



2014 Comprehensive Master Plan

Park District of Oak Park

Adopted December 18, 2014

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Executive Summary

In 2014, the Park District of Oak Park undertook a process to update its Comprehensive Master Plan to create a series of recommendations that will guide decision making and investments over the next 10 years. The last Comprehensive Master Plan, completed in 2004, provided direction that led to the much needed funding referendum, the improvement and modernization of most of the District's parks, the building of the Gymnastic & Recreation Center, and the renovation of Ridgeland Common.

Like the previous plan, this Comprehensive Master Plan will support the Mission, Vision and Values of the Park District and should serve as a living document that provides the foundation for future plans and addresses the changing needs of the Community.

Park District of Oak Park Mission Statement

In partnership with the community, we enrich lives by providing meaningful experiences through programs, parks, and facilities.

PDOP Vision Statement

We strive to exceed the needs of our diverse community with a collaborative and innovative approach

PDOP Values

Values identify the main tools that will be used to accomplish the mission and vision:

- Partnerships: We will work collaboratively with others in our community
- Responsible Leadership: We will create a high performing, engaged, and accountable organization
- Integrity: In all that we do, we will adhere to moral, honest, and ethical principles and work toward accessibility and inclusion
- Innovation: We will continuously try new methods and ideas, adapt services according to trends, and continuously improve processes in order to exceed the needs of our customers
- Sustainability: the District will endure through renewal, maintenance, stewardship and stability in all aspects of operation

Planning Process

The planning process, led by a team of consultants, started in early 2014 and began with focused community outreach and engagement, project promotion, and dialogue facilitation. At the same time, the team conducted a comprehensive inventory of parks, facilities, and programs owned or managed by the Park District, noting needs and opportunities for further study. The team's analysis was supplemented by the completion of a statistically valid community needs assessment survey. Based on the input from community dialogue, the survey results and the analysis conducted, the team developed and tested a range of master plan recommendations.

The refined list of recommendations and steps needed to implement them make up the core of the Comprehensive Master Plan. The recommendations have been organized into seven categories:

- Parks & Open Space
- Recreation Facilities & Buildings
- Programming
- Marketing
- Organization & Planning
- Administration, Maintenance & Operations
- Funding

Additionally, the recommendations have categorized based on timing as either:

- Short-term (1 to 3 Years)
- Mid-term (4 to 7 Years)
- On-going



Short-term goals will be among the first items that the Park District will focus on, following the adoption of this plan. Short-term goals include:

- **Enhance District Signage** to consistently communicate park rules and the District brand
- **Conduct a Feasibility Study for an Indoor Recreation Facility** to evaluate if a new facility can be realistically accomplished and supported by the community
- **Improve Adult Fitness Programming** to increase participation, especially among adults, who are a growing sector of the population
- **Improve Environmental Education Programming** to capitalize on existing and future District facilities and amenities and to respond to a common community value
- **Implement Recommendations from the Branding Study** to further awareness of the Park District and better communicate its brand
- **Collect, Analyze & Use Maintenance Data** to identify opportunities to efficiently maintain and improve the quality of the District's parks and facilities
- **Identify Opportunities to Engage Parks Foundation** to build capacity for accomplishing initiatives that help the District enrich livability within the community

The Park District of Oak Park is well-positioned to continue to fulfill its mission of enriching the lives of the residents of the community. However, responding to the changing needs and desires of the community requires PDOP to change as well. By following and revisiting the recommendations detailed in this plan over the next 10 year, the Park District will be able to evolve with the community, providing the high level of service that Village residents have come to expect.

1. Introduction

The Comprehensive Master Plan for the Park District of Oak Park was developed through a community-driven process that evaluated existing open space, facility conditions, current programming, future demographic projections, changing trends, identified gaps and overlaps in levels of service. Using this information combined with community input collected, a list of priorities was established for facilities, open space and programs. The Comprehensive Master Plan has been crafted to provide the District with a clear delineation of the action items and key steps needed for the successful implementation of the community's priorities over time.

History

The Park District of Oak Park has had a long and proud history of acquiring and developing green space and offering recreation opportunities for the residents of Oak Park. Established in 1912, the five elected commissioners who made up the first Park Board purchased the land now known as Scoville Park for \$135,637. This park, designed by Jens Jensen, an internationally renowned landscape artist, remains the “Village Green” today having been placed on the National Register of Historic Places by the United States Department of the Interior on November 21, 2002. It is the site of the World War I monument unveiled on November 11, 1925 in the presence of General C.G. Dawes, Vice-President of the United States.

Most of the land now owned by the Park District of Oak Park was purchased during the first two decades of the Park District’s existence. The main use of this property was for passive recreational activities. A conservatory was erected in 1929 supplying flowers for the community flower beds as well as hosting seasonal flower shows, which are still held today. The

Oak Park Conservatory was placed on the National Register of Historic Places by the United States Department of the Interior on March 8, 2005.

In 1918 a “Small Parks Commission” was appointed by the Village Board to ensure that Oak Park children had a place to “enjoy and practice organized outdoor sports.” They became the Oak Park Playground Board in 1920 and began to levy a tax in 1921 to “equip, conduct and maintain playgrounds.” This Board went on to purchase land for playgrounds and eventually built neighborhood centers, named after prominent children’s authors, where organized recreation programs were provided. At the National Recreation Congress in October 1926, Oak Park won national recognition for programs such as the “Boys’ Playground Band”, a “Shelter House Design Contest” won by Oak Parker John S. Van Bergen, “Murals Contest”, “Junior Art Museum”, “Library on Wheels”, as well as playground landscaping and beautification. Mr. Van Bergen designed many of the neighborhood recreation centers built by the Playground Commission.



In 1939 the Park District bought the property now known as Mills Park from the Herbert Mills Family. Historic Pleasant Home, designated a historic landmark in 1972, is located on this property. In 1947 the Henry W. Austin Family donated Austin Gardens to the Park District. Sometimes referred to as “the secret garden” this beautiful park has been home to Festival Theatre since 1975, the Midwest’s oldest professional theatre devoted to outdoor performances of the classics. Cheney House (now known as Cheney Mansion) was presented as gift to the Park District in 1975 although it remained the private residence of Elizabeth Cheney until her death in 1985. Cheney Mansion was designed by Charles E. White, Jr. in 1913 and boasts many handsome reception rooms, six bedrooms, seven bathrooms, and separate servants’ quarters. The two acres of beautifully-landscaped grounds also include a coach house and greenhouse.

For many years the Park District and Village Playground Commission operated side by side in serving the

recreation needs of Oak Park residents when, in 1980, a new intergovernmental agreement merged the Recreation Department with the Park District. In 1990 the Park District became the sole provider of government-sponsored parks and recreation in Oak Park. At that time the Park District assumed the operation and maintenance of the Village-owned recreation centers.

The voters of Oak Park successfully passed a referendum in April 2005 providing much needed funding to “Renew Our Parks,” and provide clear stewardship of the parks and recreation service for the residents of the Village. In 2006, the Village transferred the titles of five of the seven recreation centers to the Park District and a 99 year use lease for the two remaining centers has been established due to underground water reservoirs located on these properties. Master plans have been completed for all of the parks, and major renovation projects have been completed or are in progress.



Planning Process

The Park District of Oak Park completed a Comprehensive Master Plan in 2004 with many of the plan's recommendations being implemented. The District recognizes that there is a compelling need to continuously improve parks and facilities throughout the District. Therefore, an updated Comprehensive Master Plan will guide the attainment of this goal as well as set a course for the future of the organization.

At the end of December of 2013, the Park District engaged a team of consultants led by The Lakota Group. The project team has engaged community stakeholders and reviewed and evaluated every one of the Park District's programs, parks, facilities, and Park District operations. This evaluation will help the project team formulate up-to-date, community-relevant recommendations for the next ten years and beyond. These recommendations will guide the facility and programming decisions that will shape the future of the Park District and ensure future generations of Oak Park are well served.

The project team organized the Comprehensive Master planning process into four phases: Engage, Analyze, Envision, and Implement. Throughout the Engage project phase, the project team focused on community outreach, project promotion, and dialogue facilitation. During the second project phase, Analyze, the project team conducted a comprehensive inventory of parks, facilities, and programs owned or managed by the Park District noting needs and opportunities for further study. The Envision and Implement project phases will include an evaluation of a potential master plan.

This document represents a summary of the project team's first two phases of work. It includes a summary of community engagement and outreach, and an inventory and evaluation of Park District park land, facilities, programs, and operational practices.

Mission, Vision, and Values

The Park District's mission statement, vision statement, and core values statement were updated during the 2012 strategic planning process. These statements describe the purpose of the Park District as an organization; describe aspirations for the organization's future, and describe the Park District's organizational values. This mission, vision, and values guided the master planning process and support this plan's recommendations.

Mission Statement

In partnership with the community, we enrich lives by providing meaningful experiences through programs, parks, and facilities.

Vision Statement

We strive to exceed the needs of our diverse community with a collaborative and innovative approach

Values

Values identify the main tools that will be used to accomplish the mission and vision:

- Partnerships: We will work collaboratively with others in our community
- Responsible Leadership: We will create a high performing, engaged, and accountable organization
- Integrity: In all that we do, we will adhere to moral, honest, and ethical principles and work toward accessibility and inclusion
- Innovation: We will continuously try new methods and ideas, adapt services according to trends, and continuously improve processes in order to exceed the needs of our customers
- Sustainability: the District will endure through renewal, maintenance, stewardship and stability in all aspects of operation

Existing Partnerships and Coordination Efforts

The Park District of Oak Park makes significant efforts to partner with local agencies on a variety of initiatives with the greater good of Village residents in mind. These efforts are critical in a dense, urban community such as Oak Park, and will need to be strengthened and added onto in the future to maximize efficiency and use of tax dollars.

Multiple Agencies

- Use and programming of three floors of space in the Dole Center, which is owned by the Village and also houses the Dole Branch Library
- Agencies may reserve Cheney Mansion for one evening event per year free of charge
- PDOP is pursuing a shared Wi-Fi system with the Library and D97
- The libraries, the Village, the Visitors Center and the township distribute PDOP program guides
- All agencies have participated as stakeholders in other agencies' planning processes

Village of Oak Park

- VOP and PDOP have transferred properties to allow for the advancement of common goals
- PDOP assists the Village with clean-up of storm damage as needed
- PDOP purchases fleet maintenance service from the Village
- PDOP shares specialty maintenance equipment with the Village as needed
- PDOP uses Village lot at High School for Ice Show
- Village Farmers Market uses Ridgeland Common lot
- VOP & PDOP have an agreement in place for use of facilities in large scale disasters
- VOP replaces sidewalks around the perimeter of PDOP parks and facilities and the cost is shared equally between the two agencies

- Sidewalks within the parks are paid entirely by PDOP but the service is conducted under VOP contract when feasible
- VOP provides tree trimming service to PDOP on an emergency basis mainly at no charge
- VOP forester assists with tree condition assessments
- PDOP lends tables and chairs to VOP for events.
- PDOP permits the Village to use Scoville and Rehm Parks for Day in Our Village
- VOP is able to reserve PDOP meeting space free of charge
- VOP uses PDOP bus and vans for Explorers group and other activities with Village officials, staff and guests
- VOP and PDOP have used each other's vehicles or trailers for parades
- PDOP uses VOP GIS Equipment to interpret survey results
- PDOP awards VOP personnel with IPRA Community Service Awards.
- PDOP works cooperatively with VOP and School District D200 on the 4th of July Fireworks – GALA Celebration
- VOP used the skate park for Police Segway Training
- PDOP has recently received an award from VOP (Historic Preservation Award for the WWI Memorial Restoration) and from Visit Oak Park.
- PDOP has access to unsold parking spaces near GRC for closing staff to park
- PDOP uses VOP parking lot for Administrative Staff Park in exchange VOP permits Rehm Pool parking lot in fall, winter and spring
- PDOP has been utilizing Volvo lot for exterior storage

Police

- Full regulation of PDOP Park Use Rules by Village - every police officer received a copy of the Park Rules handbook along with key staff in VOP
- Police cooperation for Frank Lloyd Wright races
- Police have a satellite office at GRC

Fire Department

- PDOP's current alarm system is connected to the Village system
- VOP assists PDOP with fire alarm plan review and inspections
- Fire Department provides free CPR training for PDOP summer camp staff
- PDOP has offered the use of buildings to be demolished for fire department training purposes.

Fleet Service, Fuel, Equipment Sharing, Street Sweeper

- PDOP is able to borrow Village's heavy equipment with notice
- PDOP lends the Village equipment (chipper, 1 ton truck, packer, bucket loader, tables and chairs)
- Village runs the street sweeper in PDOP lots
- PDOP procures servicing of vehicles from Village services PDOP vehicles.
- PDOP uses the VOP's trailer for the 4th of July parade
- Joint purchasing of PDOP/VOP salt for sidewalks
- Joint purchasing of fuel and gas through the Village

School District 200

- PDOP staff attend high school job fair to help place students in jobs within the Park District.
- PDOP aquatic Staff uses OPRFHS facilities to conduct lifeguard training
- OPRFHS held outdoor jazz concert in Scoville Park
- PDOP uses of the OPRF indoor swimming pool to conduct swim lessons in the fall, winter and spring
- PDOP uses gymnasiums for adult futsal and for youth basketball league
- OPRFHS uses PDOP fields at RCRC, Lindberg and Stevenson for baseball, soccer and ultimate Frisbee

School District 97

- PDOP participated in the development of the Irving School synthetic turf field
- PDOP participated in the installation of irrigation for the Longfellow School natural turf field
- PDOP provides maintenance of Irving School synthetic field
- PDOP programs and uses D97 gymnasiums after school hours
- PDOP is allowed to use rooms at the Mann and Lincoln schools free of charge for community meetings
- D97 rents pool and rink at a discounted fee for class trips
- Schools use parks for the their class picnics
- PDOP responsible for permitting of D97 athletic fields to other community groups
- PDOP uses the D97 print shop for printing Kids Report, forms and other promotional materials as needed

Oak Park Public Library

- PDOP jointly hosts the Teen Battle of the Bands with the Library
- Outdoor Poetry Night was held in Scoville Park
- PDOP is allowed to use rooms at the Library free of charge for community meetings
- Library allows PDOP access to wifi for Scoville Park
- Library provided gallery space for an art exhibit

Miscellaneous

- Art projects with Arts Council (Camille Wilson White)
- Work with DCFS for summer camp opportunities
- Township has assisted with community center and sports courts staff training at no charge
- Community centers and administration center are used for polling locations during elections





2. Engage

Throughout the Engage project phase, the project team focused on community outreach and dialogue facilitation. Engagement with the community was conducted through one-on-one stakeholder interviews and small focus group meetings as well as an independently conducted, statistically valid, community attitude and interest survey. These methods of interaction served the following primary objective: to help provide the team with an understanding of the needs of project stakeholders and the broader community.

Community Engagement and Outreach Summary

Summary of Public Input

An involved community engagement strategy has helped the project team respond to planning process goals. Through stakeholder interviews and focus group meetings, the project team spoke to a broad spectrum of community members and project stakeholders. Park District staff provided the Lakota Group team with a list of stakeholder groups and key individuals, representing a variety of Park District parks and recreation-related advisory committees, affiliate groups as well as representatives from Park District staff, both School District 97 and School District 200, Village of Oak Park, and other representatives from the community at large.

