volunteer groups, primarily affiliated with local or countywide organizations.
- The family visitor percentage (14.3%) appears to be an opportunity for growth.
Question 4: Thinking about your most recent visit to Petersen Farm, how long was your visit?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choices</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1 hour</td>
<td>18.4% 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3 hours</td>
<td>55.2% 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 hours</td>
<td>14.4% 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 5 hours</td>
<td>12.0% 15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Answered 125
Skipped 1
Observations:

- Many potential reasons exist for why these visitors and volunteers had either a shorter or longer visit. Most important is that just over 55% spent 1-3 hours at the Farm, and virtually all of these respondents attended ‘A Day at Petersen Farm.’
Question 5: What programs have either you or a family member attended at Petersen Farm? (Please check all that apply.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choices</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Day at Petersen Farm in late June</td>
<td>88.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boy or Girl Scout activities</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part of a school group visit</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attended a special event</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part of an adult tour group</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archery program</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family camp-out</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Answered: 126  
Skipped: 0
Observations:

- The vast proportion of respondents, as expected, either participated in or attended ‘A Day at Petersen Farm.’
- Most of the comments in the ‘Other’ category related to volunteer activities, primarily from those affiliated with the McHenry Garden Club. Four (4) are worthy of additional consideration. They include taking photos on site, the Tractors for Charity event, the Haunted Hayride, and walking through the Farm. At least two (2) of these categories of activities represent sources of potential fees to support the Farm.
Question 6: Thinking about your Petersen Farm experience(s), would you participate in the following programs or activities if held at Petersen Farm? (Please select up to 3 types of programs or activities.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choices</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education about McHenry area history</td>
<td>57.9% 73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education about horticultural/gardening</td>
<td>38.1% 48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education about farming history</td>
<td>40.5% 51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children's programming about gardening</td>
<td>25.4% 32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s programming about farming</td>
<td>30.2% 38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special event rental</td>
<td>26.2% 33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having photos taken at Petersen Farm</td>
<td>38.9% 49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School outdoor learning laboratory</td>
<td>23.0% 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint programming with Moraine Hills State Park</td>
<td>35.7% 45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor learning lab about farming, plants, or animals</td>
<td>47.6% 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>11.1% 14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Answered 126, Skipped 0
### Observations:

- Educational programming, including children's programming, dominates the responses.
- Several comments noted that the Farm has lots of potential and available parking to support more activities.
- Specific suggested programming for the Farm:
  - Meeting place for community groups
  - Children's programming (multiple programs)
  - Ghost stories
  - Folk music (and other genres) concerts or music festival
- Joint programming with the McHenry County Historical Society, McHenry Public Library, and/or the City’s Landmarks Commission
- Community gardens
- Craft fairs for local vendors
- All of the programs suggested in the question list
Question 7: In what ZIP code is your home located? (Please enter your 5-digit ZIP code; for example, 00544 or 94305.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent Zip Codes</th>
<th>Town</th>
<th>#</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>McHenry (60050)</td>
<td>76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McHenry (60051)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodstock/Bull Valley</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wonder Lake</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvard</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hebron</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mundelein</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ringwood</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cary</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marengo</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Grove</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genoa City, WI</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belvidere</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talladega, AL</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thiensville, WI</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Observations:

- 72.1% of respondents were from the McHenry area. The communities represented were similar to those identified in the 2017 ‘A Day at Petersen Farm’ visitor data and in the Custom Market developed for this project.
Question 8: What is your age?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Quick Poll %</th>
<th>City Population %</th>
<th>Custom Market %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 20</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>25.4%</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 to 24</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 34</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 to 44</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 to 54</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 to 64</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 65</td>
<td>35.8%</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Observations:

- The age breakdown of quick poll respondents is compared above to similar the age category percentages in the populations of the City of McHenry and this project’s Custom Market. (All use the U. S Census Bureau age categories.)
- The quick poll respondents skew much older than the City or Custom Market percentages (35.8% versus 14.0% and 13.0%). This is fairly typical of BDI’s experience with these polling and survey instruments.
- While the quick poll response number is small, the responses for the age categories from 25-44 far exceed the City and Custom Market percentages for those two age groups.
**Question 9:** Please select the answer that best describes your household.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choices</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I live alone.</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We are a family with pre-school or school-aged children living at home</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We are a household composed of 2 or more adults</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Answered: 126, Skipped: 0

![Bar chart showing the distribution of responses to Question 9.](chart.png)
Observations:

- The family household percentages correlate with the age categories noted in Question 8.
Question 10: Do you have any additional comments or observations about your Petersen Farm experience(s)?

