

Application #1

Description and Purpose of Organization:

Our mission is to preserve, protect, and advocate for the restoration of the tallgrass prairie ecosystem - grasslands, savannas, woodlands, and wetlands.

Please give a detailed description of the purpose for requested funds. Explain how your request aligns with the central objective and goals of the Environmental pillar:

(Redacted) has a successful history of restoring tallgrass prairie, expanding rich ecological assets of our region and building opportunities for our local community to experience nature. In recent years, (Redacted) has incorporated small wetland restorations in some parts of the preserve. In these places, water has been drained through subterranean tile systems for decades. Removing these tiles and building small berms allows “pothole wetlands” to reestablish on the landscape. There is considerable cost up front to remove tile and build the wetland infrastructure. However, once established, the wetlands largely self-sustain, providing habitat to rare and declining species, opportunities for visitors to observe wildlife, and important ecosystem services like carbon sequestration and nutrient reduction. In the past year, wetlands at (Redacted) have hosted migrating Whooping Cranes, an endangered species with only 600 individuals known to exist in the wild. We are actively working to grow a small population of state threatened Blanding’s turtles that currently inhabit a few wetlands at (Redacted). Expanding wetland habitats is central to the success of that recovery program. In addition, wetlands are among the most effective ecosystems for sequestering carbon. Wetland plants pull carbon dioxide directly out of the atmosphere, and water-logged soils limit decomposition, allowing carbon to accumulate below ground and remain protected from future loss.

The funds requested in this proposal would specifically support a beaver exclosure system in a newly created pothole wetland at (Redacted) and support long-term work to bolster the Blanding’s turtle population. Beavers are an important part of wetland systems; however, their activities can undermine constructed wetlands, clogging water control structures and causing damage to retention berms. A beaver exclosure system has recently come to market, preventing beavers from clogging water control structures and protecting the longevity of constructed wetlands. (Redacted) installed a couple of these structures in 2020 and we are pleased with the results, we would like to add this structure to a newly created wetland. This wetland would exist on the landscape in perpetuity, supporting wildlife and sequestering carbon for generations. The created wetland would also be a potential habitat for expanding Blanding’s turtle populations. Requested funds would purchase an antenna to track turtle hatchlings, released in 2020, which have a specialized transmitter attached to them. Requested equipment would last for years, allowing us to evaluate the success of the turtle recovery efforts and potentially expand efforts in the future. We are also requesting funding to purchase a set of general use waders, which our seasonal crew can use for collecting wetland seed for augmenting current wetlands and future wetland creation.

Will this project be possible without full funding request? Please explain.

We have funding to create the wetland, but we do not have funding to include the beaver exclosure system. Including the system greatly improves the longevity and success of the wetland restoration, preventing beaver damage that can compromise the entire project. The Blanding's turtle project is collaborative, and we have funding to attach the transmitters to the turtle hatchlings. However, we currently share a receiving antenna with several other nature preserves in the region. Having an antenna on site would allow our staff to conduct more regular monitoring and bolster turtle restoration efforts across northern Illinois by allowing equipment we currently borrow to be used at other sites. We would be unable to purchase the turtle monitoring equipment without this funding. Without the monitoring equipment, we will need to wait 10-12 years until turtle hatchlings reach a size where we could effectively observe them in the field without tracking devices.

Please give a detailed/line item budget of the project.

Beaver exclosure to protect wetland drainage: \$5000

Antenna to track threatened Blanding's turtles: \$1200

5 pairs of waders for general use: \$500

Total: \$6700

Please state what you plan to accomplish, what actions you will take, when, and how you will evaluate the outcomes relative to the goals:

We plan to install the beaver exclosure system on a newly created wetland in 2021, exact timing will depend on contractor availability. Successful installation of the system will be reported to the Etnyre Foundation. Turtle monitoring equipment and waders will be purchased for use in summer 2021. We will monitor turtles with the tracking equipment at least once a week from early June through late September, when the turtles go below ground for winter hibernation. We plan to monitor these turtles for at least the next 5 years, most likely longer. Turtles require 10-13 years to mature to adults, requiring long-term monitoring to evaluate project success. The project will be determined successful if the adult turtle population doubles in the next 15 years. We will share progress reports with the Etnyre Foundation regularly. Waders will be used to conduct the turtle tracking and to collect wetland seed to increase plant diversity within the newly established wetland.

Application #2

Description and Purpose of Organization:

Our district mission statement is "to educate students to be lifelong learners who are productive, responsible citizens." In that spirit, (redacted) created a Changemaker program, offering students the opportunity to address the needs and wants of the community by promoting student-developed and led, socially-minded businesses. The newest addition to the Changemaker pathway is the Transition program. The goal of the Transition program is to prepare students with disabilities to live and work in the community by cultivating adult living skills, and by fostering vocational readiness through work-based learning opportunities, which include running school-based micro-businesses and progressing through a series of community-based mini-internships.

Please give a detailed description of the purpose for requested funds. Explain how your request aligns with the central objective and goals of the Environmental pillar:

The (redacted) is requesting funds for two purposes. The first is for materials and tools that will be used for a student-operated bicycle repair shop. Students will work on bikes for students and staff while collecting unwanted bicycles, fixing them, and selling them back to the community at an affordable price to promote bicycling and earn funds that will be paid back into the program.

The second request is for a washer and dryer that will be used to wash materials used while working on bicycles and for students to clean their work-based experience uniforms on site. This activity will teach students to better manage their belongings and attain independent living skills. The washer and dryer will also be used by other programs within the (redacted) community such as the FFA and the (redacted) County Cooperative life skills program.