Over 60 stakeholders were interviewed over the course of eight focus group discussions. Each discussion was led by one or more members of the consultant team and organized around a series of pre-approved questions. The following groups were represented:

- Residents
- Village Staff
- Current/Former Village Elected Officials
- Park District Staff
- Former Park Board Members
- Oak Park Township
- Oak Park School District 97
- Oak Park School District 200
- Oak Park Library
- West Suburban Special Recreation Association
- Park District Citizen Committee (PDCC)
- Greening Advisory Committee (GAC)
- Art Advisory Committee (AAC)
- Senior Advisory Committee (SAC)
- Parks Foundation
- Friends of the Oak Park Conservatory (FOPCON)
- Friends of Oak Park Dogs (FOPD)
- Collaboration for Early Childhood Care & Education
- Historical Society of Oak Park and River Forest
- Oak Park Arts Advisory Committee
- West Cook YMCA
- Oak Park River Forest Pony Baseball
- Oak Park Youth Baseball & Softball (OPYBS)
- Oak Park AYSO Youth Soccer
- Chicago Edge Soccer
- Team Millennium/Swimming
- Hockey
- Gymnastics
- Adult Sports
- Oak Park Festival Theater

Additionally a series of one-on-one interviews was conducted with all members of the current Park Board and other individuals selected by the Park District. These included:

Park Board Members

- Jessica Bullock
- Paul Aeschleman
- Victor Guarino
- Sandy Lentz
- David Wick

Key Community Informants

- Peter Barber, Oak Park Village Board
- James Foster, Impact Basketball Academy
- Dan Haley, Wednesday Journal
- Mary Jo Schuler, Oak Park River Forest Community Foundation

General Themes

While a range of discussion occurred throughout these conversations, there were several common themes that arose in most of the sessions.

Space Constraints and Limitations

Throughout most of the discussions there was a recognition that there is limited space within Oak Park to accomplish open space and recreational goals. This constraint leads to many challenges with programming of fields and specialized indoor facilities and the ability to allow for non-programmed times for drop-in use.

While there was recognition of these challenges, many of the affiliates or special interest groups strongly advocated for their programs saying they need additional space or time. Suggestions and thoughts discussed included the following:

- Recommendations to create opportunities for new spaces through the temporary use of vacant spaces within the Village.
- Perception that there is a lack of flexible open space and a desire for some un-programmed or “family time” on the fields.
- Taxes were seen as a major issue within the community, so additional tax burden for new facilities could create concerns. Additionally, acquisition of new land or buildings by the Park District would remove them from the tax rolls.

Coordination and Cooperation

As most groups recognized the space challenges present for the District, many felt that partnerships with other agencies and institutions provided the best opportunities for solutions. It was clear that many groups were not aware of the efforts the Park District makes to coordinate with the Village and the School Districts, which is something the District should work to remedy through education.

Stakeholders provided suggestions for opportunities to collaborate with a range of local agencies, including the School Districts, the Village, neighboring municipal Park Districts, the Cook County Forest Preserve District, and the local hospitals. Specific discussion included:

- Several participants suggested that the starting point for addressing any issue should be through collaboration.
- The potential for working with the Village to allow for a temporary or permanent use of vacant spaces within the Village, including the Lake and Forest site and the northeast corner of Madison Street and Oak Park Avenue.
- Major opportunities for collaboration were identified relative to specific issues, including working with the Township and Library on both senior and teen services.
- Collaborating with Forest Park on their new recreation project on the Roos Property on Harrison Street.
- Working with City of Chicago Park District to secure field time at nearby parks.

Park District Staff & Leadership

Many groups pointed to staff as one of the greatest assets of the Park District. Additionally, several groups praised the leadership of the Park District and the park board for being the most responsible of the local taxing bodies. The efforts made by the District to be transparent and cooperative community partners were recognized and valued by many of the participants, making the Park District more trusted than other entities.

Additionally, many stakeholders identified staff retention as a major goal, recognizing the existing knowledge base represented in the staff.

Indoor Facility

Most groups raised the desire for an indoor facility to serve a variety of needs and age groups. Elements mentioned in several of the discussions included basketball courts, walking track, fitness equipment and flexible court space. Other groups envisioned a more intense facility that would accommodate indoor soccer and baseball.

Despite some desires for a large facility, there appeared to be a recognition that if programmed correctly, even a smaller space could prove beneficial to the Village. Several groups cited the success of Legacy Sports, indicating that they have been successful in creative use of a smaller space that attracts off-season training for local teams, as well as other sports programs and birthday parties.

Indoor Pool

Similar to the desire for an indoor recreational facility, many groups discussed the potential for an indoor pool. As opposed to the indoor recreational facility, the groups indicated a desire to accomplish this in partnership with other organizations. One group cited the other indoor pools in the community, including the pool at Rush Hospital, and the focus was more on indoor lap swim in the winter.

Active Adults

There was significant discussion of the changing demographics within the community. While some thought that the high taxes would drive other residents to relocate out of the community, others recognized that there is a larger population that is aging in place. Discussion touched on a range of different facets of this topic:

- Concern that there may be a limited awareness of what programs exist for adults.
- Suggestion to create an adult-oriented program brochure.
- Comments that other entities, including the Library and the Township, are addressing the senior population, and the Park District should focus on the health and fitness of active adults as opposed to arts and crafts.
- Suggestion that many active adults do not want to enroll in programs targeted to a specific age group, but would rather participate in multi-generational programs.
- Desire for an adult version of the popular e-blast “Mom Mail” that provides weekly updates of activities and opportunities within the area.

Teens

Programming for teens was identified in many of the discussions. Similar to the seniors, there are many entities that provide for this group. However, there is a concern that teens are not fully served. The Library currently provides a “hang-out” space for afterschool with access to computers. The Township is currently exploring the option of providing mentoring and tutoring services for teens in their space on Oak Park Avenue in the afternoons, as senior programs only go through 2:00 PM at that location. It was expressed that the Park District should also play a role addressing physical health and fitness. Other discussion included:

- Concern that there are teens who are left out of high school sports programs – if so, whether the Park District provide opportunities for teens who want to play but cannot make the team.
- Teens need a safe place to hang out on a Friday night and play basketball or be active.
- The increased use of technology in communication will help engage the teens.

Youth

While the youth groups did not receive as much discussion as the seniors and teens, several stakeholders focused on this topic. Specific comments included:

- Pre-school programs are critical. They help create a touchstone for new citizens and are important to long-term academic success. Park District staff should continue to be well versed in early childhood development.
- There appears to be a trend at a national scale to “professionalize” children’s sports. It is important to allow for “free-range” kids, even in a tight, heavily programmed District like Oak Park. The Park District has an opportunity to mediate the balance between organized sports and open-ended activities.
- Support for the Park District for maximizing all of the scholarship funds each year.

Open Spaces

The District’s open spaces were seen to be in good to very good condition. Most stakeholders recognized that there was a marked improvement over the years through the implementation of the park master plans and the recent hiring of the turf maintenance position.

The field sports affiliates were the most critical of the field conditions and amenities and expressed opinions

that more of the master plan implementation efforts focused on the playgrounds, and not as much on the fields.

Other comments focused on continued improvements to the maintenance of open spaces to sustain the higher quality established through recent investments, and opportunities to maximize the use of open space through additional synthetic fields.

Facilities

Stakeholders had a harder time rating the District's facilities, mostly due to the range in age and condition. While there was general agreement that the GRC and other new or recently renovated facilities were very good, the overall score was hard to assign due to older facilities.

Many stakeholders recognized that several of the neighborhood community centers were dated and "tired." Other comments pertaining to indoor facilities further supported the desire for a central, multi-generational facility that provided for a range of recreational needs.

Programs

The programs offered by the District were rated good to very good by most stakeholders. For those who signed up for programming or had family members that participated in programming, the response was very favorable. Other stakeholders who were not as familiar with the offerings were more critical of programming and communication of the offerings, especially those for adults.

Based on the comments of stakeholders who are active in the District, as well as the discussion with District staff, it appears that the District is successful in continuously evaluating the programs and working to incorporate new offerings. Other specific comments included:

- The idea that the current programming is currently very "facility-centric" and could be supplemented with more "functional" programming, like gardening, environmental programming or other opportunities to use natural/passive spaces in programming.
- Suggestion to explore the creation of a "Park District on the Go" to bring programming to seniors within existing senior oriented buildings.

Partnerships with Affiliates

From the discussions, most stakeholders with connections to affiliate groups were mixed on their responses of how well the Park District was partnering with them. Most, if not all, of these stakeholders indicated a recognition of improvement over the last couple years in communication and management of these partnerships. Several stakeholders acknowledged that the PACT program has helped the process as well as increased accountability on field usage.

The most common issue cited with the partnership relationships generally focused on a lack of field or facility time. Several stakeholders indicated that they needed to travel to fields or facilities in other communities to accommodate their needs. Use of indoor spaces seemed to create additional concerns. In those cases, the Park District's relationship with Oak Park School District 97 was seen as providing an unfair advantage to the District in reserving those spaces.

Marketing/Branding

There was limited discussion within the interviews regarding marketing and branding. Generally participants agreed that the Park District's logo could be updated or improved. Additionally, several stakeholders commented on the ability of the program guide to better highlight adult programs, or even split them out into a separate program guide.

Future Vision / Aspirational Goals

With the wide range of stakeholders who participated, there was a similarly wide range of answers to what participants would like to see come out of this process, if they were to envision the District in 10 years. The most common aspirational vision painted a picture of the District as having well-run programs and well-maintained facilities that addressed the range of existing demographics and that were fiscally sustainable. Additionally, others offered a future vision of increased efficiency and widespread collaboration as a way of achieving higher quality results.

Other affiliate groups focused on a future vision that addressed the space constraints of the District through the addition of a new open space or facility. As mentioned earlier, the most commonly mentioned additions to the District were an indoor recreation center or indoor pool.

Funding

The general consensus was that the Park District should continue to evaluate all opportunities for funding. Most stakeholders were open to alternative funding opportunities, such as advertising and naming rights. Many participants recognized the Park District's success in securing grants. Several stakeholders were concerned how additional taxes to pay for improvements would be perceived by Village residents, as it is already an issue in the community, and instead encouraged the Park District to work within its own means.

Neighborhood Community Centers

The neighborhood community centers were specifically discussed with stakeholders. Most participants recognized that these facilities are aging and have ongoing maintenance issues. However, many stakeholders still have an emotional investment in these buildings. While they may not actively use them now, other than as a polling place, they associate them with childhood memories or as a place where they met other families from the neighborhood when they were new to the area.

Stakeholders generally advised that these centers be studied for additional programming and use before the District "gives up" on them. However, most stakeholders were not completely averse to removing them if they could not be well used, especially if they are a financial burden to the District.

Sustainable Practices

The Park District was seen as having made significant efforts to achieve all reasonable sustainability goals. The progressive approach to field maintenance was specifically cited and complimented, as well specific food production and gardening classes at the Conservatory.

One challenge noted was that as the District has more specific ecosystems installed in parks, such as native plantings, rain gardens or bio-swales, the need for specialists to appropriately maintain these spaces will increase.

Attitude and Interest Survey Summary

As part of the overall Comprehensive Plan effort, the Park District contracted with Public Research Group (PRD) to conduct a statistically valid community recreation survey to identify and update understanding of the resident's needs and preferences related to recreation.

The survey was administered to a random sampling of households in the community, from which 2,268 responses were collected. Those included 2,068 email responses, 188 mail and 12 telephone.

The survey included 21 questions which included some quantifiable results and some answers to open-ended questions.

The full results are summarized in the *Park District of Oak Park - 2014 Community Recreation Survey Analysis (August 2014)*. Additionally, the results are used as to inform the Analyze phase of the process. However, there are several take-aways worth mentioning:

- The District's parks and facilities are heavily used by the community.
- Compared to the 2004 and 2010 surveys, there is an improvement in how residents evaluate the physical condition of the parks, reflecting an awareness of the work completed by the Park District.
- Of the District's facilities, the most respondents indicated they use the Conservatory.
- The neighborhood community centers rated the worst when it comes to condition.
- There is a majority support for the Park District to build and operate both an indoor pool and an indoor multi-use facility, though the community does not have a clear support for how these facilities should be paid for.
- The community is almost evenly split when it comes to prioritizing future investment towards additional greenspace or new facilities.



Legend

- Multi-Family - 439
- Single Family - 1,644
- Park District Boundary

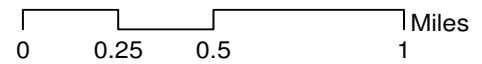


Figure 2.1 - Distribution of Survey Respondents



3. Analyze

During the Analyze phase the project team conducted a comprehensive analysis of Park District parks, facilities, programs, and operational practices. The analysis is summarized in the following section of this report, which also addresses community demographics, trends in recreation, and how the District's offerings currently meet the needs of the community.

Demographics

Demographic Overview

The demographic analysis provides an understanding of the population within the Village of Oak Park, Illinois boundaries (also called “service area”). This analysis is reflective of the total population, and its key characteristics such as age segments, income levels, race, and ethnicity.

It is important to note that future projections are all based on historical patterns. Unforeseen circumstances during or after the time of the projections could have a significant bearing on the validity of the final projections.

The total population of the service area had a slight decrease of approximately 1.2% from 52,524 in 2000 to 51,878 in 2010. The current estimated population for 2013 is 52,080, and it is projected to remain steady at 52,497 in 2018, and total 52,114 by 2028.

According to the U.S. Census reports, the total number of households in the service area has decreased by approximately 1.8%, from 23,079 in 2000 to 22,670 in 2010. The Village of Oak Park is estimated to have 22,765 households in 2013, and is expected to grow to 22,805 households by 2028.

Based on 2013 estimates, the service area’s median household income (\$72,867) and per capita income (\$44,599) are both well above state and national averages.

According to the 2010 Census results, the population of the Oak Park is slightly older (38.8 years) than the median age of the U.S. (37.2 years). Projections show that the service area will undergo an aging trend, with the 55+ group growing to represent 34.7% of the total population by 2028.

The majority of the estimated 2013 population is White Alone (67.52%), with the Black Alone (21.22%) representing the largest minority. Future projections through 2028 expect the area’s racial composition to remain consistent, as White Alone decreases minimally to 66.69%, followed by Black Alone (19.43%) and Asian (6.24%) minorities.

Methodology

Demographic data used for the analysis was obtained from U.S. Census Bureau and from Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI), the largest research and development organization dedicated to Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and specializing in population projections and market trends. All data was acquired in March 2014 and reflects actual numbers as reported in the 2000 and 2010 Censuses, and estimates for 2013 and 2018 as obtained by ESRI. Straight line linear regression was utilized for projected 2023 and 2028 demographics. The geographic boundary of the Village of Oak Park was utilized as the demographic analysis boundary shown in Figure 3.1.

