

**EFFICIENCY REPORT FOR THE
CAROL STREAM PARK DISTRICT**

**APPROVED BY THE PARK DISTRICT'S
COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY
ON OCTOBER 15, 2024**



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I. Purpose

The Carol Stream Park District (“Park District”) formed its Committee on Local Government Efficiency on September 25, 2023, to study efficiencies and report recommendations regarding those efficiencies and increased accountability pursuant to 50 ILCS 70/1, *et seq.* (the “Committee”).

II. Committee Membership

The Committee consisted of the following individuals:

Jacqueline Jeffery, Board President

Brenda Gramann, Board Vice President

Brian Sokolowski, Commissioner

Tim Powers, Commissioner

Dan Bird, Commissioner

Sara Witteck, Commissioner

Adam Parisi, Commissioner

Mike Ashby, Resident Member

Dana Hybl, Resident Member

Frank Parisi, Resident Member

Todd Powell, Resident

Sue Rini, Executive Director/Committee Chairperson

Renee Bachewicz, Director of Recreation

Shane Hamilton, Director of Parks & Facilities

Christine Quinn, Director of Human Resources & Administrative Services

Lisa Scumaci, Director of Finance & Information Technology

III. Committee Meetings

The Committee met as follows:

Meeting Date	Meeting Time and Place
<u>September 25, 2023</u>	<u>910 N. Gary Avenue, 5:30 pm</u>
<u>September 23, 2024</u>	<u>910 N. Gary Avenue, 5:30 pm</u>
<u>October 15, 2024</u>	<u>910 N. Gary Avenue, 5:30 pm</u>
<u>November 12, 2024</u>	<u>910 N. Gary Avenue, 5:30 pm</u>

Minutes of these meetings are available on the Park District's website or upon request at the Park District's administrative office.

IV. General Overview of Governing Statutes, Ordinances, Rules, Procedures, Powers, Jurisdiction

The Park District was established by a referendum initiated and approved by the voters of the Park District in May 25, 1964. All Illinois park districts, including the Park District, are governed by the Park District Code, 70 ILCS 1205/1 *et seq.*

Having a separate and distinct taxing body for parks, recreation, and conservation within the local community, which operates apart from general purpose governments, is extremely beneficial to the community for many reasons, as detailed further in this report.

1. Elected, non-partisan, non-compensated board.

The Park District is governed by a board of seven (7) commissioners. Commissioners must reside within the boundaries of the park district and are elected at the Consolidated Election in odd-numbered years. Pursuant to state law, commissioners are non-partisan and serve without compensation.

2. Accessible and focused representation.

Having a dedicated board to oversee these essential facilities, programs, and services provides the community with increased access to their elected representatives and allows those elected representatives to remain focused solely on those facilities, programs, and services. This is contrasted with general purpose governments where elected representatives are responsible for broad oversight on a wide range of issues.

This special purpose benefit is particularly advantageous when it comes to budget and finance oversight.

3. Increased transparency.

Having a dedicated unit of local government to provide park and recreation services also improves the relationship between the park district and its residents because of the transparency and openness related to the board and park district operations. Having detailed agenda and action items allows taxpayers to be better informed about the inner workings of their local government. When individual units of government are responsible for providing specified services like park districts, transparency is increased because action items and budget procedures are more detailed. Additionally, these items and budgetary decisions are subject to more scrutiny by locally elected officials than is the case with larger, multi-purpose governments with a multitude of departments.

4. Protection of revenues.

Because the Park District is a separate unit of local government, the revenues it generates can only be used for park district purposes. This assurance is contrasted with general purpose governments like cities, villages, and counties that provide a multitude of services such as fire, police, public works, economic development, etc., where revenues that are generated specifically for parks and recreation can be expended on these other services with limited, if any, input from voters.

5. Protection of assets.

Public parks and other real property owned by the park district is held in trust for the residents of the park district, and, subject to very limited exceptions, can only be sold or transferred if residents approve of the sale or transfer by a referendum. This is contrasted with general purpose units of government, which have authority to sell or dispose of property by a vote of the governing board.

