

**104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY****State of Illinois****2025 and 2026****HB1367**

Introduced 1/28/2025, by Rep. Laura Faver Dias

**SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:**

60 ILCS 1/115-5  
60 ILCS 1/115-55  
60 ILCS 1/115-90  
60 ILCS 1/115-95  
60 ILCS 1/115-97 new

Amends the Township Open Space Article of the Township Code. Reduces the acreage that constitutes open land or open space under the Article to 25 acres (currently, 50 acres). Provides, in the definition of "open space purposes", that development includes development for agricultural purposes. Provides that, after the effective date of the amendatory Act, a township board may lease open space that is a part of the township's open space program for a period not longer than 25 years from the date of the lease to an individual, a nonprofit organization, the federal government, a state government, or a local government for specified purposes consistent with open space purposes. Provides that, upon expiration of a lease of land that was leased after the effective date of the amendatory Act, title to all structures on the leased land shall be vested in the township. Provides that leased open space may be used for agricultural purposes. Provides that a township board may lease open space for open space purposes and buildings and facilities on the open space to an individual, a nonprofit organization, the federal government, a state government, or a local government. Provides that the township board may not sell, convey, donate, or otherwise dispose of open space without referendum approval by the majority of the voters of the township at a regular election, and provides that the board may certify the question of disposition of property to the appropriate election authority only if the board approves the question by at least a two-thirds majority of the board members. Provides that, if a township dissolves or is consolidated or merged or the boundaries of the township are altered, any affected open space shall continue to be used for open space purposes unless the open space is disposed of is approved by a two-thirds vote of the board of the unit of local government in control of that open space and after referendum of the voters of the unit of local government.

LRB104 06216 RTM 16251 b

1                   AN ACT concerning local government.

2                   **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**  
3                   **represented in the General Assembly:**

4                   Section 5. The Township Code is amended by changing  
5                   Sections 115-5, 115-55, 115-90, and 115-95 and by adding  
6                   Section 115-97 as follows:

7                   (60 ILCS 1/115-5)

8                   Sec. 115-5. Definitions. As used in this Article, unless  
9                   the context otherwise requires:

10                  "Board" means the township board in counties having a  
11                  population of more than 150,000.

12                  "Development of real property" means the constructing,  
13                  installing, planting or creating of any permanent or temporary  
14                  improvement of real property that has been acquired for open  
15                  space purposes.

16                  "Open land" or "open space" means any space or area of land  
17                  or water of an area of 25 ~~50~~ acres or more, the preservation or  
18                  the restriction of development or use of which would (i)  
19                  maintain or enhance the conservation of natural or scenic  
20                  resources; (ii) protect natural streams or water supply; (iii)  
21                  promote conservation of soils, wet lands, or shores; (iv)  
22                  afford or enhance public outdoor recreation opportunities; (v)  
23                  preserve flora and fauna, geological features, historic sites,

1 or other areas of educational or scientific interest; (vi)  
2 enhance the value to the public of abutting or neighboring  
3 highways, parks, or other public lands; (vii) implement the  
4 plan of development adopted by the planning commission of any  
5 municipality or county; or (viii) promote orderly urban or  
6 suburban development. A township at any time may release a  
7 specified parcel of land from an open space plan and allow the  
8 development of the parcel to occur. Once development (as  
9 defined in Section 115-55) has commenced, the land shall no  
10 longer be eligible for acquisition as open space or open land.

11 "Open space plan" means the written plan adopted by the  
12 board to implement an open space program and includes properly  
13 adopted amendments or additions to the plan.

14 "Open space program" means the acquisition of the fee or  
15 of a lesser right or interest in tracts of open land in the  
16 township for open space purposes.

17 "Open space purposes" includes (i) the preservation and  
18 maintenance of open land, scenic roadways, and pathways; (ii)  
19 the holding of real property described in clause (i), with or  
20 without public access, for the education, pleasure, and  
21 recreation of the public or for other open space values; (iii)  
22 the preservation of portions of that property in their natural  
23 condition and the development of other portions of that  
24 property, including development for agricultural purposes;  
25 (iv) the management and use of that property in a manner and  
26 with restrictions that will leave it unimpaired for the

1 benefit of future generations; and (v) otherwise promoting the  
2 conservation of the nature, flora and fauna, natural  
3 environment, and natural resources of the township.