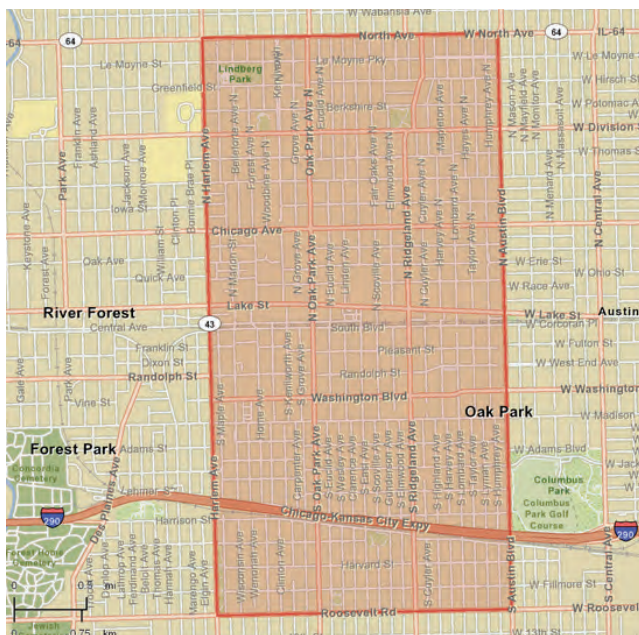


Figure 3.1 - Comprehensive Master Plan Analysis Boundary

Race and Ethnicity Definitions

The minimum categories for data on race and ethnicity for Federal statistics, program administrative reporting, and civil rights compliance reporting are defined as below. The Census 2010 data on race are not directly comparable with data from the 2000 Census and earlier censuses; caution must be used when interpreting changes in the racial composition of the US population over time. The latest (Census 2010) definitions and nomenclature are used within this analysis.

- American Indian – This includes a person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment
- Asian – This includes a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam
- Black – This includes a person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander – This includes a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands
- White – This includes a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa
- Hispanic or Latino – This is an ethnic distinction, a subset of a race as defined by the Federal Government; this includes a person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race

Village of Oak Park Population

The service area has witnessed minimal change in recent years. From 2000 to 2010, the service area’s total population underwent a slight decrease of 1.2%, from 52,524 to 51,878. In 2013, the population was estimated to be 52,080. Projecting ahead, the total population of Oak Park is expected to remain relatively flat-lined over the next 15 years. Based on predictions through 2028, the local population is anticipated to have approximately 52,114 residents living within 22,805 households. See Figure 3.2.



Figure 3.2 - Oak Park Total Population

Village of Oak Park Age Segment

Evaluating the distribution by age segments, the service area is largely balanced between youth, young adult, family, and senior populations. In 2010, the largest segment by population is the 35-54 group representing 31.5%, and the smallest is the 18-34 segment which constitutes 20% of the population.

Over time, the overall composition of the population is projected to undergo a rapid aging trend. Based on the 2013 estimate, the 35-54 segment remains the largest age group by a narrow margin at 29.8% of the population, but the 55+ is expected to grow to be the largest segment within the next five years. Future projections through 2028 show that the <18 and 35-54 segments will undergo small decreases in size as compared to the population as a whole, while the 18-34 and 55+ groups will grow. The 55+ group is expected to grow more rapidly than any other segment, and represent approximately 34.7% of the population by 2028. This is consistent with general national trends where the 55+ age group has been growing as a result of increased life expectancies and the baby boomer population entering that age group. See Figure 3.3. This means that programs and facilities focused on an actively adult (55+ population) will assume an even greater importance as the population ages in the years to come.

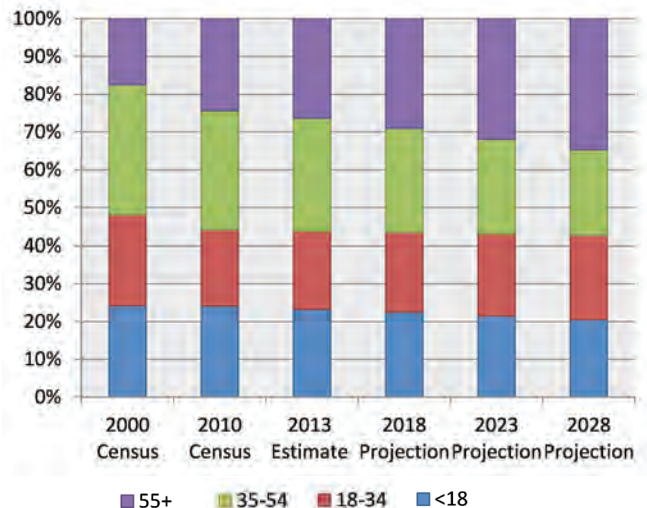


Figure 3.3 - Population by Age Segments

Race and Ethnicity

In analyzing race and ethnicity, the selected area is quite diverse. The 2013 estimate shows that over 85% of the population falls into the White Alone (67.52%) and Black Alone (21.22%) categories. Predictions for 2028 expect the population to remain mostly concentrated within the two largest racial categories, with the White Alone and Black Alone representing 66.69% and 19.43%, respectively. Based on 2028 projections, the Asian (6.24%) population and those belonging to Two or More Races (4.66%) are expected to continue growing. The Hispanic / Latino population grew to 6.79% in 2010, and is expected to reach 10.42% of the total population by 2028. See Figures 3.4 and 3.5.

These changing racial and ethnic compositions will have an impact on the nature of program offerings as well as the marketing and outreach strategies employed by PDOP.

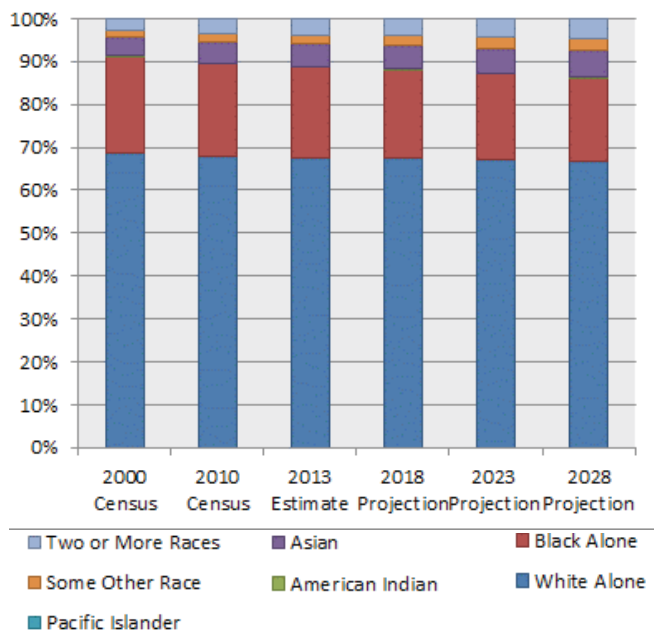


Figure 3.4 - Population by Race

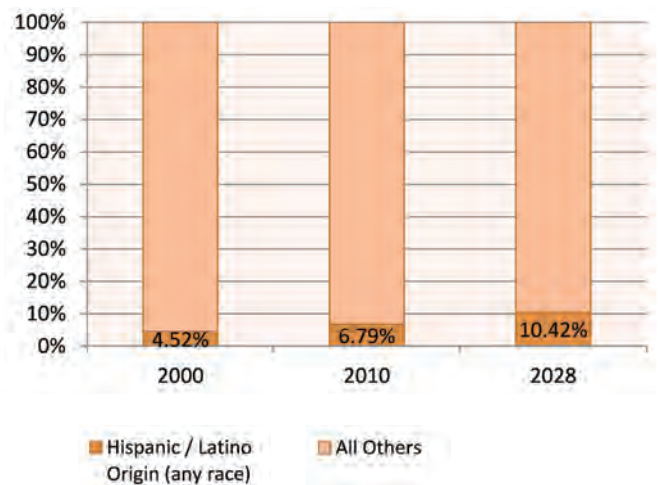


Figure 3.5 - Population by Ethnicity

Households and Income

The Village of Oak Park’s projected income characteristics demonstrate an upward trend. The median household income is estimated to be \$72,867 in 2013 and per capita income is an estimated \$44,599. Household income is projected to grow to \$99,967 by 2028, while per capita income will reach \$59,095. The median household income represents the earnings of all persons age 16 years or older living together in a housing unit. (Figure 3.6).

As seen in Figure 3.7, the service area’s median household income is well above the state (\$56,576) and national (\$52,762) averages. Per capita income is also much higher than state (\$29,511) and national (\$27,915) averages. Future predictions expect that both median household income and per capita income for the area will increase to \$99,967 and \$59,095, respectively, by 2028.

Both of these high-income numbers mean both that there is a greater level of disposable dollars in the community, and that they come with higher expectation for quality program and facility offerings within the target audiences.

Thus, what might be ‘good enough’ in many places may not be acceptable in Oak Park and the staff must continue to place additional emphasis on service offerings and service delivery through outstanding customer service as a way to differentiate themselves from their competitors.

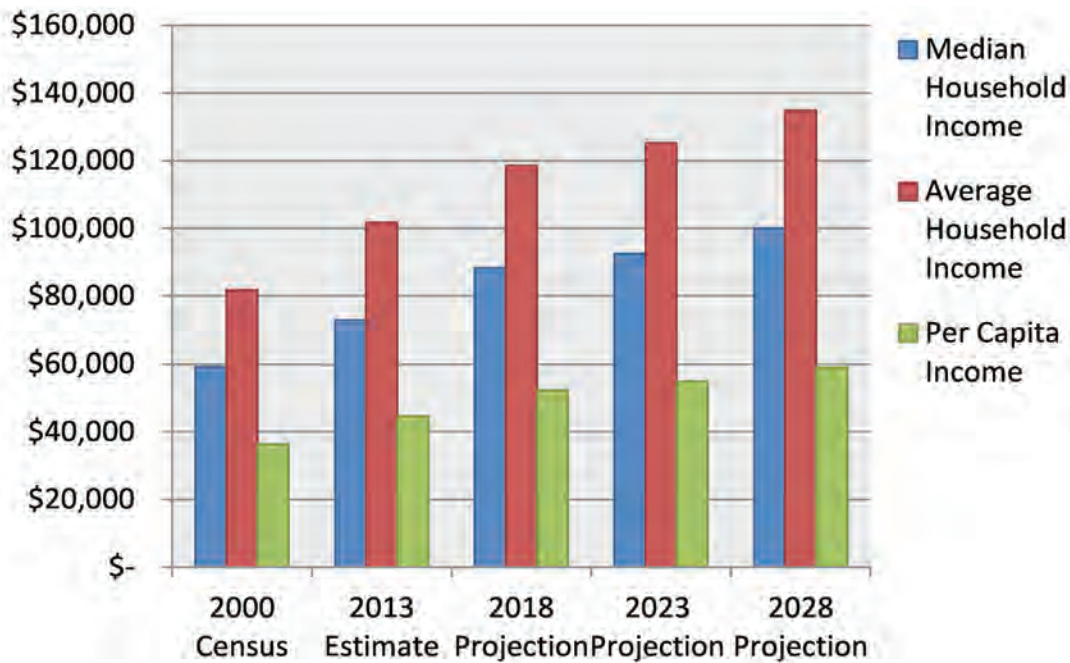


Figure 3.6 - Household Income Characteristics

Market Profile

Level of Education

The chart below (Figure 3.7) depicts the education level of adults 25 years and older within the Village of Oak Park. Approximately 96% of residents have at least a high school diploma, and nearly 70% have a Bachelor’s degree or better. This is significantly higher than national averages and correlates directly with higher income levels and could also indicate a propensity to make greater use of online and social media tools to seek information for PDOP offerings.

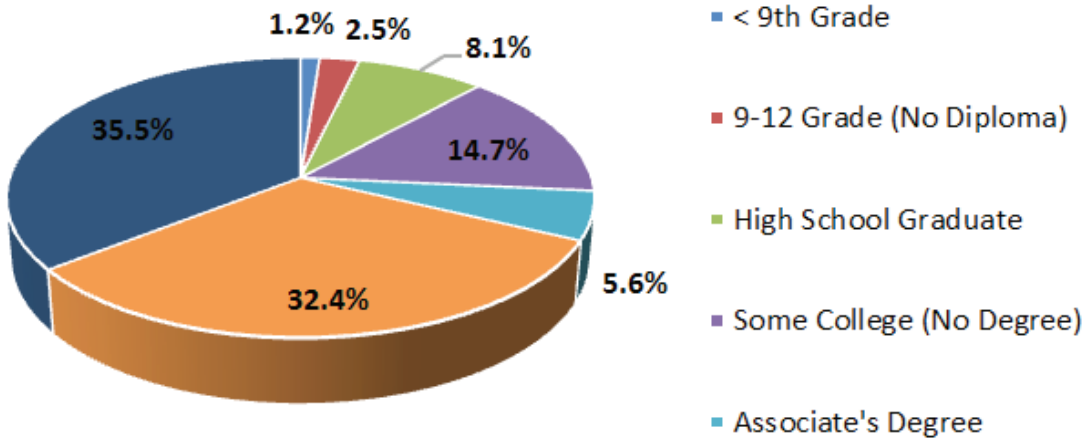


Figure 3.7 - Education Attained (25+ years old)

Consumer Spending

The graph below (Figure 3.8) shows the average consumer dollars spent among residents of Oak Park in 2013. Entertainment/recreation ranks fifth out of the 14 categories reported, averaging over \$4,700 spent per resident per year, which is higher than even travel and dining out and is certainly encouraging for PDOP offerings.

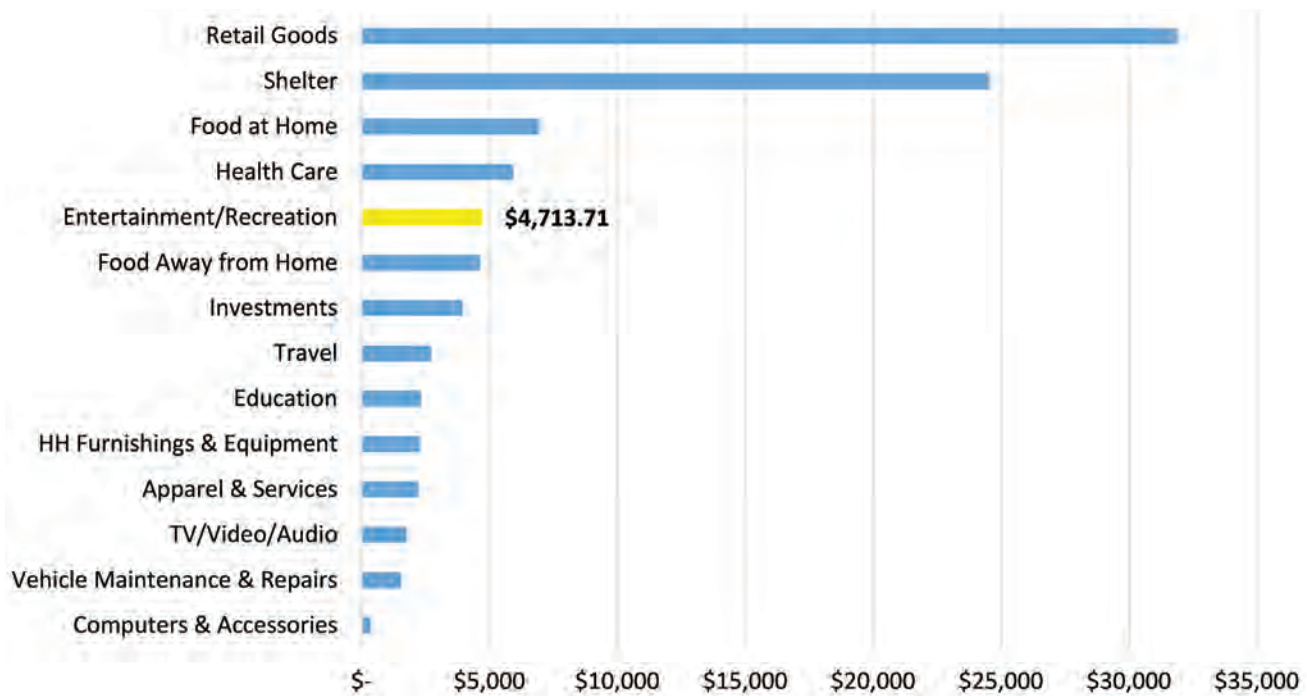


Figure 3.8 - Consumer Spending (Average Dollars Spent)

Tapestry Segmentation

In the Socioeconomics of Urban Travel: Evidence from the 2001 National Household Travel Survey report, John Pucher and John Renne evaluate variations in travel behavior and other behavioral characteristics based on income, race, ethnicity, sex, and age.

