3. Continue to strengthen intergovernmental cooperation between the county, municipalities, and other units of local government.
4. Protect and restore natural resources in the Kishwaukee River Corridor.
5. Recognize the link between economic growth and an adequate quantity of clean water, a pleasing natural environment, and ample recreational opportunities in local development plans.

Conclusion

Local businesses and industry as well as local residents have become increasingly aware of the need to develop with a long-term sustainability attitude. This plan provides the foundation for community leaders, developers and natural resource groups to create a vibrant region that attracts responsible economic growth while protecting our water and the public investments that have already been made along the river. We look forward to working together.

Selected References

To see full recommendations and information download Kishwaukee River Corridor Green Infrastructure Plan at: see appendix for checklist of “watershed friendly” ordinance revisions.

Kishwaukee River Corridor Green Infrastructure Plan

The Kishwaukee River Ecosystem Partnership (KREP) has worked for many years to guide preservation and restoration efforts in the watershed, offering advice on strategies and initiatives that help preserve and sustain the river for our future generations. KREP continues to work with Kishwaukee River, New Milford, Rockford, Belvidere and Cherry Valley, and other communities throughout the area.

What is “Green Infrastructure?”

The term “green infrastructure” is attributed to a 1994 report to the Governor of Florida. It was intended to reflect the notion that natural systems are important components of our infrastructure, as much as “grey infrastructure” is in developed areas.

The Kishwaukee River Corridor

The corridor of land south of the Kishwaukee River between Chicago-Rockford International Airport and Cherry Valley has been identified in local economic development plans for new industrial development, taking advantage of the airport’s location near major transportation systems and the I-39/Baxter Road Intersection.

The Kishwaukee River is recognized statewide for its diversity of fish and mussels, migratory bird habitats, bald eagles, ospreys, river otters, and high quality natural woodlands and wetlands. It is one of the highest quality river systems in Illinois. The Kishwaukee River is an important destination for recreational activities, providing quality fishing, hiking, canoeing, tubing, camping, picnicking, bird watching and other healthy outdoor activities.

The Kishwaukee River Corridor Green Infrastructure Plan

The Plan recommends the adoption of green infrastructure as a planning strategy to enhance the continued protection of valuable natural ecosystems and land and water resources of the Kishwaukee River and Kilbuck Creek.

Kishwaukee River Corridor Green Infrastructure Plan

The Plan was funded in part by a Boeing grant to the Chicago Wilderness Sustainability/Watershed Action Team. The plan is a result of engaging the local community in a planning effort focused on incorporating green infrastructure into industrial development.

Kishwaukee River Corridor Green Infrastructure Plan

The Kishwaukee River is an important destination for fisheries, riparian and wetland ecosystems, and for birdwatching and other outdoor activities. The Kishwaukee River Gorge scenic area is also an important destination for fishing, canoeing, tubing, camping, picnicking, bird watching and other healthy outdoor activities. The Winnebago County Forest Preserve District has made a major public investment protecting open space along the Kishwaukee River and Kilbuck Creek. The Rockford Park District also owns Atwood Park, a multi-purpose regional park that straddles the Kishwaukee River east of New Milford.