4 (Source: P.A. 91-641, eff. 8-20-99.)

5 (60 ILCS 1/115-55)

6 Sec. 115-55. Acquisition of open land.

7 (a) The board may acquire by gift, legacy, purchase,  
8 condemnation in the manner provided for the exercise of the  
9 right of eminent domain under the Eminent Domain Act and  
10 except as otherwise provided in this subsection, lease,  
11 agreement, or otherwise the fee or any lesser right or  
12 interest in real property that is open land and may hold that  
13 property with or without public access for open space, scenic  
14 roadway, pathway, outdoor recreation, or other conservation  
15 benefits. No township in a county having a population of more  
16 than 150,000 but not more than 250,000 has authority under  
17 this Article to acquire property by condemnation, and no other  
18 township has authority under this Article to acquire by  
19 condemnation (i) property that is used for farming or  
20 agricultural purposes; (ii) property that is situated within  
21 the corporate limits of a municipality or contiguous to one or  
22 more municipalities unless approval to acquire the property by  
23 condemnation is obtained under Section 115-30 or 115-35; (iii)  
24 property upon which development has commenced; or (iv)  
25 property owned by a religious organization, church, school, or

1 charitable organization exempt from federal taxation under  
2 Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or  
3 similar provisions of any successor law, or any other  
4 organization controlled by or affiliated with such a religious  
5 organization, church, school, or charitable organization.

6 (a-5) Open land acquired in fee for an open space plan by a  
7 township must be held by the township, unless leased or  
8 disposed of as provided in Sections 115-90, 115-95, and  
9 115-97, and used by the township or lessee for open space  
10 purposes.

11 (b) For purposes of this Section:

12 (1) "Development" of property is deemed to have  
13 commenced if (i) at least 30 days before the filing of a  
14 petition under Section 115-10, an application for a  
15 preliminary plan or preliminary planned unit development  
16 has been filed with the applicable governmental entity or,  
17 if neither is required, a building permit has been  
18 obtained at least 30 days before the filing of a petition  
19 under Section 115-10; (ii) mass grading of the property  
20 has commenced; and (iii) within 180 days of the date the  
21 open space plan is recommended for approval by the board  
22 under Section 115-5 or by petition of the voters under  
23 Section 115-20, 115-30, or 115-35, the installation of  
24 public improvements has commenced.

25 (2) "Contiguous" means contiguous for purposes of  
26 annexation under Article 7 of the Illinois Municipal Code.

(3) Real property is deemed used for farming or agricultural purposes if it is more than 10 acres in area and devoted primarily to (i) the raising and harvesting of crops, (ii) the feeding, breeding, and management of livestock, (iii) dairying, or (iv) any other agricultural or horticultural use or combination of those uses, with the intention of securing substantial income from those activities, and has been so used for the 3 years immediately preceding the filing of a condemnation action. Real property used for farming or agricultural purposes includes land devoted to and qualifying for payments or other compensation under a soil conservation program under an agreement with an agency of the federal government and also includes the construction and use of dwellings and other buildings customarily associated with farming and agricultural uses when associated with those uses.

(c) If a township's acquisitions of open land, or interests in open land when combined with other lands in the township held for open space purposes by other governmental entities, equals 30% of the total acreage of the township, then the township may not acquire additional open land by condemnation.

(d) Any parcel of land that is included in an open space plan adopted by a township that has not been acquired by the township under this Section within 3 years, or within 2 years with respect to existing open space programs, after the later

1 of (i) July 29, 1988, or (ii) the date of the passage of the  
2 referendum may not thereafter be acquired by condemnation by  
3 the township under this Section, except that if an action in  
4 condemnation to acquire the parcel is filed under this Section  
5 within that 3 year or 2 year period, as applicable, the parcel  
6 may be acquired by condemnation by the township  
7 notwithstanding the fact that the condemnation action may not  
8 be concluded within the 3 year or 2 year period, as applicable.  
9 Notwithstanding the foregoing, if a parcel of land cannot be  
10 acquired by condemnation under subsection (a) because of its  
11 use for farming or agricultural purposes, the 3 year or 2 year  
12 period, as applicable, shall be tolled until the date the  
13 parcel ceases to be used for farming or agricultural purposes.  
14 Notwithstanding the foregoing, the fee or any lesser right or  
15 interest in real property that is open land may be acquired  
16 after the 3 year or 2 year period, as applicable, by any means  
17 authorized under subsection (a) other than condemnation.