They developed a 65-segment Community Tapestry system that classifies U.S. neighborhoods based on their socioeconomic and demographic compositions. Community Tapestry combines the traditional statistical methodology of cluster analysis with ESRI's latest data mining techniques to provide a robust and compelling segmentation of U.S. neighborhoods. Tapestry market information is of particular importance for an abundance of campaigns, including:

- Targeting specific groups
- Using customer preferences in developing services
- Customer relations and marketing

To provide a broader view of the 65 various tapestry profile segments, twelve LifeMode groups were created (Figure 3.9). LifeMode groups are based on lifestyle and lifestage composition.

When analyzing the LifeMode Groups by household income, it is evident that although LifeMode Groups are summarized based on a shared experience, many of the similarities are based on the socioeconomic profiles of the segmented populace. Figure 10 illustrates the income ranges of each of the LifeMode Groups. While most fall in the middle ground, only one group – High Society – is exclusively comprised of very affluent households.

Figure 3.10 presents the top ten individual tapestry segments for the Village of Oak Park and the comparative national percentages for those segments. The index for each segment denotes the likelihood of an occurrence compared to national averages (index of 100). Thus, an index of 200 means that the occurrence, (in this case, a tapestry segment), is twice as likely to happen within the service area.

As can be seen in Figure 3.10, the top ten tapestry segments alone comprise over 80% of the local population. More importantly, seven of the top ten segments fall under the LifeMode groups of Solo Acts, Upscale Avenues, and High Society, a further indication of the above average income levels and lifestyle of the primary target market.

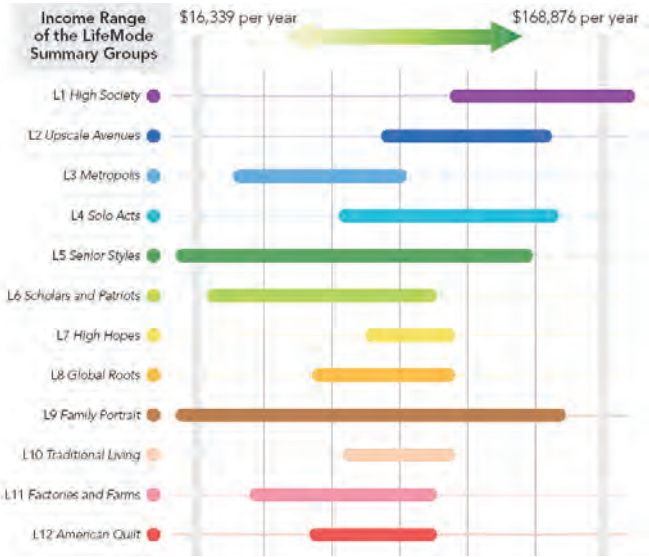


Figure 3.9 - LifeMode Groups

The top ten tapestry segments fall under the six main LifeMode groups that are depicted below along with the key characteristics of each group.

Solo Acts (old and newcomers, trendsetters, Metro Renters) 30.4% total

- This group features singles who prefer urban life; many are young, startup households located in America’s more densely populated neighborhoods; contrary to modern migration patterns that flow away from the largest cities, Solo Acts’ residents are moving into major cities like Chicago
- Second only to High Society, this group tends to be well-educated, working professionals who are either attending college or already hold a degree
- Incomes reflect their employment experience, ranging from a low median of \$40,400 among the newest households to approximately \$91,000 among established singles

- With considerable discretionary income and few commitments, their lifestyle is urban, including the best of city life—arts and leisure offerings, dining out, attending plays, and visiting museums—and, for a break from constant connectivity, extensive travel domestically and abroad

Upscale Avenues (urban chic, in style) 19.3% total

- Success has been earned from years of hard work; well educated with above average earnings
- Wide range of housing preferences – high-rise townhouses to single-family suburban neighborhoods, open spaces, and renters
- Median household income is \$70,504; median net worth exceeds \$178,285
- They love to participate in leisure activities and sports such as golf, bicycling, and domestic vacations

Village of Oak Park Households					
U.S. Households					
Rank	Tapestry Segment	LifeMode Group	Percent	Percent	Index
1	Old and Newcomers	Solo Acts	11.8%	2.0%	578
2	Urban Chic	Upscale Avenues	11.5%	1.4%	825
3	Trendsetters	Solo Acts	10.4%	1.2%	895
4	Sophisticated Squires	High Society	8.9%	2.5%	358
5	Metropolitans	Metropolis	8.6%	1.4%	603
	Subtotal		51.2%	8.5%	
6	Metro Renters	Solo Acts	8.2%	1.6%	497
7	In Style	Upscale Avenues	7.8%	2.3%	337
8	Top Rung	High Society	6.2%	0.9%	696
9	Main Street, USA	Traditional Living	3.9%	2.2%	176
10	Retirement Communities	Senior Styles	3.8%	1.6%	238
	Subtotal		29.9%	8.6%	

Figure 3.10 - Top Ten Individual Tapestry Segments for Oak Park

High Society (sophisticated squires, top rung) 15.1% total

- Affluent and well educated; represent slightly more than 12% of the U.S. households but generate nearly 25% of total U.S. income
- Median household income of this group (\$104,934) is nearly twice as much as the national median
- One of the least ethnically diverse groups, however, one of the fastest growing, increasing by 2% annually
- Active financially, civically, and physically; participate in a wide variety of public activities and sports; travel extensively

Metropolis (metropolitans) 8.6% total

- Live and work in America's cities; occupy older, single-family homes or row houses built in the 1940s or earlier
- Diverse segment in housing, age, and income; from Generation Xers to retirees; households include married couples with children and single parents with children; from well-educated professionals to unemployed
- Median home value is \$166,249; median household income of the group is approximately \$41,099
- Lifestyle is uniquely urban and media oriented; those living in larger cities tend to own fewer vehicles and rely more on public transportation

Traditional living (Main street, usa) 3.9% total

- Group conveys the common perception of middle America – hardworking, settled families
- Higher median age of 37.8 years conveys their lifestage – a number of older residents who are completing their child-rearing responsibilities and looking forward to retirement

- The aging of the population has not slowed their participation in the labor force; they earn a modest living and typically own single-family homes in established neighborhoods that are experiencing slow population growth
- Residents belong to veterans' clubs and fraternal organizations; rely on traditional information sources, such as newspapers, for their news

Senior Styles (retirement communities) 3.8% total

- Nearly 14.2 million households comprise this summary group; segment illustrates the diversity among today's senior markets
- Incomes within this group cover a wide range, the median is approximately \$44,094, attributable mostly to retirement income or Social Security payments
- Younger, more affluent seniors, freed of their child-rearing responsibilities, are traveling and relocating to warmer climates; settled seniors are looking forward to retirement and remaining in their homes
- This is the most politically active market group; golf is clearly their sport of choice; they read the newspaper daily and prefer to watch news shows on television

Knowledge of consumer types, shopping patterns, and product and media preferences aid in providing consumers with the right products and services. This information is key to effective marketing and communication to potential consumers through their preferred media method.

In summary, the high numbers of specific LifeMode Groups and specific Tapestry segments indicate a high preference towards active lifestyles and recreation opportunities. However, what would most attract some of the audiences from this above average educated and affluent population are innovative and niche offerings that convey a sense of exclusivity i.e. not just what the neighboring Park Districts are offering but something that is unique to Oak Park.

Recreation Trends

The following tables summarize the findings from the Sports & Fitness Industry Association’s (SFIA) 2014 Sports, Fitness and Leisure Activities Topline Participation Report.

Summary of National Participatory Trends Analysis	
1.	Number of “inactives” decreased slightly, those ‘active to a healthy level’ on the rise
a.	“Inactives” down 0.4% in 2013, from 80.4 million to 80.2 million
b.	Approximately one-third of Americans (ages 6+) are active to a healthy level
2.	Most popular sport and recreational activities
a.	Fitness Walking (117 million)
b.	Running/Jogging (54 million)
c.	Treadmill (48 million)
3.	Most participated in team sports
a.	Basketball (23.7 million)
b.	Tennis (17.7 million)
c.	Baseball (13.3 million)
4.	Activities most rapidly growing over last five years
a.	Adventure Racing – up 159%
b.	Non-traditional/Off-road Triathlon – up 156%
c.	Traditional/Road Triathlon – up 140%
d.	Squash – up 115%
e.	Rugby – up 81%
5.	Activities most rapidly declining over last five years
a.	Wrestling – down 45%
b.	In-line Roller Skating – down 40%
c.	Touch Football – down 32%
d.	Horseback Riding – down 29%
e.	Slow-pitch Softball – down 29%

Information released by Sports & Fitness Industry Association’s (SFIA) 2014 Study of Sports, Fitness, and Leisure Participation reveals that the most popular sport and recreational activities include: fitness walking, treadmill, running/jogging, free weights and bicycling. Most of these activities appeal to both young and old alike, can be done in most environments, are enjoyed regardless of level of skill, and have minimal economic barriers to entry. These popular activities also have appeal because of the social aspect. For example, although fitness activities are mainly self-directed, people enjoy walking and biking with other individuals because it can offer a

degree of camaraderie.

Fitness walking has remained the most popular activity of the past decade by a large margin. Walking participation during the latest year data was available (2013), reported over 117 million Americans had walked for fitness at least once.

From a traditional team sport standpoint, basketball ranks highest among all sports, with nearly 24 million people reportedly participating in 2013. Team sports that have experienced significant growth in participation are rugby, lacrosse, field hockey, ice hockey, gymnastics, beach volleyball, and Ultimate Frisbee— all of which have experienced double digit growth over the last five years. Most recently, rugby, field hockey, and lacrosse underwent the most rapid growth among team sports from 2012 to 2013.

In the past year, there has been a slight (0.4%) decrease of “inactives” in America, from 80.4 million in 2012 to 80.2 million in 2013. According to the Physical Activity Council, an “inactive” is defined as an individual that doesn’t take part in any “active” sport. Even more encouraging is that an estimated 33.9% of Americans above the age of 6 are active to a healthy level, taking part in a high calorie burning activity three or more times per week.

The Sports & Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) Sports, Fitness & Recreational Activities Topline Participation Report 2014 was utilized to evaluate national sport and fitness participatory trends. SFIA is the number one source for sport and fitness research. The study is based on online interviews carried out in January and February of 2014 from more than 19,000 individuals and households.

NOTE: In 2012, the Sports & Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) came into existence after a two-year strategic review and planning process with a refined mission statement-- “To Promote Sports and Fitness Participation and Industry Vitality”. The SFIA was formerly known as the Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association (SGMA).

National Trends in General Sports

Basketball, a game originating in the U.S., is actually the most participated in sport among the traditional “bat and ball” sports with almost 24 million estimated participants. This popularity can be attributed to the ability to compete with relatively small number of participants, the limited amount of equipment needed to participate, and the limited space requirements necessary – the last of which make basketball the only traditional sport that can be played at the majority of American dwellings as a driveway pickup game.

As seen in Figure 3.11, since 2008, squash and other niche sports like lacrosse and rugby have seen strong growth. Squash has emerged as the fastest growing sport overall, as it has seen participation levels rise by nearly 115% over the last five years. Based on survey findings from 2008-2013, rugby and lacrosse have also experienced significant growth, increasing by 80.9% and 66% respectively. Other sports with notable

growth in participation over the last five years were field hockey (31.4%), ice hockey (27.9%), gymnastics (25.1%), and beach volleyball (18.5%). From 2012 to 2013, the fastest growing sports were rugby (33.4%), field hockey (19.2%), lacrosse (12.8%), and squash (9.6%). During the last five years, the sports that are most rapidly declining include wrestling (45.2% decrease), touch football (down 32%), and slow pitch softball (28.9% decrease).

In terms of total participants, the most popular activities in the general sports category in 2013 include basketball (23.7 million), tennis (17.7 million), baseball (13.3 million), outdoor soccer (12.7 million), and slow pitch softball (6.9 million). Although three out of five of these sports have been declining in recent years, the sheer number of participants demands the continued support of these activities.

