

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Facilities & Services

Physical Plant Service Building
1501 South Oak Street
Champaign, IL 61820



To: Student Sustainability Committee
Date: September 19, 2017
RE: Red Oak Rain Garden – F&S Letter of Support

Hello,

Facilities & Services supports this application for the Red Oak Rain Garden improvements. We appreciate the clear and comprehensive communication provided by Cameron Letterly and Eliana Brown, as the idea was developed through the summer.

Through a series of summer meetings at F&S, Cameron shared the idea concepts, listened carefully to the F&S concerns, and incorporated important feedback from the Superintendent of Grounds, Ryan Welch, and the Campus Landscape Architect, Brent Lewis. We are confident that the redesign will meet campus operational requirements--such as non-invasive species and safety design features--and aesthetic expectations--which still requires final approval from the Architecture Review Committee.

The Red Oak Rain Garden is also an important component of the transition to more sustainable landscapes for campus. In addition to providing pollinator support with the native plants in the design, the rain garden is one of our best examples of green infrastructure for managing stormwater on campus. A major hurdle to expanding pollinator pockets and rain gardens around campus is the increased maintenance requirements and associated costs for managing the grounds. This innovative solution was proposed by UIUC retiree and Master Naturalist Karen Folk and II Water Resources Center Outreach Specialist and Master Gardener Eliana Brown. They coordinated an agreement with F&S Grounds and UI Extension to include the Red Oak Rain Garden as a valid volunteer site for the masters' programs annual requirements. This resolves the maintenance concerns at Red Oak, and it is an excellent concept to help connect campus and the local community for sustainability efforts.

From the beginning of the Red Oak Rain Garden, F&S has been a strong supporter, and we will continue that support. In addition to the agreed upon support per the MOU with Extension, F&S will provide communication support. We have already included an article about the Red Oak Rain Garden in the first issue of the [F&S Insider](#), and we would like to be able to include the SSC as a funding supporter in future messaging.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Thank you,

Morgan White

Morgan White
Associate Director for Sustainability