6. Providing the Community More with Less.

The Park District does more with much fewer funding options. Unlike other units of local government that receive direct state funding, and income, sales, use, hotel/motel, motor fuel and other numerous taxes, the Park District's only tax revenues come from a modest portion of a resident's overall property tax bill. In fact, despite its limited funding options, the Park District share is only 7% of the local tax bill.

7. Ordinances, Rules, Policies, and Procedures

As part of good governance and implementing best practices in the management of day-to-day operations, the Park District has also adopted the following ordinances, rules, policies, and procedures:

- a. General Use Regulations; Ordinance No. 411 Park Rules & Regulations
- b. Administrative Operations Policy Manual
- c. Board of Commissioners Policy Manual
- d. Personnel Policy Manual
- e. Safety Manual
- f. Crisis Management Plan
- g. Cyber Liability Plan
- h. Emergency Operations Plan
- i. Strategic Plan 2018-2022 (extended to 2023)
- j. Master Plan 2018-2027

V. List of Shared Services and Partnerships

The Park District works diligently to provide the best possible programs, services, and facilities to our community at the least possible cost. One of the many ways the Park District achieves this goal is by partnering with neighboring park districts, school districts, other units of local government within or near the community, the State, non-profit organizations, and for-profit corporations. Below is a comprehensive list of the current partnerships, agreements, and other relationships that assist the Park District's mission of delivering the best possible services at the least possible cost to our community.

1. Membership in SRA

The Park District is part of the Western DuPage Special Recreation Association ("SRA"). Special recreation associations are a form of intergovernmental cooperation among units of local government that are authorized under the Illinois Constitution, the Intergovernmental Cooperation Act, the Park District Code, and the Municipal Code. Their formation is rooted in a fundamental belief and recognition that "Recreation is for Everyone." They are shining examples of local government efficiency.

By partnering together, local communities are able to effectively and efficiently deliver more successful program opportunities to community members who have special needs. Furthermore, by participating in the SRA, the Park District networks with nine other local governments to provide many more program opportunities for our community members who have special needs and offers a choice between participating in the SRA's programs or in programs that are provided by the Park District.

The Park District and the SRA also achieve efficiency by utilizing existing facilities that are owned and operated by the SRA's members, including the Park District. Utilizing these existing facilities allows the SRA to deliver services to its member communities at a lower cost. Currently the Park District provides the SRA access to the following facilities for their program offerings:

- Fountain View Recreation Center
- Simkus Recreation Center
- Coral Cove Water Park
- Coyote Crossing Mini Golf
- Post Office Ball Field

The SRA also provides the support needed for participants with special needs who choose to register for the Park District programs or inclusive programming. The SRA collects information on the registered participant and determines what supports are needed for that participant to be successful in this inclusive setting or the Park District program. This could include additional training of the supervisory staff, additional support staff, the use of adaptive equipment, behavior management, and/or other measures that will assist in the successful participation of this individual in the Park District program. Although success may not look the same for everyone, the SRA works with the Park District's staff to ensure the best possible results for all the participants in the program. The Park District's cost of providing these services would be much greater without its participation and partnership in the SRA.

In 2023, the SRA successfully served 503 residents in 226 programs. The SRA also supported 192 participants in inclusive programs that were provided by the Park District.

The Park District is very proud of the ongoing collaboration with the SRA. By working cooperatively with other local governments, not only are we better able to collectively serve all citizens within our communities, including persons with disabilities, but we are able to do so in the most efficient and effective manner possible.

2. Other intergovernmental agreements with other park districts, forest preserve districts, conservation districts, or municipal recreation agencies

- a. Intergovernmental Agreement between Forest Preserve of DuPage County and Carol Stream Park District for Red Hawk Park

- b. Intergovernmental Agreement between the Village of Glendale Heights and Carol Stream Park District providing resident rates for the use of the Glendale Lakes Golf Club and Carol Stream Park District Fountain View Recreation Center indoor pool.
- c. Intergovernmental Agreement between Winfield Park District and Carol Stream Park District providing resident rates for the use of Coral Cove Water Park, and Fountain View Recreation Center indoor pool.
- d. Intergovernmental Agreement between Winfield Park District and Carol Stream Park District providing resident rates for the use of the Bark Park.

