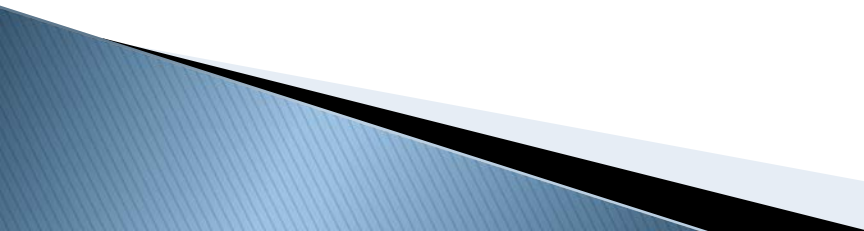


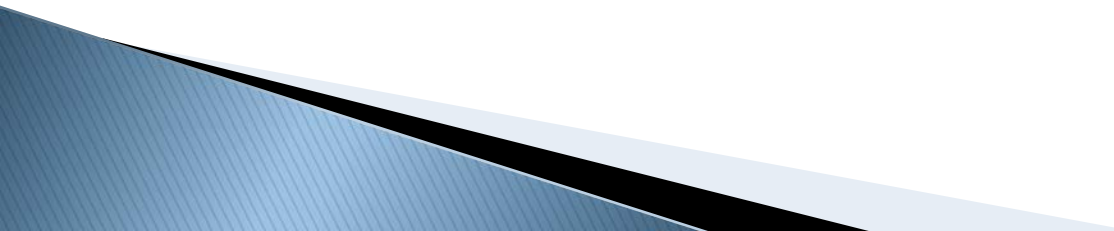
# **Greenway and Pond Prairie Management Program**

Brief history, current practices, what Engineering is proposing going forward & plan of action in 2016

# Brief History of City Greenway and Pond Maintenance

- ▶ In 2000, Engineering assumed responsibility for mowing greenways and ponds two times a year as possible
  - ▶ Greenways and ponds that were newly constructed or reconstructed were planted or restored with prairie seeding, instead of traditional turf
  - ▶ Many of these prairie areas were not managed as prairie and as a result much has been lost
- 

# Current City Greenway and Pond Maintenance

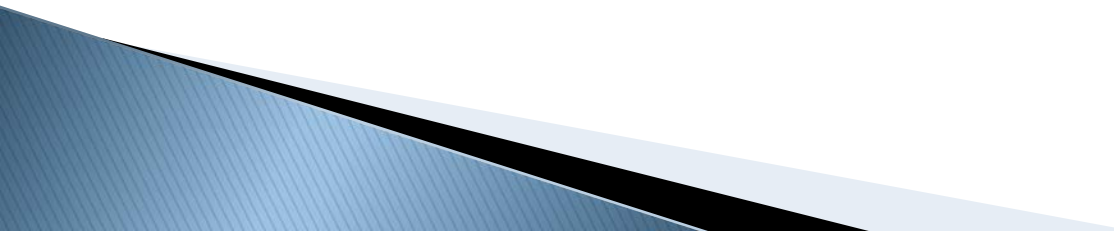
- ▶ Engineering Department maintains approximately 1,100 acres of greenways and ponds
  - ▶ Approximately 10% of these 1,100 acres are currently managed in the Selective Prairie Management program
  - ▶ Our goal is to increase acres managed by 30% in the next 5 years
- 

# Plan of Action in 2016


Engineering will create a greenway and pond prairie management policy to identify the importance of what we are doing and why

This policy will be taken to the Common Council, Bee Pollinator Task Force, Committee on the Environment, and back to Common Council for approval

# Purpose of Prairie Management Program:

- ▶ Provide wildlife habitat in an urban environment
  - ▶ Provide Pollinator habitat in accord with the Pollinator Protection Task Force Report
  - ▶ Save money by reduced mowing
  - ▶ Create a distinctive sense of place
  - ▶ Improve soil and water quality
  - ▶ Prevent invasive plants from spreading
- 

# What does “managed” mean?

- ▶ To maintain a healthy prairie, invasive weeds need to be kept in check, otherwise they will dominate the desirable native plant species.
  - ▶ In order to keep invasives in check, these areas need to be monitored and have appropriate maintenance scheduled.
  - ▶ Engineering staff will locate and map invasive weed patches, determine best time to mow so as not to spread invasive seeds around, and coordinate mowing with operations staff.
- 

# ... further management options

- ▶ Engineering will likely be partnering with an Operation Fresh Start conservation group to do invasive and brush removal work in suitable green-ways and ponds. This will provide local youth a supervised opportunity for job training and education.
- ▶ In some cases, herbicide will be needed to eradicate especially noxious weeds that can cause damage if left untreated.
- ▶ Lastly, some greenway and pond prairies will benefit from prescribed burning, which encourages native plants to grow again.

# The “biggest” reason of all...





# PRAIRIE MANAGEMENT IMPROVES THE POLLINATOR TASK FORCE GOALS:

- ▶ Prairie greenway and pond management promotes bee habitat and health by providing a food source
  - ▶ Well managed prairie increases bee habitat, in turn sustains local and global food systems
  - ▶ Increasingly rare pollinators such as birds, butterflies, and insects benefit from managed public land
- 