Both requests align with the Education Pillar since they target career readiness and support the District's mission statement "to educate students to be lifelong learners who are productive, responsible citizens." In addition, by participating in both activities, students will increase their independence and confidence with adult independent living skills prior to graduating from high school.

Will this project be possible without full funding request? Please explain.

This project requires funds for the appropriate tools for the bike repair shop and for the washer and dryer necessary for teaching students domestic/independent living skills.

Without full funding, aspects of our project will be delayed until we secure additional funding.

Please give a detailed/line item budget of the project.

Washer 650.00*

Dryer 450.00*

Bike Repair Shop: \$869.95 Bike repair tools + Shipping & handling

\$395.95 Bike repair stand + Shipping & handling

Total ~\$2,500

*Average price. Students will assist with the final purchase, by comparing features and prices at local outlets

Please state what you plan to accomplish, what actions you will take, when, and how you will evaluate the outcomes relative to the goals:

The objectives of these projects are two-fold. First, the bike repair shop will provide alternative work experience to students with disabilities to learn the hands-on mechanics of bicycles, broaden thinking, facilitate problem solving, and to empower students to maintain their own machines. Bicycles are a viable transportation option within city limits and several students in the Transition Program will need to access public transportation and/or human-powered transportation to access work and medical services. The bike shop will also aim to collect unwanted bikes, fix them, and return them back to the community in order to promote bicycling and generate income for transition programming. This project will be ongoing and results will be measured by student performance across vocational skills criteria, income-based measurements through bicycle and service sales, and student self-assessments. The washer and dryer will benefit students throughout the school community as students attain independence in domestic living skills across courses and disciplines. Although not aligned to a specific project, students in the Transition Program will be participating in work-based learning internships and job shadowing both on and off campus wearing work uniforms. Assuming responsibility for the laundry produced through work activities, FFA, and independent living skills instruction will provide students the opportunity to attain independence and gain ownership of their belongings.

The start time for this program is slated for the start of the 2021-22 school year.

Application #3

Description and Purpose of Organization:

Our mission is to enhance the lives of at-risk children by providing educational and family stabilization programs and services to the adults in their lives; in order to ensure a safe and nurturing quality of life.

Please give a detailed description of the purpose for requested funds. Explain how your request aligns with the central objective and goals of the Environmental pillar:

We are requesting funds in order to create a Foster Care Resource Center. When a child is placed in care, they very often arrive with only the clothing they are wearing. It is then up to the foster parents to find or buy necessities for the child - clothing, toiletry items, shoes, food, etc. The State of Illinois gives vouchers, but it takes many weeks to receive them and very few stores actually take the vouchers. In addition, many families are thrust unprepared into caring for children from newborn to teenagers. With limited resources and a need to focus on the child rather than look for large items like cribs, changing tables, extra beds, car seats, etc, these caregivers scramble to provide appropriate items. It is also important that we provide items that span multiracial items (ie hair care products for a Caucasian baby are different than those of an African American child)

(redacted) accepts (through donations) clothing, gift cards, baby food, shoes, diapers, beds, bedding and necessities to the newly placed foster children. These items will be available for free to families in need. Working with DCFS and other agencies, (Redacted) will be contacted by a caseworker. We will then put together an order of items based on the children's gender, age and size and either deliver it to the home or be available for pickup within 24 hours. This allows the foster parents or family members to spend more time getting to know the new child(ren) rather than having to go out and search for basic necessities. In addition, we will work directly with those in need without agency intervention.

Foster children have already experienced so much trauma and heartache before arriving at a new foster home. The goal of this project is to provide items that are in perfect or near perfect condition. (Redacted) wants each and every child to feel that they are important, loved and special enough to get something new.

The area to be utilized is a 24x30 space attached to the back of our current building. This project aligns perfectly with the objectives of the Health and Well Being Pillar in all ways. It addresses the unmet needs of children and their new families both physically (providing needs of food and clothing) and mentally wellbeing (loving each one and making them see their importance).

Will this project be possible without full funding request? Please explain.

This is a project that we are committed to on behalf of all at-risk and foster children in our area. The project funding need is greater than the requested amount, any amount will go towards the project and additional funding will be sought elsewhere

Please give a detailed/line item budget of the project.

Room Completion	
(paint, lighting, flooring)	2500
Racking / Shelving for	
Food / Clothes / Diapers /	
Toiletries / car seats /	
Toys / Supplies	3000
Workstations (2) w/ supplies	500
Labeling / Organizing	150
Gift Cards for needed	
products (\$25)	1000
Misc Needed Items for	
initial stock inventory	5000
Total	12150

Please state what you plan to accomplish, what actions you will take, when, and how you will evaluate the outcomes relative to the goals:

We plan to provide quality necessities to families and children in need as they enter care.

1) Our first action is to complete the space for warehousing. While it is a wide open warehouse space requiring no demolition, it will require cleanup, organization and retrofitting of shelving and racking.

Time frame: 1-2 weeks

Evaluation: based on completion

2) Organization of donated and purchased large items. Includes creating, implementing and managing an inventory system

Time frame; Initial 5 days PLUS ongoing

Evaluation: done monthly with inventory process

3) Use of the services and inventory for Foster Children

Time Frame: Ongoing

Evaluations: Quarterly quantitative evaluation (# inquired/served)

4) The true success of this program will be the ongoing use of the Center by new Foster Parents as well as the happiness of the child whose needs are met