National Participatory Trends - General Sports											
Activity	Participation Levels						% Change				
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	12-13	11-13	10-13	09-13	08-13
Baseball	15,539	14,429	14,198	13,561	12,976	13,284	2.4%	-2.0%	-6.4%	-7.9%	-14.5%
Basketball	26,108	25,131	25,156	24,790	23,708	23,669	-0.2%	-4.5%	-5.9%	-5.8%	-9.3%
Cheerleading	3,192	3,070	3,134	3,049	3,244	3,235	-0.3%	6.1%	3.2%	5.4%	1.3%
Field Hockey	1,122	1,092	1,182	1,147	1,237	1,474	19.2%	28.5%	24.7%	35.0%	31.4%
Football, Flag	7,310	6,932	6,660	6,325	5,865	5,610	-4.3%	-11.3%	-15.8%	-19.1%	-23.3%
Football, Tackle	7,816	7,243	6,850	6,448	6,220	6,165	-0.9%	-4.4%	-10.0%	-14.9%	-21.1%
Football, Touch	10,493	9,726	8,663	7,684	7,295	7,140	-2.1%	-7.1%	-17.6%	-26.6%	-32.0%
Gymnastics	3,975	3,952	4,418	4,824	5,115	4,972	-2.8%	3.1%	12.5%	25.8%	25.1%
Ice Hockey	1,871	2,018	2,140	2,131	2,363	2,393	1.3%	12.3%	11.8%	18.6%	27.9%
Lacrosse	1,092	1,162	1,423	1,501	1,607	1,813	12.8%	20.8%	27.4%	56.0%	66.0%
Racquetball	4,611	4,784	4,603	4,357	4,070	3,824	-6.0%	-12.2%	-16.9%	-20.1%	-17.1%
Roller Hockey	1,569	1,427	1,374	1,237	1,367	1,298	-5.0%	4.9%	-5.5%	-9.0%	-17.3%
Rugby	654	720	940	850	887	1,183	33.4%	39.2%	25.9%	64.3%	80.9%
Soccer (Indoor)	4,487	4,825	4,920	4,631	4,617	4,803	4.0%	3.7%	-2.4%	-0.5%	7.0%
Soccer (Outdoor)	13,996	13,957	13,883	13,667	12,944	12,726	-1.7%	-6.9%	-8.3%	-8.8%	-9.1%
Softball (Fast Pitch)	2,331	2,476	2,513	2,400	2,624	2,498	-4.8%	4.1%	-0.6%	0.9%	7.2%
Softball (Slow Pitch)	9,660	9,180	8,477	7,809	7,411	6,868	-7.3%	-12.1%	-19.0%	-25.2%	-28.9%
Squash	659	796	1,031	1,112	1,290	1,414	9.6%	27.2%	37.1%	77.6%	114.6%
Tennis	17,749	18,546	18,719	17,772	17,020	17,678	3.9%	-0.5%	-5.6%	-4.7%	-0.4%
Track and Field	4,604	4,480	4,383	4,341	4,257	4,071	-4.4%	-6.2%	-7.1%	-9.1%	-11.6%
Ultimate Frisbee	4,459	4,636	4,571	4,868	5,131	5,077	-1.1%	4.3%	11.1%	9.5%	13.9%
Volleyball (Court)	7,588	7,737	7,315	6,662	6,384	6,433	0.8%	-3.4%	-12.1%	-16.9%	-15.2%
Volleyball (Sand/Beach)	4,025	4,324	4,752	4,451	4,505	4,769	5.9%	7.1%	0.4%	10.3%	18.5%
Wrestling	3,335	3,170	2,536	1,971	1,922	1,829	-4.8%	-7.2%	-27.9%	-42.3%	-45.2%

NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over

Legend: Large Increase (greater than 25%) Moderate Increase (0% to 25%) Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%) Large Decrease (less than -25%)

Figure 3.11 - National Participatory Trends - General Sports

National Trends in Aquatic Activity

Swimming is unquestionably a lifetime sport. Swimming activities have remained very popular among Americans, and both competition and fitness swimming have witnessed an increase in participation recently. Fitness swimming is the absolute leader in multigenerational appeal with over 26 million reported participants in 2013, a 13.5% increase from the previous year (Figure 3.12). NOTE: In 2011, recreational swimming was broken into competition and fitness categories in order to better identify key trends.

Aquatic Exercise has a strong participation base, but has recently experienced a downward trend. Aquatic exercise has paved the way for a less stressful form of physical activity, allowing similar gains and benefits to land-based exercise, including aerobic fitness, resistance training, flexibility, and better balance. Doctors have begun recommending aquatic exercise for injury rehabilitation, mature patients, and patients with bone or joint problems due to the significant reduction of stress placed on weight-bearing joints, bones, muscles, and also the effect that the pressure of the water assists in reducing swelling of injuries.

National Participatory Trends - Aquatics											
Activity	Participation Levels						% Change				
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	12-13	11-13	10-13	09-13	08-13
Aquatic Exercise	9,512	8,965	8,947	9,042	9,177	8,483	-7.6%	-6.2%	-5.2%	-5.4%	-10.8%
Swimming (Competition)	N/A	N/A	N/A	2,363	2,502	2,638	5.4%	11.6%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Swimming (Fitness)	N/A	N/A	N/A	21,517	23,216	26,354	13.5%	22.5%	N/A	N/A	N/A

NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over

Legend:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)
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Figure 3.12 - National Participatory Trends - Aquatics

National Trends in General Fitness

National participatory trends in general fitness have experienced some strong growth in recent years. Many of these activities have become popular due to an increased interest among people in improving their health by engaging in an active lifestyle. These activities also have very few barriers to entry, which provides a variety of activities that are relatively inexpensive to participate in and can be performed by nearly anyone with no time restrictions.

The most popular fitness activity by far is fitness walking, which had over 117 million participants in 2013, which was a 2.9% increase from the previous year. Other leading fitness activities based on number of participants include running/jogging (over 54 million), treadmill (48.1 million), and hand free weights (43.2 million), and weight/resistant machines (36.3 million).

Over the last five years, the activities that are growing most rapidly are high impact aerobics (up 47.1%), yoga (up 36.9%), running/jogging (up 31.9%), cardio kickboxing (28.7% increase), and group stationary cycling (up 27.8%). Most recently, from 2012-2013, the largest gains in participation were in boxing for fitness (8.7% increase), Tai Chi (up 8.3%), and high impact aerobics (up 7.1%). See Figure 3.13.

National Participatory Trends - General Fitness											
Activity	Participation Levels						% Change				
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	12-13	11-13	10-13	09-13	08-13
Aerobics (High Impact)	11,780	12,771	14,567	15,755	16,178	17,323	7.1%	10.0%	18.9%	35.6%	47.1%
Aerobics (Low Impact)	23,283	24,927	26,431	25,950	25,707	25,033	-2.6%	-3.5%	-5.3%	0.4%	7.5%
Aerobics (Step)	9,423	10,551	11,034	10,273	9,577	8,961	-6.4%	-12.8%	-18.8%	-15.1%	-4.9%
Boxing for Fitness	N/A	N/A	4,788	4,631	4,831	5,251	8.7%	13.4%	9.7%	N/A	N/A
Calisthenics	8,888	9,127	9,097	8,787	9,356	9,356	0.0%	6.5%	2.8%	2.5%	5.3%
Cross-Training	N/A	N/A	N/A	7,706	7,496	6,911	-7.8%	-10.3%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Cardio Kickboxing	4,905	5,500	6,287	6,488	6,725	6,311	-6.2%	-2.7%	0.4%	14.7%	28.7%
Elliptical Motion Trainer	24,435	25,903	27,319	29,734	28,560	27,119	-5.0%	-8.8%	-0.7%	4.7%	11.0%
Fitness Walking	110,204	110,882	112,082	112,715	114,029	117,351	2.9%	4.1%	4.7%	5.8%	6.5%
Free Weights (Barbells)	25,821	26,595	27,194	27,056	26,688	25,641	-3.9%	-5.2%	-5.7%	-3.6%	-0.7%
Free Weights (Dumbbells)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	32,309	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Free Weights (Hand Weights)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	43,164	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Martial Arts	6,818	6,643	6,002	5,037	5,075	5,314	4.7%	5.5%	-11.5%	-20.0%	-22.1%
Pilates Training	9,039	8,770	8,404	8,507	8,519	8,069	-5.3%	-5.1%	-4.0%	-8.0%	-10.7%
Running/Jogging	41,097	42,511	46,650	50,061	51,450	54,188	5.3%	8.2%	16.2%	27.5%	31.9%
Stair Climbing Machine	13,863	13,653	13,269	13,409	12,979	12,642	-2.6%	-5.7%	-4.7%	-7.4%	-8.8%
Stationary Cycling (Group)	6,504	6,762	7,854	8,738	8,477	8,309	-2.0%	-4.9%	5.8%	22.9%	27.8%
Stationary Cycling (Recumbent)	11,104	11,299	11,459	11,933	11,649	11,159	-4.2%	-6.5%	-2.6%	-1.2%	0.5%
Stationary Cycling (Upright)	24,918	24,916	24,578	24,409	24,338	24,088	-1.0%	-1.3%	-2.0%	-3.3%	-3.3%
Stretching	36,235	36,299	35,720	34,687	35,873	36,202	0.9%	4.4%	1.3%	-0.3%	-0.1%
Tai Chi	3,424	3,315	3,193	2,975	3,203	3,469	8.3%	16.6%	8.6%	4.6%	1.3%
Treadmill	49,722	50,395	52,275	53,260	50,839	48,166	-5.3%	-9.6%	-7.9%	-4.4%	-3.1%
Weight/Resistant Machines	38,844	39,075	39,185	39,548	38,999	36,267	-7.0%	-8.3%	-7.4%	-7.2%	-6.6%
Yoga	17,758	18,934	20,998	22,107	23,253	24,310	4.5%	10.0%	15.8%	28.4%	36.9%

NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over

Legend:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)
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Figure 3.13 - National Participatory Trends - General Fitness

National Trends in General Recreation

Results from the SFIA's Topline Participation Report demonstrate increased popularity among Americans in numerous general recreation activities. Much like the general fitness activities, these activities encourage an active lifestyle, can be performed individually or with a group, and are not limited by time restraints. In 2013, the most popular activities in the general recreation category include road bicycling (over 40 million participants), freshwater fishing (nearly 38 million participants), and day hiking (over 34 million participants).

From 2008-2013, general recreation activities that have undergone very rapid growth are adventure racing (up 159%), non-traditional/off-road triathlons (up 156%), traditional/road triathlons (up 139.9%), and trail running (up 49.7%). In-line roller skating, horseback riding, and skateboarding have all seen a substantial drop in participation, decreasing by 40%, 29.4%, and 21.8% respectively over the last five years. See Figure 3.14.

National Participatory Trends - General Recreation											
Activity	Participation Levels						% Change				
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	12-13	11-13	10-13	09-13	08-13
Adventure Racing	809	1,005	1,214	1,202	1,618	2,095	29.5%	74.3%	72.6%	108.5%	159.0%
Archery	6,180	6,368	6,323	6,471	7,173	7,647	6.6%	18.2%	20.9%	20.1%	23.7%
Bicycling (Mountain)	7,242	7,367	7,152	6,989	7,265	8,542	17.6%	22.2%	19.4%	15.9%	18.0%
Bicycling (Road)	38,527	39,127	39,730	39,834	39,790	40,888	2.8%	2.6%	2.9%	4.5%	6.1%
Bicycling (BMX)	1,896	1,858	2,090	1,958	1,861	2,168	16.5%	10.7%	3.7%	16.7%	14.3%
Camping (Recreational Vehicle)	16,343	16,977	16,651	16,282	15,903	14,556	-8.5%	-10.6%	-12.6%	-14.3%	-10.9%
Camping (Within 1/4 Mile of Vehicle/Home)	32,531	34,012	32,667	31,961	31,454	29,269	-6.9%	-8.4%	-10.4%	-13.9%	-10.0%
Climbing (Sport/Indoor/Boulder)	4,642	4,541	4,542	4,445	4,355	4,745	9.0%	6.7%	4.5%	4.5%	2.2%
Climbing (Traditional/Ice/Mountaineering)	2,175	2,062	2,017	1,904	2,189	2,319	5.9%	21.8%	15.0%	12.5%	6.6%
Fishing (Fly)	5,849	5,755	5,523	5,581	5,848	5,878	0.5%	5.3%	6.4%	2.1%	0.5%
Fishing (Freshwater)	42,095	40,646	39,911	38,864	39,002	37,796	-3.1%	-2.7%	-5.3%	-7.0%	-10.2%
Fishing (Saltwater)	14,121	13,054	12,056	11,896	12,000	11,790	-1.8%	-0.9%	-2.2%	-9.7%	-16.5%
Golf	28,571	27,103	26,122	25,682	25,280	24,720	-2.2%	-3.7%	-5.4%	-8.8%	-13.5%
Hiking (Day)	31,238	32,542	32,534	33,494	34,519	34,378	-0.4%	2.6%	5.7%	5.6%	10.1%
Horseback Riding	11,457	10,286	9,782	9,335	8,423	8,089	-4.0%	-13.3%	-17.3%	-21.4%	-29.4%
Hunting (Bow)	3,770	3,974	4,067	4,271	4,354	4,079	-6.3%	-4.5%	0.3%	2.6%	8.2%
Hunting (Handgun)	2,734	2,575	2,493	2,690	3,112	3,198	2.8%	18.9%	28.3%	24.2%	17.0%
Hunting (Rifle)	10,490	10,729	10,632	10,479	10,485	9,792	-6.6%	-6.6%	-7.9%	-8.7%	-6.7%
Hunting (Shotgun)	8,638	8,611	8,276	8,370	8,426	7,894	-6.3%	-5.7%	-4.6%	-8.3%	-8.6%
Roller Skating, In-Line	10,211	8,942	8,128	7,451	6,647	6,129	-7.8%	-17.7%	-24.6%	-31.5%	-40.0%
Shooting (Sport Clays)	4,199	4,232	4,291	4,296	4,544	4,479	-1.4%	4.3%	4.4%	5.8%	6.7%
Shooting (Trap/Skeet)	3,523	3,519	3,489	3,453	3,591	3,784	5.4%	9.6%	8.5%	7.5%	7.4%
Skateboarding	8,118	7,580	7,080	6,318	6,227	6,350	2.0%	0.5%	-10.3%	-16.2%	-21.8%
Target Shooting (Handgun)	12,551	12,919	12,485	13,638	15,418	14,370	-6.8%	5.4%	15.1%	11.2%	14.5%
Target Shooting (Rifle)	12,769	12,916	12,637	13,032	13,853	13,023	-6.0%	-0.1%	3.1%	0.8%	2.0%
Trail Running	4,537	4,845	4,985	5,373	5,806	6,792	17.0%	26.4%	36.2%	40.2%	49.7%
Triathlon (Non-Traditional/Off Road)	543	634	798	819	1,075	1,390	29.3%	69.7%	74.2%	119.2%	156.0%
Triathlon (Traditional/Road)	943	1,148	1,593	1,686	1,789	2,262	26.4%	34.2%	42.0%	97.0%	139.9%

NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over

Legend:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)
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Figure 3.14 - National Participatory Trends - General Recreation

Local Sports and Market Potential

The following charts show sport and leisure market potential data from ESRI. A Market Potential Index (MPI) measures the probable demand for a product or service in the Village of Oak Park. The MPI shows the likelihood that an adult resident of the service area will participate in certain activities when compared to the US National average. The National average is 100, therefore numbers below 100 would represent a lower than average participation rate, and numbers above 100 would represent higher than average participation rate.

The service area is compared to the national average in four (4) categories – general sports, fitness, outdoor activity, and money spent on miscellaneous recreation. Overall, the Village of Oak Park participation trends

demonstrate high market potential index numbers in all categories. Of particular interest are:

- Participation in Golf, Soccer and Tennis
- All fitness-related programming (jogging / running, aerobics, pilates, yoga, swimming, weightlifting etc.)
- Outdoor activities (backpacking / hiking, biking, canoeing / kayaking etc.)

As seen in the tables below (Figures 3.15 to 3.18), the following sport and leisure trends are most prevalent for residents within service area. Cells highlighted in yellow indicate the top three (top four in case of a tie) scoring activities for each category based on the purchasing preferences of residents.