3. Intergovernmental agreements with other units of local government

- a. Intergovernmental Agreement between DuPage County, Carol Stream Park District, and the Village of Carol Stream for the Klein Creek Watershed Flood Control Project at Armstrong Park.
- b. Intergovernmental Agreement between the Village of Carol Stream and Carol Stream Park District for parking at Town Center.
- c. Intergovernmental Agreement between the Village of Carol Stream and Carol Stream Park District for Veterans Memorial Plaza.
- d. Intergovernmental Agreement between the Village of Carol Stream and Carol Stream Park District for Charger Court Park.
- e. Intergovernmental Agreement between the Village of Carol Stream and Carol Stream Park District for Papoose Park.
- f. Intergovernmental Agreement between the Village of Carol Stream and Carol Stream Park District for Law Enforcement Services.
- g. Intergovernmental Agreement between the Village of Carol Stream and Carol Stream Park District for Klein Creek Streambank Stabilization at Armstrong Park.
- h. Intergovernmental Agreement between the Village of Carol Stream and Carol Stream Park District for Klein Creek Streambank Stabilization at Memorial Park.
- i. Intergovernmental Agreement between the Village of Carol Stream and Carol Stream Park District for Community Park Stormwater Management.
- j. Intergovernmental Agreement between Glenbard North High School for use of the Carol Stream Park District Fountain View Recreation Center indoor pool.
- k. Intergovernmental Agreement between Glenbard North High School for the use of the Weber Stadium Turf Fields.

- l. Intergovernmental Agreement between Glenbard North High School and Carol Stream Park District for Youth Athletic Camps.
- m. Intergovernmental Agreement between Glenbard North High School for general usage of park district property by the high school and park district using high school property.
- n. Intergovernmental Agreement between Community Consolidated School District 93 and Carol Stream Park District for Before and After School Care at each D93 elementary school.
- o. Intergovernmental Agreement between Benjamin School District 25 and Carol Stream Park District for the use of Evergreen School Gymnasium.
- p. Intergovernmental Agreement between Community Unit School District 200 and Carol Stream Park District for the use of Pleasant Hill Park.
- q. Intergovernmental Agreement between School District U-46 and Carol Stream Park District for the use of Spring Trail School Gymnasium.
- r. Intergovernmental Agreement between Carol Stream Library and Carol Stream Park District for lease of Horizon Park.
- s. Intergovernmental Agreement between the US Postal Service, the Village of Carol Stream and the Carol Stream Park District for the Baseball Field.
- t. Intergovernmental Agreement between DuPage County, Milton Township and Carol Stream Park District for Weeks Park.
- u. Intergovernmental Agreement between Wayne Township and Carol Stream Park District for use of parking lot adjacent to Red Hawk Park.

4. Intergovernmental agreements with the State of Illinois

- a. Intergovernmental Agreement the Illinois Department of Transportation and Carol Stream Park District for pedestrian underpass trail from Red Hawk Park to Bark Park and Volunteer Park.

5. Partnerships or agreements with athletic or similar affiliate organizations that operate sports or other leagues

- a. Carol Stream Panthers Soccer Club
- b. Carol Stream Travel Softball/Baseball Association
- c. Carol Stream Youth Football Association

- d. Carol Stream Youth Travel Basketball Association

6. Partnerships or other interrelationships with non-profits

- a. Intergovernmental Agreement between the Western DuPage Special Recreation Association and Carol Stream Park District for use of personnel and equipment.
- b. Agreement with Wheaton Bible Church and Carol Stream Park District for mutual use of parking and entrance and exits to neighboring facilities.

7. Informal cooperation with other units of local government which save taxpayer dollars by eliminating redundancy

- a. Agreement with Village of Carol Stream Public Works and Carol Stream Park District for use of tools and equipment.

8. Grants received

- a. \$400,000 IDNR OSLAD Grant for Walter Park Renovation
- b. \$37,637.32 State of Illinois DCEO Grant for McCaslin Turf Replacement
- c. \$22,000 Mainstreet Realtors Association Grant for Armstrong Park Playground
- d. \$2,500 Mainstreet Realtors Association Grant for Coral Cove Water Park Entrance
- e. \$1,000 IAPD Power Play Grant for Outdoor Adventure Camp
- f. \$50,000 DCEO Grant for Pickleball Courts at Armstrong Park
- g. \$1,000,000 CDBG Grant for renovation of Community Park

VI. Other Examples of Efficient Operations

1. Use of volunteers.

One way in which the Park District reduces the burden on taxpayers is through the use of volunteers. Last year, 348 individuals volunteered 14,070 hours of service to the Park District.

