



# The Lakeshore Nature Preserve

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## **Lakeshore Nature Preserve Governance Committee - Comments on Master Plan**

Acted upon at the May 12, 2016 Governance Committee of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve.

The Lakeshore Nature Preserve Committee has been kept up to date on the 2015 UW-Madison Campus Master Plan as it has been updated. We provide the following the comments as a group to address Campus Planning activities that may affect the Lakeshore Nature Preserve.

We are especially supportive of:

- A landscape perspective that emphasizes linkage and connectivity of green/open spaces to natural areas such as the Lakeshore Nature Preserve (e.g., woodland walk from Charter St. to Lake Mendota).
- Emphasis on natural rather than manipulated ecosystems to the extent possible.
- Landscape planning and design that enhances wildlife habitat but also controls wildlife-human interactions to maximize benefits to vegetation, wildlife and people.
- Increased green space and the development and use of green infrastructure systems to mitigate environmental issues including stormwater/runoff.
- Willow Creek reconstruction to make it a more natural functioning waterway (e.g. with meanders/floodplain) providing ecosystem services. Include pedestrian access.
- Multiple plans for Lot 34/Observatory Hill, especially to those that restore mixed-oak savanna and prairie vegetation to the hill (and close to vehicle traffic).
- Re-routing of University Bay Drive at Picnic Point, with a new visitor's center and lakefront gathering area.
- Improved interpretive signage so community understands significance of natural areas on campus. This will provide opportunities for informal education (e.g. self-guided tours).
- As a teaching landscape, maximize opportunities for student involvement and use.
- Continued involvement of Lakeshore Nature Preserve and larger community in decision-making process.

We wish to acknowledge challenges that may arise:

- Ambitious plans for Lot 34/Observatory Hill will require careful planning with Preserve staff and Committee, to mitigate impacts on Muir Woods.
- Depending on the plan chosen for Observatory Hill, limit human disturbance in natural areas and ensure options for pedestrian and bicycle traffic where needed.
- Some land areas may be transferred to the Preserve for management, and this will entail additional responsibilities for which new resources will be required. Efforts currently maintained using Gift funds likely will not be sustainable in new areas.
- New green spaces may require a range of management activities by skilled staff, including invasive species monitoring/monitoring/removal, herbicide application, hazard tree removal, prescribed fires, etc.