Oak Park Participatory Trends - Money Spent on Recreation	
Activity	MPI
Spent on High End Sports/Recreation Equipment <\$250	101
Spent on High End Sports/Recreation Equipment >\$250	108
Attend sports event: baseball game	126
Attend sports event: basketball game (college)	110
Attend sports event: basketball game (pro)	117
Attend sports event: football game (college)	104
Attend sports event: football-Monday night game (pro)	103
Attend sports event: football-weekend game (pro)	119
Attend sports event: golf tournament	109
Attend sports event: ice hockey game	115
Attend sports event: soccer game	115
Attend sports event: tennis match	113
Visited a theme park in last 12 months	111
Visited Disney World (FL)/12 mo: Magic Kingdom	108
Visited any Sea World in last 12 months	101
Visited any Six Flags in last 12 months	118
Went to zoo in last 12 months	116

Figure 3.15 - Oak Park Participatory Trends - Recreation

Oak Park Participatory Trends - General Sports	
Activity	MPI
Participated in Baseball	99
Participated in Basketball	100
Participated in Football	92
Participated in Golf	116
Participated in Soccer	121
Participated in Softball	102
Participated in Tennis	136
Participated in Volleyball	102

Figure 3.16 - Oak Park Participatory Trends - General Sports

Oak Park Participatory Trends - Fitness	
Activity	MPI
Participated in Aerobics	132
Jogging/ Running	142
Participated in Pilates	137
Participated in Swimming	122
Participated in Walking for Exercise	121
Participated in Weight Lifting	137
Participated in Yoga	159

Figure 3.17 - Oak Park Participatory Trends - Fitness

Oak Park Participatory Trends - Outdoor Activity	
Activity	MPI
Participated in Archery	74
Participated in Backpacking/Hiking	137
Participated in Bicycling (mountain)	134
Participated in Bicycling (road)	133
Participated in Boating (Power)	98
Participated in Canoeing/Kayaking	116
Participated in Fishing (fresh water)	79
Participated in Fishing (salt water)	108

Figure 3.18 - Oak Park Participatory Trends - Outdoor Activity

Previous Plans and Reports

The Park District of Oak Park has worked diligently over the years to self-evaluate and plan for the future. The Comprehensive Plan process is not intended to re-create any previous efforts, but instead to build upon them and supplement the analysis and outputs of these efforts with current data and information. The following is a summary of the plans, studies and reports that were reviewed as part of the Comprehensive Planning Process.

2004 Comprehensive Master Plan

The previous Comprehensive Master Plan for the Park District established a baseline understanding of the District at the time and a series of recommendations for moving forward. The process included stakeholder and focus group interviews as well as an Attitude and Interest Survey. Key elements that came from this Plan included a referendum that established the Park District with a secure line of financing that provided funding for much-needed capital work. This led directly into the process of developing and implementing Master Plans for all of the parks to address deficiencies within the parks.

2005-2011 Park Master Plans

A series of plans and exhibits detailing the master plans for all parks within the District (with the exception of Barrie Park) which were completed in 2005. Many of the plans identify phasing of improvements, and all of the parks have had at least the initial phase implemented.

2010 Community Attitude & Interest Survey

An update to the Community Attitude & Interest Survey conducted as part of the 2004 Comprehensive Plan. The survey helped to evaluate progress from the 2004 Plan and to specifically identify the community's preference for repair and upgrading the existing Ridgeland Common building.

2010 Population Report

A report that analyzes age and gender distribution per Census tract in the Village based on the 2010 Census results. Generally, the demographic analysis compared to the 2000 Census shows a stable, but aging, population with a reduction in population in the 20 to 24 year old age range. It also highlights specific shifts per Census tract.

2012 Conservatory Report

A summary report for the Conservatory for 2012. The report provides an overview of expenses, revenues, visitor statistics, facility improvements and plans for the future. The Conservatory draws more than half of its visitors from outside of Oak Park.

2011/2012 Gymnastics Facility & Operations Report

A report providing background on the operations of the gymnastic program, including programs, registration, risk management, training and revenue and expenses. This report was developed prior to the transition to the Gymnastics & Recreation Center and discusses opportunities to capitalize on the new facility.

2012 Annual Programming & Participation Report

A report identifying the strengths, weaknesses and trends within Park District programs to help understand needed improvements and assist with program decision making. The report shows that revenues have grown in many of the categories. Specific programming categories, such as ice and fitness/martial arts, were impacted by changes to the facility or departure of a specialized instructor. Otherwise, the report indicates that significant management and monitoring of the programs has resulted in overall improvements.

2012-13 Rink Report

A report for the final season of the Ridgeland Common indoor ice rink prior to its closing for renovation. The report identifies decreased registration, participation and rentals, potentially due to the pending closing. However, revenue was still shown to exceed expenses.

2013 Budget

A report on the financial condition of the Park District and budget items for 2013. Major investments planned included the completion of the Gymnastics and Recreation Center, the start of construction of the new Ridgeland Common, continued technology improvements, completion of the Scoville Park renovations and increased investment in outdoor athletic fields through the hiring of a sports field manager and purchasing of new field maintenance equipment.

2013 Comprehensive Outdoor Athletic Field Development & Operation Plan

A report on the District's athletic fields and operations. Includes an assessment of all Park District and local school district athletic fields, including capacity and demand analysis. The report includes recommendations for improvements, changes in maintenance operations and useage guidelines, such as rotation of the fields and maximum use of each field.

2013 Pool Report

A report on the 2013 pool season. Due to the temporary closing of Ridgeland Common for renovation, and an abundance of cool and rainy days, registration and attendance were down from previous years. Additionally, expenses exceeded revenues for the season. The report lays out plans for changes to better meet budget goals and a transition plan for the 2014 season as Ridgeland Common reopens.

2013 Teen Center Report

A report identifying the number of visits tracked during drop-in hours at the Teen Center at Stevenson Park, leading to the recommendation that the Teen Center be closed for drop-in hours at the end of 2013.

2013 Facility Availability Study

A series of charts that detail the availability, expressed as a percentage, of all individual rooms and facilities within the Park District, as tracked for the 2013 calendar year. These charts show that many of the facilities have significant availability depending on the time of day and day of the week.

2013-15 Strategic Plan

A report that establishes the mission, vision and values of the Park District as well as strategic initiatives, goals and objectives for the three year period of 2013 to 2015. These strategic initiatives, goals and objectives are used for benchmarking and justifying budget decisions moving forward.

2014 Brand Strategy Report

A report on the brand strategy process and recommendations. This process studied the alignment of the visual identity of the Park District with the message it communicates and its mission. The study identified recommendations for the District's brand and identity, marketing mix and messaging. Specifically, it provided recommendations for new marketing messages for the overall Park District, as well as targeted messages for Ridgeland Common, Cheney Mansion and the Conservatory.

2014 Budget

A report on the financial condition of the Park District and budget items for 2014. Major investments planned included the completion of the Ridgeland Common, continued technology improvements, a comprehensive update to the District's park rules signs, increased allocation of resources to help maintain playing fields, standardization of district camps to a one-week format and full-year operation of the Gymnastics and Recreation Center.

2015-19 Capital Improvement Plan

A document identifying the five-year projection of planned capital improvements to Park District, including the planned budget and benefits related to planned expenditures.

Village & Other Plans

2012 Madison Street Corridor Plan

The Madison Street Plan developed a vision for this key east-west Village corridor. In specific, it identifies a Node at Oak Park Avenue and calls out that the Village-owned site at the northeast corner of Madison Street and Oak Park Avenue should be redeveloped as some kind of destination use, citing an athletic facility as one of the possible options.

I-290 Eisenhower Expressway Study

In addition to the District's reports and studies, the on-going planning and design process for improvements to the I-290 Eisenhower Expressway was also reviewed. As there are four District parks or facilities - Barrie Park, Rehm Park, The Conservatory and Wenonah Park - adjacent to the Eisenhower, there are significant potential impacts from modifications to the road. However, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) has clearly defined that all improvements will be contained within the existing "trench" and no land acquisition will be necessary.

2014 Envision Oak Park - A Comprehensive Plan for the Oak Park Community

In 2014, the Village released its updated Comprehensive Plan to guide the Village over the next 15-20 years. The Plan divides its goals and objectives into 11 categories. There are several that specify the Park District as a key partner, including:

- Arts & Culture
- Parks, Open Space, & Environmental Features
- Environmental Sustainability

The Park District currently supports and seeks to advance many of the goals and specific objectives within these categories. However, as a Village document, it is intended that the Village take an active leadership role in moving these goals forward on a community-wide basis and in partnering with other agencies.

Community Context

Regional Context

A key component in understanding the current state of the Park District and its role in the next ten years is to place it in the context of the region and the Village.

Regionally, the Park District is unique. It serves the Village of Oak Park community, with boundaries that are the same as the municipal boundaries. The neighboring communities all have significantly different characters and demographics:

- The City of Chicago occupies all of the north and east borders of Oak Park. The demographics are markedly different from Oak Park’s in both race/ethnicity and income. Where the Oak Park population along the border is very diverse, the Chicago population is predominantly African-American. The median household income is \$20,000 to \$40,000 less than in the immediately adjacent areas in Oak Park.
- The Town of Cicero and the City of Berwyn occupy the south border of Oak Park. Again, there is a noticeable difference in demographics. Both Cicero and Berwyn have a significant Hispanic population that is not paralleled in Oak Park. Again, the median household income is about \$20,000 to \$40,000 less than in the immediately adjacent areas in Oak Park.
- The Villages of Forest Park and River Forest occupy the west border of Oak Park. The demographics in these communities are more comparable to Oak Park, with similar levels of diversity and comparable median incomes. However, River Forest and the northeast portions of Oak Park have the highest median incomes in the region.
- The racial distribution is relatively consistent throughout the community. Several areas, including the east and west Village boundaries, between Madison and Washington Streets and between Lake Street and the railroad, where there are larger black populations (Figure 3.19).

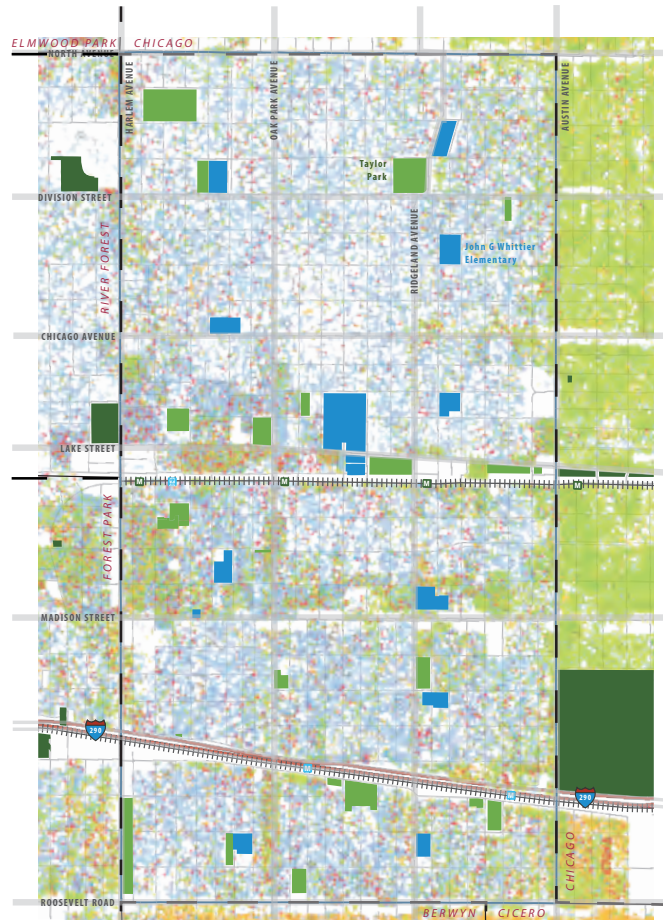
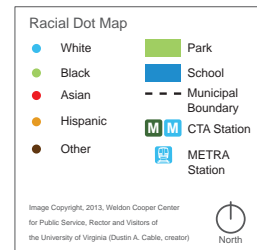


Figure 3.19 - Racial Dot Map

Each dot on the map represents one person



- As shown in Figure 3.20, the median age is higher in the northern and western portions of the community. These are also the areas in the community with higher incomes.

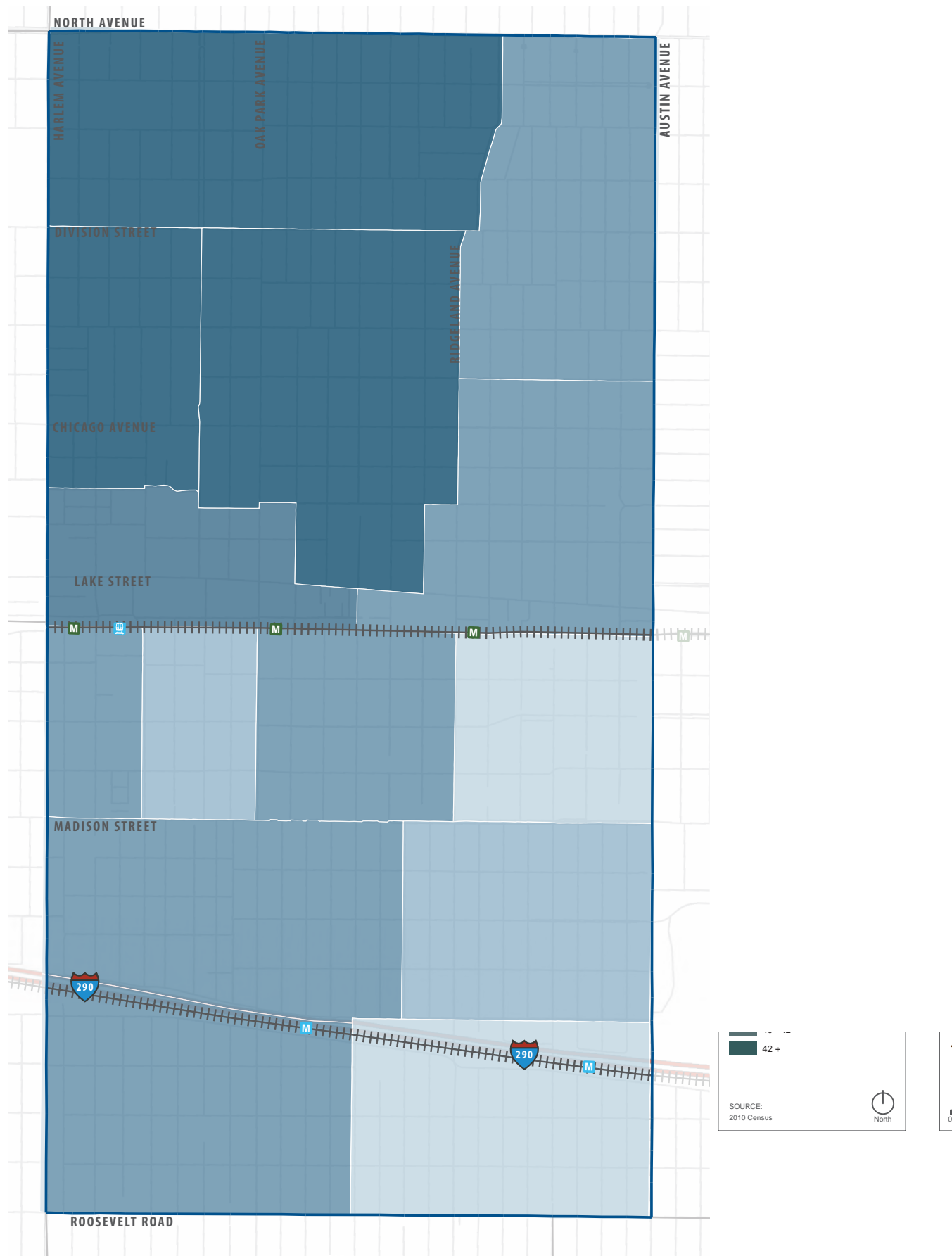


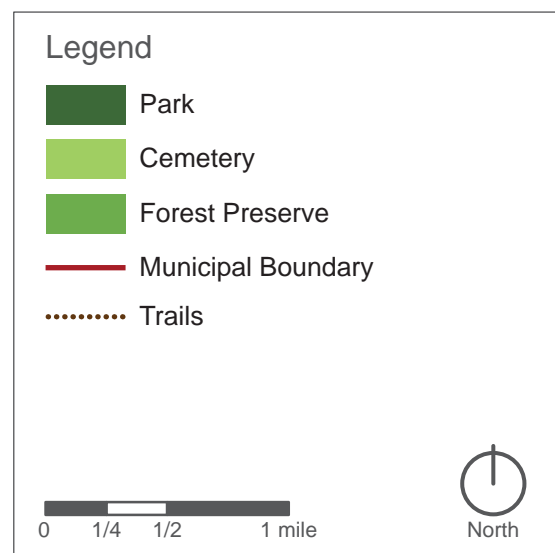
Figure 3.20 - Median Age

Some of the largest open spaces in the region are found outside the Village boundaries (Figure 3.21).