2. Youth employment.

The Park District is a major employer of youth in the community. Last year, the Park District employed 89 youth. Not only is this an efficient way to deliver services, but youth employment serves as a valuable training tool for the future workforce.

3. Joint purchasing.

The Park District participates in joint purchasing cooperatives pursuant to the Governmental Joint Purchasing Act (30 ILCS 525/0.01 *et seq.*) thereby saving taxpayer dollars through economies of scale. These include:

- a. Office Supplies
- b. McCaslin Turf Field Replacement
- c. John Deere Tractor
- d. John Deere (2) Gators
- e. Ford F-550 Dump Truck
- f. Ford F-150 Pick-up Truck
- g. Walter Park Playground
- h. Armstrong Park Playground

4. Carol Stream Parks Foundation.

Last year, the Foundation raised \$29,235 in private donations, which help alleviate the burden on taxpayers. The Foundation also supported the Park District by:

- a. The Foundation made a donation to the Scholarship fund of \$3,000 in 2023.
- b. Veterans Memorial Plaza received a Park sign, commutative brick installation, and lighting.
- c. Bike Fix-it Stations have been installed at Simkus Recreation Center and Volunteer Park.
- d. Community Park bench.

5. Collaboration with other park districts on best practices.

Because park districts are not in competition with one another, they are more willing than the private sector to share best practices. These best practices help to avoid unnecessary costs and deliver services more effectively and efficiently.

6. Reliance on Non-Tax Revenue.

Unlike most local governments that rely on a wide range of sales, use, and income taxes, the Park District is not permitted to assess these types of taxes. Additionally, although the Park District is an economic engine for the community and generates much revenue for the state and our community in the form of hotel/motel, sales, and motor fuel taxes, our Park District does not receive any of these revenues. Also, unlike Illinois cities,

villages, counties, and school districts that received billions of dollars in direct financial assistance from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), our Park District did not receive any such direct federal aid. Our Park District also does not receive state funding under the Local Government Distributive Fund (LGDF) or General State Aid (GSA) that these same cities, villages, counties, and school districts receive through the State budget.

Instead, the Park District provides all of the programs, facilities, and services to the community with a very modest amount of property taxes and from **non-tax sources** such as memberships, program registrations, and other user fees as well as private donations and grants.

VII. Transparency to the Community

The following information about the Park District may be obtained by citizens in the location listed.

1. Document

Location

(website, administrative offices, county clerk, state website, etc.)

a. Annual tax levy	<u>Website, Administrative Office</u>
b. Annual budget and appropriation ordinance	<u>Website, Administrative Office</u>
c. Agenda and minutes	<u>Website, Administrative Office</u>
d. Comptroller's annual finance report (AFR)	<u>Administrative Office</u>
e. Annual audit	<u>Website, Administrative Office</u>
f. Statement of Receipts and Disbursements	<u>Website, Administrative Office</u>
g. Code of Conduct	<u>Website, Administrative Office</u>
h. Master plans	<u>Website, Administrative Office</u>
i. Strategic plans	<u>Website, Administrative Office</u>
j. Capital improvement plan	<u>Website, Administrative Office</u>
k. ADA transition plan	<u>Website, Administrative Office</u>
l. Compensation Disclosure	<u>Website, Administrative Office</u>

The Park District offers residents many opportunities to provide feedback. These include:

- The board of commissioners meets twice a month. Residents may provide public comment at every meeting.

- The Park District's annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance is available in tentative form at least 30 days prior to its adoption at an open meeting of the Park District board. Additionally, at least one public hearing is held prior to final action, and notice of the hearing is published in the newspaper at least one week prior to the hearing.
- The Park District's annual property tax levy is approved at an open meeting of the Park District board in accordance with the Open Meetings Act. The Park District follows all public notice and hearing requirements under the Truth in Taxation Law prior to the adoption of this annual tax levy. The Park District's annual levy is also subject to the limitations of the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law.
- Residents may contact or request information from the Park District by phone at 630-784-6100 or email at info@csparks.org.