62 survey of the 126 respondents provided responses to this question. These responses are shown below as recorded in the poll instrument and are unedited.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peterson Farm represents the history of McHenry which is fast disappearing. If the City of McHenry fails to protect it and (I hope you bring it up to code) then McHenry will become one of the many &quot;same looking&quot; suburbs of Chicago. You will lose your identity of history of farming that is still visible but fast vanishing from the area. I hope that whoever is making decision will make the right one and save Peterson Farm for the next generations. Please bring it up to code so it can stand for the next 100 years. Thank you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always enjoy getting outdoors and enjoying the local amenities. Perer Farm is a valuable community resource.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love the Peterson Farm Day in June. Very interesting to have the Peterson farm area so close to my home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many local communities have a historic destination - Petersen Farm could become this for McHenry. Activities for both young &amp; old could be held here - educational, social (by restoring the barn buildings &amp; house), civic &amp; community meeting places. Parking potential is better that most areas in town. Holiday activities could be highlighted at this Farm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would love to hear more history of Peterson Farm. It seems we are not preserving our historical sites and adding new. History should be something we save for our future.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyed the horse drawn wagon ride and the volunteers willing to answer questions. I liked seeing children activities. That is good for families. Very interesting pics and antique objects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You have a gem that could rival the Palmer house in Crystal Lake if the right resources were applied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feel it could benefit in teaching agriculture to non farm people as some generations don’t know where or how their food is produced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nice location, parking, concern be long-term building upkeep.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If the city would restore the buildings, it would make a wonderful museum and place for historical activities such as are done at Day at Petersen farm but include many seasonal, agricultural and farming exhibitions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have enjoyed Petersen Farm Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It has been very rewarding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it's quite a lovely event, keep up the good work!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very pleased with events attended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I wish there was more of a social media push for events at this location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It was a nice walk around the loop.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We enjoyed the house tour, and learning about the animals on the farm. The hayride was fun, too.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petersen Farm is a beautiful treasure. I would be interested in camping there if this is available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoy every time we visit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think a solar farm is a bad idea totally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Happy the farm has not been torn down. We need more of our historical sites saved and restored

- wonderful areas  mowed and bug control
- The farm could be used for adult learning experiences, speed dating events, etc.....
- I help with the gardening there.
- This is a nice farm
- Great job this year and past
- I'm concerned about plans to put a field of solar panels on the property and its potential impact on the historical nature of the site.
- Only actual experience is day of the farm. I was there several times b/4 it became city owned.
- I love Petersen Farm Day, we just need more events - hopefully those events will spur grounds/buildings improvements.
- It is a wonderful resource that is severely under utilized. I plan and tend the vegetable garden (30-40 hours of volunteer time, around $50 of my own money) for ONE event. I wish the garden was used/visited more.
- It provided an historical, educational, creative, varied experience that seemed to appeal to all ages and interests. It is a much needed, one of a kind addition to the area. Looking forward to seeing expansion on all levels!
- Pat Wirtz was excellent in promoting and providing information about Peterson Farm.
- A Day on the Farm is an exceptional opportunity for children to learn about farm life and life before all the automation and technology we live with now.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Only exhibited there as part of Petersen Farm Day. Attendance seems to be going down each year. Same exhibits.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Some of the questions in this survey do not apply to me and I have no option except to give a incorrect answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Spot...should be used for a variety of activities</td>
<td>Petersen Farm is a wonderful asset to the City of McHenry!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>We need a better farmers market. One in Park not good with concert after. As people are hesitant to buy because of having to enjoy concert and juggle purchases. And having to compete for parking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am proud to have witnessed the development of the Peterson Farm for all to experience &amp; enjoy from an open space and history concept. When I was little, Kenneth would let me ride his Belgian Horses out in the fields and I would hang out in Bobby Gene's work shop. Fond memories. Planning on donating my property as well.....</td>
<td>Love to see continued education programs throughout our community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seems under utilized maybe more info on FB about how it's Used and add programs for cub &amp; boy scouts, Girl Scouts Youth groups</td>
<td>I would not like to see it used as a solar farm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>A wonderful place to have a museum and other events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm Day(s) are so enjoyable here. Wonderful potential for development of this historic property, McHenry is lucky to have it.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Love Peterson farm and hope it continues to be preserved.