- Columbus Park is located immediately adjacent to the eastern border of the Village, within the City of Chicago. This park is approximately 135 acres and includes an 9 hole public golf course and 6 tennis courts, 3 basketball courts, newly renovated synthetic football and baseball fields, a swimming pool, a playground and a trail system.
- The Des Plaines River runs north/south about one mile west of the Oak Park border. Along the River there are significant Cook County Forest Preserve District lands, as well as other open spaces. One of the key elements is the Hal Tyrrell Trailside Museum within the Thatcher Woods portion of the Forest Preserve. The museum features educational exhibits, live native animals and a wildflower garden.
- The Forest Preserve District of Cook County is planning improvements to the Miller Meadows site located along the Des Plaines River, adjacent to Maywood, Forest Park and North Riverside. These improvements include an approximately 7 acre fenced-in dog park, athletic fields, disc golf and canoe launch.

Additionally, the Village is connected to or proximate to several major bike trail networks.

- The Grand Illinois Trail passes east/west through Oak Park, where it runs as an on-street bike path on Augusta Boulevard. This approximately 500 mile trail creates a loop that connects the Lake Michigan shores of Chicago to the Mississippi River at the Quad Cities, north to Galena, Illinois and back to Chicago.
- The Illinois Prairie Path, a 61 mile rails-to-trails path, begins just west of the Village, within Forest Park, close to the end of the CTA Blue Line and connects to several western suburbs.



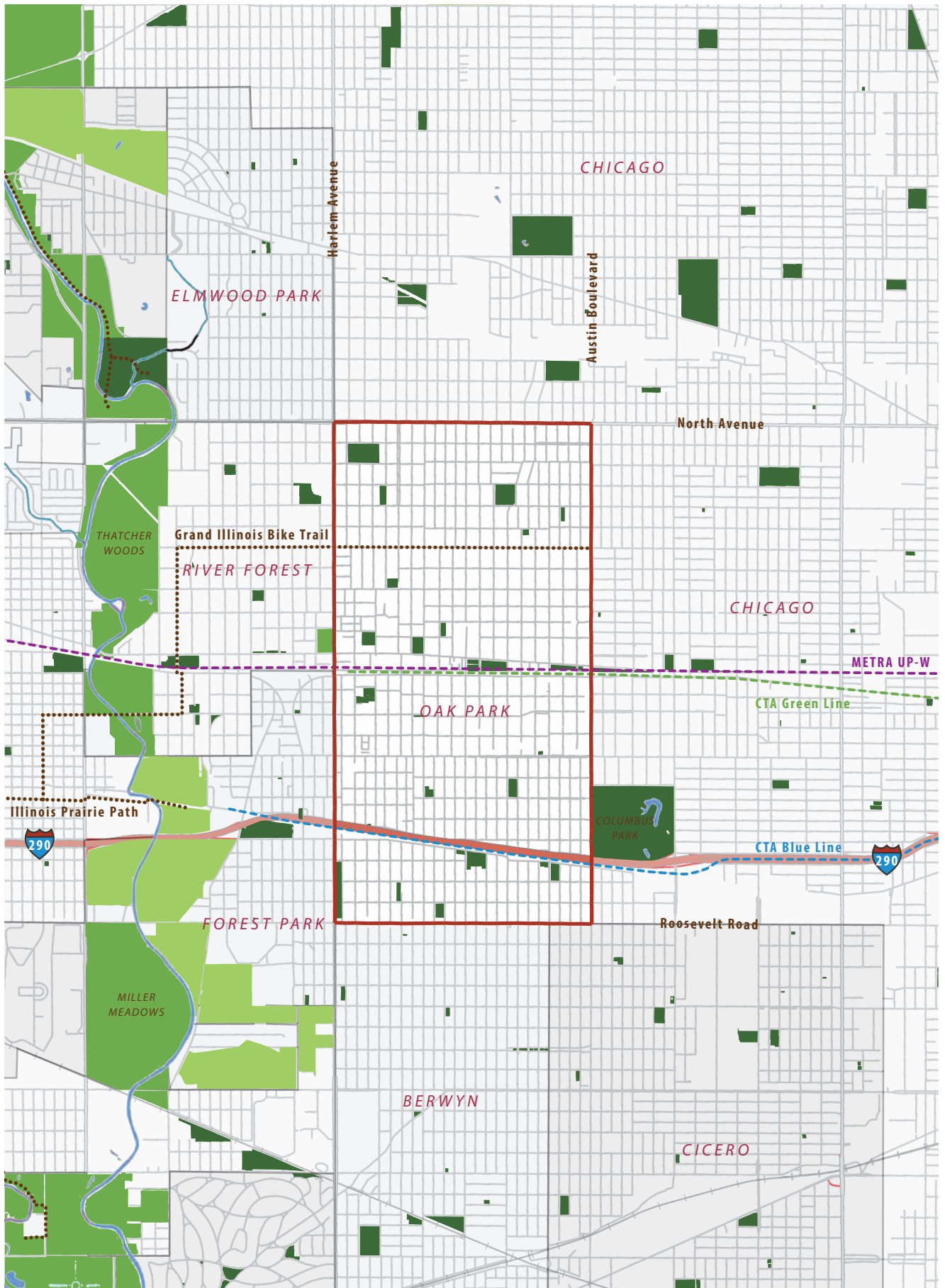


Figure 3.21 -Regional Context

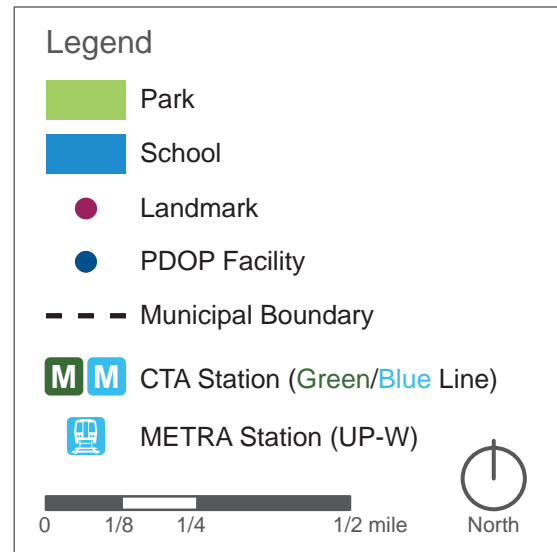
Village Context

At the Village level, there several factors that can be analyzed to help provide a context to how the Park District, its holdings and operations interact with the community. These include factors like location of cultural amenities, land use, and roadways (Figure 3.22).

Cultural Amenities

The parks, along with the local schools, the libraries and other institutions and cultural amenities are spread out throughout the community. While there is a clustering of these elements along Lake Street throughout the Village, there is a relatively balanced distribution of these features in the community.

This distribution provides easy, walkable access for most residents to some type of open space or civic amenity.



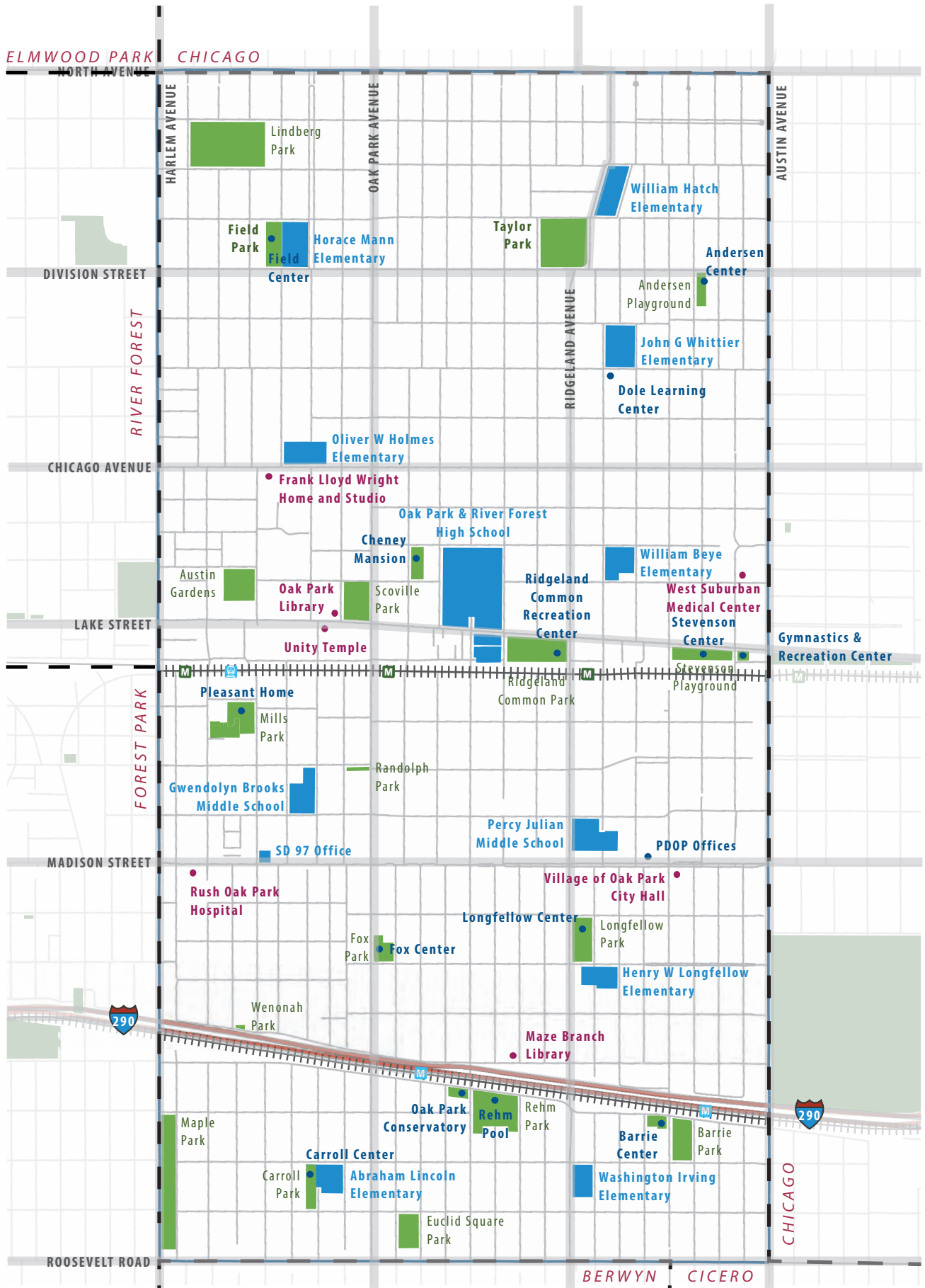


Figure 3.22 -Village Context

Zoning and Land Use

The zoning for the Village helps to create a clear picture of the general land use patterns of Oak Park based upon the ordinances that are in place (Figure 3.23). The majority of the Village is residential zoning of various densities.

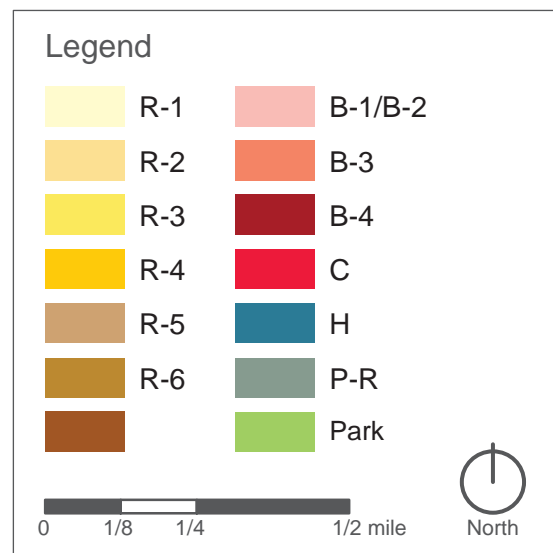
- The lowest density, largest home lots are generally located in the R-1 zoning district which just east of Oak Park Avenue, to the north and south of Chicago Avenue. Along with the R-2 zoning located to the north and west, these areas have the highest median annual incomes in the Village.
- R-3 and R-4 zoning are the most predominant residential areas in Oak Park, found in several areas in the Village. In the northeast portion of the Village, they are located in an area approximately bounded by North Avenue, Austin Boulevard, Chicago Avenue and Ridgeland Avenue. In the central of the Village, they are in the area approximately bounded by South Boulevard, Austin Avenue, Washington Boulevard and Oak Park Avenue. In the southern portion of the Village, they are in the area approximately bounded by Madison Street, Austin Boulevard, Roosevelt Road and Harlem Avenue
- Denser residential areas, which include multi-unit buildings, apartments and condominiums are found proximate to the Downtown in the area bounded by Chicago Avenue, Oak Park Avenue, Madison Street and Harlem Avenue. They are also located between Washington Boulevard and Madison Street for the width of the Village, and along Austin Boulevard
- All of the parks and schools within the Village fall within residential zoning districts.

- Commercial uses are generally located along the major roadways in the Village, including North Avenue, Austin Boulevard, Roosevelt Road, Harlem Avenue, Madison Street, Lake Street and Chicago Avenue.
- The Hospital zoning district is used for the two hospital campuses: Rush Oak Park Hospital near the Harlem Avenue and Madison Street intersection and West Suburban Hospital along Austin Boulevard north of Lake Street.

Vacant Sites

There are very few vacant sites within the Village and their status is subject to change. However, they are important to note as they may offer opportunities for the development of additional open spaces or facilities for the Park District. At the time of this report, the notable vacant sites are:

- The northeast corner of Madison Street and Oak Park Avenue
- The site bounded approximately by the Eisenhower Expressway, Home Avenue, Garfield Boulevard and the Post Office property.