18 (Source: P.A. 94-1055, eff. 1-1-07.)

19 (60 ILCS 1/115-90)

20 Sec. 115-90. Lease of lands.

21 (a) Before the effective date of this amendatory Act of  
22 the 104th General Assembly, the ~~The~~ board may lease land for a  
23 period not longer than 50 years from the date of the lease to a  
24 responsible person, firm, or corporation for construction,  
25 reconstruction, alteration, renewal, equipment, furnishing,

1 extension, development, operation and maintenance of lodges,  
2 housekeeping and sleeping cabins, swimming pools, golf  
3 courses, campgrounds, sand beaches, marinas, convention and  
4 entertainment centers, roads and parking areas, and other  
5 related buildings and facilities. In any lease of land leased  
6 under this subsection Section, upon expiration of the lease  
7 title to all structures on the leased land shall be vested in  
8 the township.

9 (b) On and after the effective date of this amendatory Act  
10 of the 104th General Assembly, the board may lease open space  
11 that is a part of the township's open space program for a  
12 period not longer than 25 years from the date of the lease to  
13 an individual, a nonprofit organization, the federal  
14 government, a state government, or a local government for  
15 construction, reconstruction, alteration, renewal, equipment,  
16 furnishing, extension, development, operation, housekeeping,  
17 and maintenance of lodges, sleeping cabins, swimming pools,  
18 golf courses, campgrounds, sand beaches, marinas, agricultural  
19 properties, roads and parking areas, and other related  
20 buildings and facilities consistent with open space purposes.  
21 Upon expiration of a lease of land under this subsection,  
22 title to all structures on the leased land shall be vested in  
23 the township. Nothing in this subsection prohibits open space  
24 that is a part of the township's open space program from being  
25 used in accordance with this Article for agricultural  
26 purposes. The changes made to this Section by this amendatory

1       Act of the 104th General Assembly do not affect any lease  
2       entered into on or before the effective date of this  
3       amendatory Act of the 104th General Assembly.

4       (Source: P.A. 88-670, eff. 12-2-94.)

5       (60 ILCS 1/115-95)

6       Sec. 115-95. Lease of buildings or facilities. The board  
7       may lease to an individual, a nonprofit organization, the  
8       federal government, a state government, or a local government  
9       any building or facility constructed, reconstructed, altered,  
10      renewed, equipped, furnished, extended, developed, and  
11      maintained by the township on open space that is a part of the  
12      township's open space program to a responsible person, firm,  
13      or corporation for operation or development, or both, and  
14      maintenance for a period not longer than 20 years from the date  
15      of the lease. Nothing in this Section prohibits open space  
16      that is a part of the township's open space program from being  
17      used in accordance with this Article for agricultural  
18      purposes. The changes made to this Section by this amendatory  
19      Act of the 104th General Assembly do not affect any lease  
20      entered into on or before the effective date of this  
21      amendatory Act of the 104th General Assembly.

22       (Source: P.A. 88-670, eff. 12-2-94.)

23       (60 ILCS 1/115-97 new)

24       Sec. 115-97. Disposition of open space.

1                   (a) A township board may not sell, convey, donate, or  
2 otherwise dispose of any part of open space without referendum  
3 approval by the majority of the voters of the township voting  
4 on the question at a regular election. The board may certify  
5 the question of disposition of property to the appropriate  
6 election authority only if the board approves the question by  
7 at least a two-thirds majority of the board members. The  
8 referendum shall be conducted consistent with the referendum  
9 procedures under Section 115-20.

10                   (b) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, if a  
11 township dissolves or is consolidated or merged or the  
12 boundaries of the township are altered, any open space  
13 affected by that action shall continue to be used for open  
14 space purposes unless the open space is disposed of using the  
15 same procedures required under subsection (a) by the board of  
16 the unit of local government in control of that open space.