2. Community Surveys

- 2023 Community Needs Assessment
- Veterans Park Trail Connection Survey
- Seasonal sports evaluations
- Annual preschool program evaluation
- Annual summer camp program evaluation
- Annual adult overnight trip destination survey
- Annual dance recital program evaluation
- Annual dance team evaluation
- Annual gymnastics team evaluation
- Theatre production program evaluation (frequency varies)
- Swim team program evaluation (frequency varies)
- Before & After Care program evaluation (frequency varies)
- Fitness member survey (frequency varies)
- Monthly program evaluations emailed to all other activity registrants

3. Community Input Meetings

- Community Park
- Walter Park
- Park on the Green

VIII. District Awards and Recognition

The District's achievements have been recognized in numerous ways.

- Distinguished Accredited Agency 2012 (Reaccreditation achieved in 2018). Staff completed a rigorous assessment process that resulted in the District receiving Illinois Distinguished Accredited Agency by the Illinois Association of Park Districts and the Illinois Park and Recreation Association. The accreditation process focuses on efficient and effective professional practices and the implementation of professional standards.
- The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting to the District for its Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) annually from 2012 to 2023.
- The following Commissioners have achieved Master Board Members through committee involvement, attending continuing educational opportunities, and achievements at the local state and national levels.
 - Dan Bird
 - Brenda Gramann
 - Jaqueline Jeffery
 - Tim Powers
 - Brian Sokolowski
- Staff credentials
 - Sue Rini, Certified Parks and Recreation Professional
 - Kelly Sisco, Certified Parks and Recreation Professional
 - Debbie Greninger, Certified Administrative Professional

IX. Benefits and Services

The Park District serves the entire community from the youngest child to the oldest adult and all ages in between. It does so in a variety of ways.

1. Facilities

The Park District offered the following facilities to the community last year:

- Appomattox Park is a fun, half-acre neighbor park with slides, swings and climbing apparatus.
- Armstrong Park is named after the famous astronaut, Neil Armstrong. It is the district's largest park with features including lighted ball fields, restrooms, playgrounds, sand volleyball, and basketball court. Residents enjoy fishing and there is a Purple Martin bird sanctuary at the park.

- Barbara O’Rahilly Volunteer Park is an attractive three-acre park named after a past Executive Director. It includes a large playground, two bocce ball courts, and trails that lead to the Great Western Trail, Red Hawk Park, and the Bark Park.
- Bark Park has a large and small dog off-leash fenced play area. Each section includes agility equipment.
- Bierman Park is a beautiful 40-acre park with a 1.26-mile path that wraps around Heritage Lake. There is a large playground, gazebo with picnic tables, sand volleyball, soccer field, and fishing.
- Blue Heron Park is a quaint neighborhood park with a small gazebo that overlooks wetlands. The park includes playgrounds for both tots and youth.
- Cambridge Park is a 6.5-acre park with a playground for kids of all ages. The park is adjacent to a small baseball/softball field.
- Carolshire Park was dedicated on October 15, 2019, after five years of planning. Grant funding helped pay for the playground, gazebo and ADA play surface.
- Charger Court is a two-acre neighborhood park with a playground for tots and youth.
- Community Park is a 17-acre park that was renovated in 2023 (finished in 2024) with grant funding to cover a portion of the cost. The park includes Futsal, basketball, soccer, and volleyball areas, playground, picnic shelters, restroom, and community gardens.
- Coral Cove Water Park opens on Memorial Day weekend and closes on Labor Day, featuring a zero-depth entry pool, lap pool, spray playground, drop slide, splash pad, boulder wall, and diving board. There is a concession stand, shaded seating and party areas.
- Coyote Crossing Mini Golf is a fun family destination with 18-hole mini golf course, concessions, fire pit, and lawn games. There is a shade shelter and private party room.
- Evergreen Lakes Park is a great spot for fishing and kayaking.
- Fair Oaks Park is a neighborhood wetland, filled with prairie grass, wildlife, and a small lake for fishing.
- Fountain View Recreation Center features a gymnasium with three basketball courts, fitness center, lap pool and therapy pool, and multi-purpose rooms for programming and rentals.

