

## *Orland Park Community Center*

The Village of Orland Park, Illinois takes pride in its abundance of open space, not only through preservation and restoration sites, but also through larger lot sizes, which create low density and spaciousness in neighborhoods. These considerations are based around the idea of further identifying the community, such deliberations are crucial ingredients to having a 'sense of place' in a community. The Village's unique characteristics derive from its focus on providing "traditional single family suburban housing surrounded by considerable amounts of open space..."<sup>1</sup> However, recognition and sufficient acknowledgement of these spaces can be further executed through community connectivity and education.

The Village has objectives to further implement and inform the public on sustainable management of natural resources. More specifically, Orland Park would like to establish a unified, connected and accessible open space infrastructure that includes a variety of experiences, including passive and active recreational activities at multiple scales.<sup>2</sup> Linking existing open spaces together and involving them with one another enhances a communal distinctiveness of recognizing the importance of unifying the residents and the natural environment. Through education and participation in these preserved spaces, an opportunity emerges to acknowledge our dependence on non-renewable resources and materials like fossil fuels and other chemicals from imported food. Learning involves recognition, which derives from action, and informs subsequent action.<sup>3</sup>

Roughly eight acres of land directly across from the Orland Grasslands (a prairie restoration owned by Cook County Forest Preserve) has the potential to be developed into a community center to further educate the public on the knowledge of local sustainable food sources. This poster will illustrate the significance of connectivity, education, and preservation through activities implemented into the design. The site location itself serves as a passageway between two existing natural areas, further joining the two. Within the space encompasses classes demonstrating sustainable food practices and the participation in communal gardens, which will provide the public with a better appreciation of their natural resources. The involvement of all residents sharing in numerous actions can intuitively drive the notions of conservation of their surroundings in the same direction.

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<sup>1</sup> "Introduction & Vision." *Comprehensive Plan*, pg. 13 & 30. *Village of Orland Park*, 2013. Web. June-July 2016.

<sup>2</sup> "Open Space, Parks & Recreation." *Comprehensive Plan*, pg. 180. *Village of Orland Park*, 2013. Web. June-July 2016.

<sup>3</sup> Stankey, George H., Roger N. Clark, and Bernard T. Bormann. "Adaptive Management of Natural Resources: Theory, Concepts, and Management Institutions." *USDA*. Web. June-July 2016.