This is a great event and my family has attended the past few years since my first child was born. It’s friendly to all ages and the best part of that it is free. It costs a lot for families to do things these days and we look forward to Farm day every year. Thank you all for your efforts and continuing to keep agriculture education alive!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Great place and a solar farm is a good fit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nice to see history preserved &amp; have such a lovely property available for activities!!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We enjoy doing things as a family. Maybe family oriented events (family picnic day, free games for the family, Daddy/daughter dance, Mother/son day)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fix up the buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If there were more animal activities, art in the park we’d attend.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would be great to have horseback riding there or to be able to use the barn for weddings, reunions, parties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great space and love the history of the farm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking forward to being able to check it out and hoping for more programs as I am I stay at home homeschooling mom with a preschool/kindergarten level cold that I would love to bring over for some hands on studies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The farm, while historic, would be an excellent place for weddings and events if renovated properly. The Bryan Colby farm in Grayslake is constantly rented every weekend throughout the spring into fall!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3: Selected Funding Resources

The following list of links to potential funding sources is intended as an initial guide. Each funder has their own unique requirements to fulfill their mission. The City, the Foundation, and their partners should work together to identify potential sources. As noted in the report text, the Farm’s partners are important resources for funding collaborative programming at the Farm. An important example is the expertise available about U. S. Department of Agriculture grants through the McHenry County Farm Bureau, 4-H, and the University of Illinois Extension office. The peer community examples also include funder ideas.

U. S. Department of Agriculture

https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services

Illinois Department of Natural Resources

https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/grants/Pages/default.aspx

Landmarks Illinois (LI)

Should the City decide to hire a consultant for the Farm’s Master Plan process, LI offers a preservation fund grant for obtaining professional expertise.

http://www.landmarks.org/resources/financial-resources/landmarks-illinois-grants-landmarks-illinois/

Openlands

Openlands, in partnership with ComEd, offers the Green region program that includes improvements to green space as part of their effort to support local quality of life. Openlands offers other funding options that may prove useful to Farm programming.

https://openlands.org/planning/greenregion/

Illinois Humanities

Their multiplier grants enable larger collaborations to provide programs that incorporate the humanities to target community needs. A recent grantee was a conservation program in Carbondale that examined water resources from multiple perspectives.

https://www.ilhumanities.org/program/vision-action-and-multiplier-vam-grants/

Jeffris Family Foundation (JFI)

JFI provides match funding for planning studies, primarily historic structures reports, throughout the Midwest. The completion of their funded reports can result in an invitation to submit an application for larger funding for that building or site.

https://www.jeffrisfoundation.org/preservation/heartland-fund/
Other local resources, such as major employers or corporations active in the McHenry area, may provide opportunities to fund specific programs or efforts at the Farm. One example, cited in the Peer communities’ research, is partnerships with local healthcare systems. Specific to McHenry, Follett provides access to a wide range of grants to schools and school districts. A partnership for specific programs with McHenry’s schools could be eligible for such funding.


Additional fundraising options can include crowdfunding for specific projects at the Farm. Certain crowdfunding platforms, such as Ioby, Indiegogo, GoFundMe and Kickstarter, have been more often for community-oriented projects. Information about each, their fees, and how they work are described on each website.

For the Foundation, the National Trust for Historic Preservation offers grants through the Peter H. Brink Fund to help build the capacity of local organization by providing funding for mentorship in such areas as fundraising and management. LI may have some additional information, and the program is described at https://forum.savingplaces.org/build/funding/grant-seekers/specialprograms/brink-fund.

The National Recreation and Park Association, cited in the Final Report, offers a crowdfunding toolkit at https://www.nrpa.org/contentassets/51120e425b4846f2b59b910a30ae7753/crowd-funding-toolkit.pdf A list of potential funding raising resources is also provided at https://www.nrpa.org/our-work/Grant-Fundraising-Resources/. Two (2) programs noted include funding for gardening and beekeeping, as examples.

As the City and Foundation’s work progresses, funding for certain projects may fulfill the mission requirements of funding priorities at either the Chicago Community Trust or the W. K. Kellogg Foundation.

https://cct.org/grants/
https://www.wkkf.org/grantseekers