- Friendship Park is a half-acre neighborhood park with a shelter and fun playground.
- Hampe Park is a 21-acre park named after a Commissioner. The park includes basketball, skate park, picnic pavilion with restrooms, and playgrounds.
- Horizon Park is a partnership with the Village Library with a Disc Golf Course.
- Jan Smith Park is a four-acre outdoor museum of native Illinois prairie plants. Each fall, the seeds are collected and distributed to volunteers. The park is also a certified Monarch Butterfly Waystation.
- Jirsa Park is an 8.5-acre park named after a Commissioner. The park includes a playground for all ages and a pond for fishing.
- Kent Park is a small park with a baseball/softball field. It is named after a Commissioner.
- McCaslin Park is a 32-acre multi-use park and facility featuring four lighted baseball diamonds with artificial turf infields, digital scoreboards, and bleachers. A concession stand with shaded seating, and restrooms connects to a walking trail, a large playground, splash pad, and basketball courts. There is a picnic shelter with a permanent grill, sand volleyball, and bags court. A cricket field with bleacher seating and shade area. There is also a fishing station with gazebo to round out this beautiful facility.
- Memorial Park is the first piece of land purchased by the Park District in 1967. There is a playground on one side of the creek and a Veterans Memorial on the other side of the creek.
- Mitchell Lakes Park is a linear park that include two lakes, a one-mile multi-use path circling it, and lots of fishing opportunities.
- Murray Meadow is a 3.5-acre wetland with rice cut grass, blue flag iris, and common rush.
- Papoose Park is a wonderful one-acre neighborhood park with two playgrounds for tots and youth.
- Park on the Green is a lovely park nestled in a beautiful neighborhood bordered by Klein Creek Golf Course. The playground accommodates tots and youth.
- Pleasant Hill Park is a 10-acre park with two baseball/softball diamonds, basketball, tennis courts, and two playgrounds.
- Post Office Baseball Field is used for baseball practice and picnics.

- Red Hawk Park is a 42-acre park with a multi-use trail leading to the Great Western Trail. The playground accommodates tots and youth and has a picnic shelter. There is a football field and soccer fields as well.
- Shining Waters Park is a quiet neighborhood park with playground accommodating tots and youth, and fishing.
- Simkus Recreation Center is named after a Commissioner, and includes preschool classrooms, gymnasium, gymnastics, and dance studios.
- Slepicka Park is named after the family who farmed the land. It features beautiful Black Walnut trees, a multi-use path with exercise stations, a picnic shelter, game tables, bocce and baggo courts.
- Spring Valley Park is a 6-acre park with open space used for soccer and baseball/softball games.
- Stonebridge Park is a 3-acre neighborhood park with a great playground, and walking path.
- Sundance Park is a 2.5-acre neighborhood park with a playground accommodating tots and youth. There is also a small shade shelter.
- Tedrahn Park is named after a dispatcher for the volunteer fire department during the early days of Carol Stream. The park features a playground and fishing.
- Tokarski Park is a half-acre neighborhood park with a fun playground and swings. It was named after a fire chief during the early days of Carol Stream.
- Veterans Park surrounds Mitchell Lake and has a 1.6-mile multi-use trail. The lake is ideal for fishing.
- Veterans Memorial Plaza is located near Fountain View Recreation Center. It is a beautiful gathering place for residents and visitors.
- Walter Park is a six-acre park named after a Commissioner. The park features baseball/softball, soccer field and playground.
- Weeks Park has a playground and swings, a sled hill, fishing, and soccer field.

2. Programs

The Park District offered the following programs last year. Registration numbers are also provided.

Program

Annual Registration

• Adult Sports Leagues	416
• Adult Sports Tournaments	118
• Adult Day Trips	794
• Adult Overnight Trips	66
• Awesome Adventure Camp	2,669
• Before & After Care – 2022-2023 School Year	868
• Before & After Care – 2023-2024 School Year	820
• Before & After Care – Day Flex Passes	1,664
• Birthday Parties	111
• Coral Cove Water Park Memberships	1,836
• Coral Cove Water Park Daily Admissions	23,845
• Coyote Crossing Mini Golf Daily Admissions	12,980
• Dance	481
• Days Off Club	614
• Early Childhood Programs	568
• Fitness Daily Admissions	2,270
• Fitness All-Inclusive Memberships	1,464
• Fitness Corporate Memberships	413
• Fitness Short-term Memberships	755
• Glenbard North Summer Sports Camps	916
• Gymnastics Programs	1,849
• Gymnastics Team	57
• Group Outings	61
• Lap Swim Memberships	192

• Open Swim	1,581
• Outdoor Adventure Camp	702
• Park/Shelter Rentals	138
• Personal Training Sessions	878
• Preschool 2022-2023 School Year	170
• Preschool 2023-2024 School Year	157
• Private Swim Lessons	57
• Room Rentals	217
• Special Events	1,919
• Special Interest	249
• Sports Classes	1,059
• Swim Lessons	1,230
• Swim Team	313
• Theatre	320
• Walking Track Memberships	242
• Youth Sports Leagues	2,683
• Youth Sports Tournaments	52
• Total	67,764

3. Additional Services

The Park District provided the following additional services to the community.

- Electric Vehicle charging stations.
- Free walking track (4 hours daily).
- Voting location.
- Free Little Library.

- Job Fairs.
- In collaboration with the Carol Stream Rotary Club, various clothing, food and supply drives to benefit the needy.
- Collection site for DuPage County food pantries (year-round).

4. Other Benefits

While the Park District is a special purpose district, its impact to the community is multi-faceted and far reaching. For example, the Park District's parks, recreational programming, and other opportunities improve the community's overall physical and mental health and wellness, thereby reducing health care costs. Before and after school and summer programs offer safe, convenient, and affordable childcare options for working families during critical times when school is not in session. These opportunities also help reduce juvenile crime. The Park District's open space and trees help improve air and water quality and mitigate flooding.

X. Recommendations for Increased Accountability and Efficiency

1. Intergovernmental Fees and Charges

One opportunity for efficiency would be the elimination of fees and charges assessed by other units of government. By way of example, below are amounts that other units of local government charge the Park District even though the Park District's taxpayers are also taxpayers of these other units of local government. Such fees and charges, and the bureaucracy that accompanies them, inhibit the park district's ability to deliver programs, facilities, and services at the least possible cost.

- Village Water/Sewer charge for 2023 was \$46,661.52
- Fire Alarm Inspection charges for 2023 was \$1,702.99
- Sprinkler Inspection charges for 2023 was \$1,814.00
- DuPage County Liquor License for 2023 was \$2,472
- State of IL Liquor Permit for 2023 was \$613.50
- Food Permits for Concessions operations in 2023 was \$1,464.25
- NCW Permit for Coyote Crossing Mini Golf in 2023 was \$256.75
- Pool Permits for Coral Cove Water Park and Fountain View was \$2,744.50
- Public Notices were \$74.75 in 2023

Other units of local government should recognize that intergovernmental fees often lead to inefficiency in the expenditure of taxpayer dollars through extra bureaucracy and administrative costs. In many cases, the unit of government assessing the fee ultimately benefits from the project or event, meaning it can recoup its costs through the extra sales tax or other revenue that will be generated. Where such fees are absolutely necessary, general purpose units of government should offset the fee by crediting the park district for all benefits they will receive from a project, event, or property. For example, open space that is protected and maintained by the Park District helps mitigate stormwater management costs, so assessing stormwater management fees on the Park District not only leads to inefficiency, but it is also shortsighted.

Governmental units should be discouraged or prohibited from charging more than their out-of-pocket costs associated with the activities covered by a fee that is assessed to another unit of local government with the same taxpayers. Put another way, one unit of local government should not profit by taxing another. Eliminating local permit fees is a way to reduce administrative costs without impacting overall public revenue. Local government best serves the people when it cooperates and works together. Some communities recognize this and do not charge fees to other units. All communities should be encouraged to follow that model to receive the best results for local taxpayers and to promote governmental efficiency.

2. Inefficiency of Other Governments

The Park District is also negatively impacted by the inefficiency of the state and other units of local government.

- State grants are often overly complicated to apply for and staff at the state level is not routinely available to answer questions or provide guidance, which causes delays for the Park District attempting to apply for grant funds. Once grant funding is obtained, cumbersome and time-consuming reports are due on a monthly or quarterly basis.

3. Unfunded Mandates

Unfunded state mandates are another cost driver. While the Park District recognizes that there are benefits to some of these mandates, modifications could help alleviate some of the burden to the park district.

a. Non-resident FOIA Requests.

Last year, the park district responded to 19 FOIA requests. Only two were residents. We spent \$15,000 in staff time and legal fees to fulfill FOIA requests in 2023. Often the individuals/businesses submitting the FOIA requests are from outside of the park district boundaries, and they appear to be serving a specific agenda, rather than assuring better local government.

- SmartProcure for Accounts Payable information
- Union Bids
- SmartProcure for Human Resources information
- Indiana, Illinois, Iowa Foundation for Fair Contracting
- BetterGov
- Smart Procure for Accounts Payable information
- NBC News
- SmartProcure for Accounts Payable information
- Indiana, Illinois, Iowa Foundation for Fair Contracting
- Union Bids
- Beary Landscaping
- Indiana, Illinois, Iowa Foundation for Fair Contracting
- Dodge Construction Network
- Dodge Construction Network
- SmartProcure for Accounts Payable information
- SmartProcure for Human Resources information
- Smart Local 265

Under current law, resident taxpayers end up footing the bill for these non-resident or commercial requests. In order to help alleviate the burden for these non-resident requests the law could be amended to: (1) add a requirement that non-residents identify/explain the purpose of the request for information; (2) add a time limit on how far back a non-resident can request information; (3) staff time and costs could be included in the amount that is reimbursable for non-resident and commercial requests; (4) move back the deadline for non-resident requests 10 business days so that the park district does not have to delay services to its residents in order to comply with a non-resident request.

Sunshine laws are supposed to protect taxpayers by allowing them to shed light on any issue that is not exempt from FOIA. However, local government can be

burdened by having to drop everything to rearrange priorities to meet FOIA deadlines, particularly if it has limited resources. Since local residents ultimately bear the expense of complying with FOIA, treating resident and non-resident requests differently would be justified.

- b. **Criminal Background Checks.** All park districts are statutorily required to conduct criminal background checks on all employees pursuant to Section 8-23 of the Park District Code. The background checks must be done through the Illinois State Police (ISP). Last year, the park district spent \$6,896 for criminal background checks. The Park District does not recommend eliminating this mandate because it is necessary to ensure the safety and well-being of children and other park district patrons. However, the State should explore ways in which it could improve the current system and make it less costly for park districts to comply with the law.

The mandate also raises the fundamental question as to why one layer of government is forced to charge its taxpayers to comply with a State mandate when the State made the determination to impose the mandate. Put another way, if the State has determined that criminal background checks are necessary for public safety, the State should assist with compliance.

The Park District recommends studying whether there can be a more efficient background check process implemented through the ISP to reduce the time and expense it takes for background checks. Another suggestion is for ISP to waive the fee for checks on minors or waive all fees for name checks. Since it is a state mandate, perhaps the fee structure for park districts should also be reviewed to determine whether the fee being charged exceeds the actual cost of doing the check and, if so, perhaps the ISP could consider reducing its cost to local governments.

- c. **Prevailing Wage.** One way to reduce burden on local government staff is to limit the prevailing wage requirement to larger capital contracts. This would free up tracking of the paperwork on small repairs and projects. One reason for creating a threshold requirement is the cost of the administrative burden relative to the cost of the actual project. For example, eliminating prevailing wage on smaller projects, e.g., those less than \$50,000, will result in more local bids and decrease the overall cost for these smaller public works projects.
- d. **Newspaper Publication.** The newspaper is no longer the most effective way to provide notice. Websites are cheaper and reach more people. Permitting the park district to post the information on its website in lieu of newspaper publications would reduce costs.

4. Opportunities for Savings such as Energy Efficiency Projects

- ComEd Energy Efficiency Program/Rebate Program

Dated: October 15, 2024,

Signed: 
Sue Rini, Executive Director/Committee Chairperson