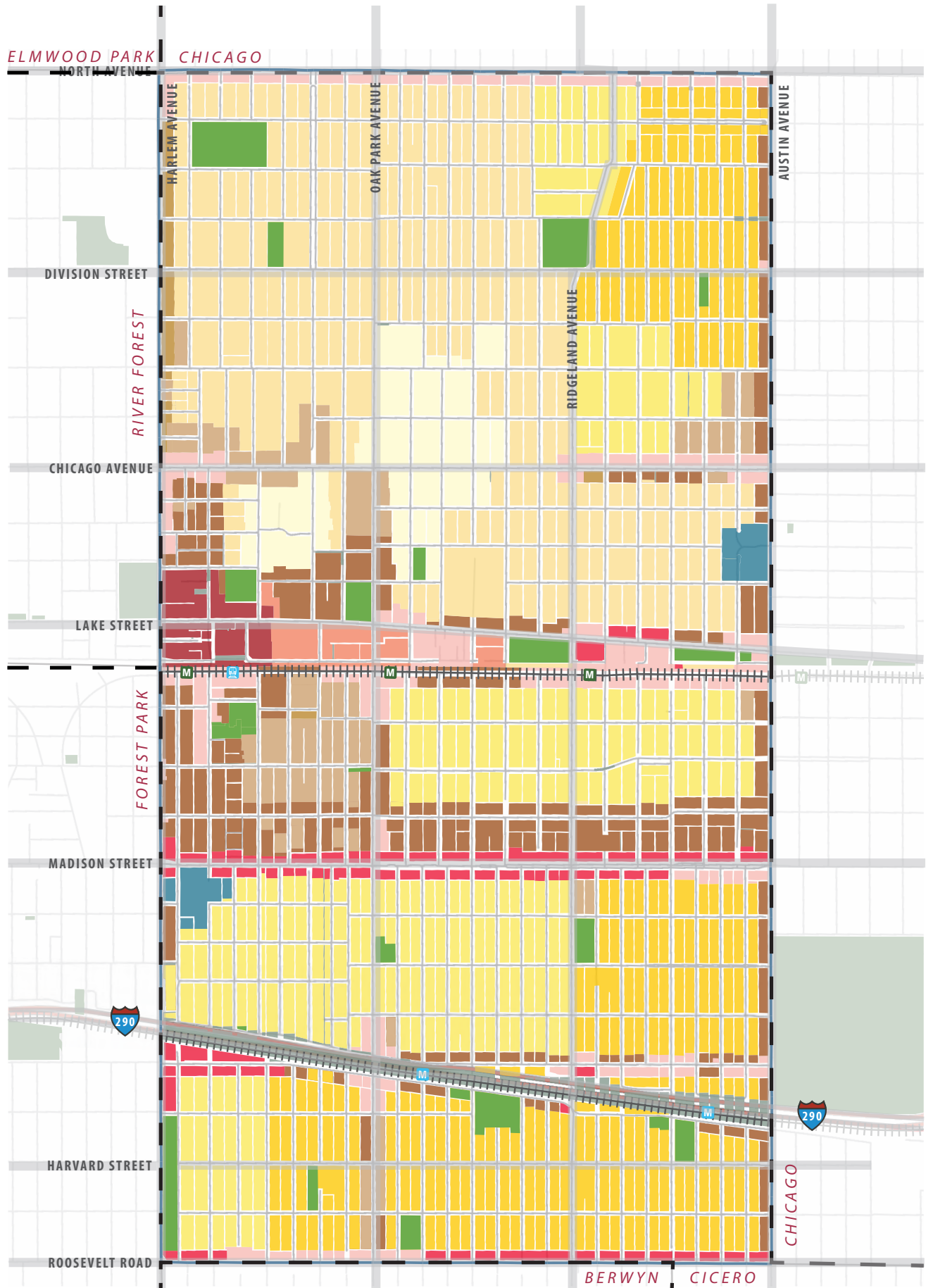


Figure 3.23-Village Zoning

Transportation Network

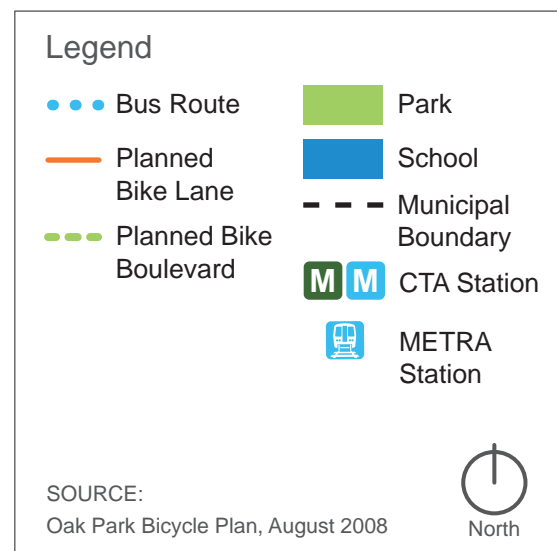
Oak Park benefits from a well-established grid network. Major roads are spaced approximately every 1/2 mile apart in both east/west and north/south directions (Figure 3.24). These larger roads carry more vehicles, are generally controlled through signalized intersections and have the potential to act as barriers to walking and biking within the Village.

Most of these larger roads serve as the routes for local bus lines, including Harlem Avenue, Oak Park Avenue, Ridgeland Avenue, Austin Boulevard, North Avenue, Lake Street, Madison Street and Roosevelt Road. These bus lines, in addition to the CTA Green Line and Blue Line trains and the Metra Union Pacific West train, make up a robust public transit network within the Village that connects to downtown Chicago and communities within the region.

The Village of Oak Park has indicated a commitment to alternative forms of transportation, and developed the Oak Park Bicycle Plan in 2008. This document provides the plan for building a network of bicycle facilities to make it safer and easier to bike within the community. The Plan identifies a network of “Shared Lanes,” “Bike Lanes” and “Bike Boulevards”

along the local roads. This network connects to all but two of the District’s parks or facilities. If established, this network could further encourage residents to access the parks by bicycle. The Village has been working to implement the plan and has pursued grant opportunities to help put it in place.

As most of the Park District’s parks do not have dedicated automobile parking, the ability to access them through other modes of transit is important. Future improvements should continue to provide supporting amenities, including more bicycle parking, with consideration for more covered parking such as at Ridgeland Common, and integration with bus stops – such as benches provided at key stops. Additionally, the Park District should work closely with the Village on future multi-modal improvements within the Community to ensure they connect and relate to the District’s parks and facilities.



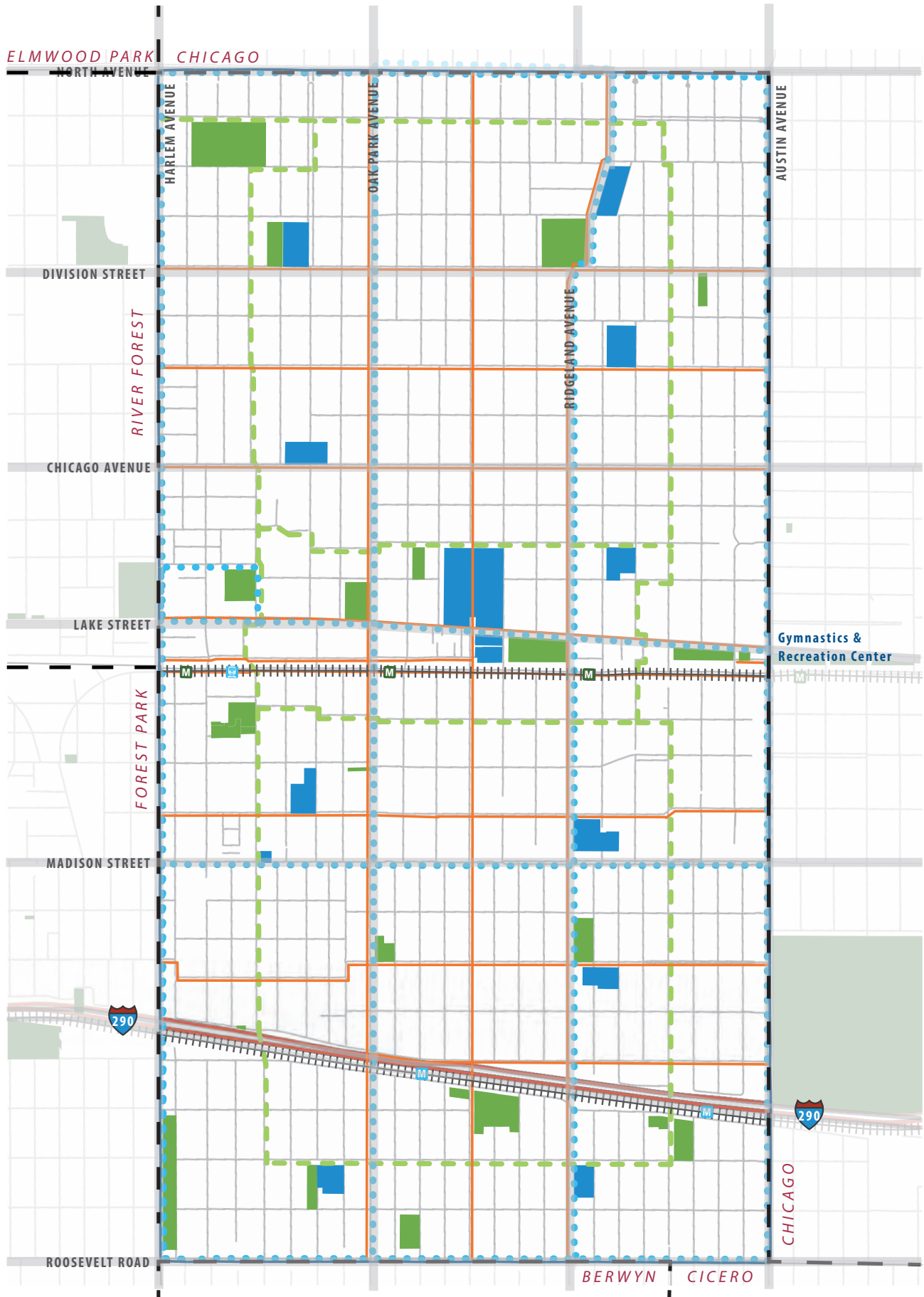


Figure 3.24 -Village Transportation Network

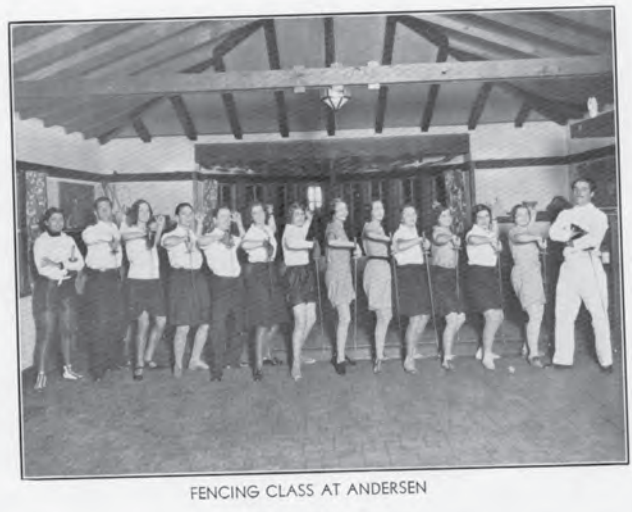
Historic Preservation

The Park District of Oak Park currently owns and maintains several historic landscapes, buildings and sites that are considered significant architecturally, historically and culturally to the Village of Oak Park. These architectural and historical resources are not only important Park District facilities but also “iconic” buildings and places that help define and contribute to the Village’s overall image and quality of life. Over the years, the Park District has taken the appropriate measures to preserve, rehabilitate and re-use these historic resources for current and future generations of Oak Park residents and visitors to the community.

Of the Park District’s facilities, there are three historic resources that are listed in the National Register of Historic Places, this nation’s official list of buildings, structures and sites worthy of preservation. The National Register is a program of the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, and administered in Illinois by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (IHPA). The buildings include the Oak Park Conservatory (constructed in 1929 and listed in 2005), and the Pleasant Home (constructed in 1897 and listed in 1972), originally known as the Farson-Mills House and designed by noted Prairie School architect George W. Maher. Scoville Park (originally Scoville Place, constructed in 1913), Oak Park’s first public park and designed by the landscape architect Jens Jensen, was listed in the National Register in 2002. According to the Village of Oak Park’s Historic Preservation Commission, Taylor Park, also designed by Jens Jensen, is considered potentially eligible for listing in the National Register but has not been nominated.

In addition to National Register listing, the Pleasant Home is also a designated National Historic Landmark. National Historic Landmarks are nationally-significant historic properties and places designated only by the Secretary of the Interior due to their exceptional value or quality in demonstrating and illustrating a certain aspect of the heritage of the United States. There are currently 86 National Historic Landmarks in Illinois. Designation as a National Historic Landmark or listing

in the National Register do not place restrictions on the use of property but provide a level of protection against federally-funded or licensed projects that may alter or significantly impact listed or designated buildings, structures, sites and objects. Designation also provides the opportunity for the Park District to apply for federal-level grants for bricks and mortar projects when funding is available. National Historic Landmarks (NHLs) are also eligible to receive in-depth site inspections funded and coordinated by the National Park Service regional offices, with the nearest located in Denver, Colorado. The purpose of the inspection is to analyze a NHL’s condition, identify and prioritize recommended preservation treatments, and provide cost estimates for such treatments. A building condition assessment report may also be completed.



It should be noted that two other parks and facilities are included as part of the three National Register Historic Districts in Oak Park. Austin Gardens Park at Forest Place and Ontario Street is a contributing resource in the Frank Lloyd Wright Prairie School of Architecture National Register Historic District, which is bounded by Division Street to the north, Lake Street to south and Harlem and Ridgeland Avenues to the west and east respectively; and, Mills Park, part of the original Farson-Mills estate, is a contributing resource in the Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District, which extends south from Lake Street and South

Boulevard to Washington Boulevard and from Harlem to Ridgeland Avenues from west to east. Contributing resources are buildings, sites, structures and objects that add or “contribute” to the architectural, historical and other design qualities of a particular National Register Historic District. The Randolph Park at the southwest corner of Randolph Street and Oak Park Avenue is located within the Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District; this park facility is a non-contributing resource due to its most recent renovation in 2010.

The three National Register Historic Districts are also designated Village of Oak Park Historic Districts by municipal ordinance, which mandates design review for proposed plans that may alter the exterior appearance of contributing buildings to the Historic District by the Village’s Historic Preservation Commission. The Oak Park Conservatory and the Pleasant Home are also designated as Village of Oak Park Landmarks. While routine maintenance projects and exterior changes that are not visible in the public right-of-way only receive an advisory review by the Commission, projects that propose partial or full demolition of a contributing resource must receive a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) from the Commission, with which owners of historic properties must comply. Therefore, design review for contributing historic resources located in Park District parks, whether they be buildings, sites, structures or objects and located in Village of Oak Park Historic Districts is required for any proposed projects that may alter or demolish such resources.

Going forward, the Park District of Oak Park should continue to be good stewards of its historic buildings, sites and landscapes that make up part of its facilities. Such facilities are important legacies of Oak Park’s heritage and serve to inform the community on the important people, architects and landscape architects that helped shape the community’s architectural icons and public spaces. While it is recognized that maintaining historic park facilities can be challenging,

the Park District may need to continue underwriting operations and maintenance costs while exploring additional partnership opportunities, such as Pleasant Home Foundation’s co-stewardship partnership for example, which can help generate additional revenues for rehabilitating buildings and landscapes. Additionally, the Park District should pursue funding and grant opportunities when they become available and consult with the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency and the National Park Service.

The Park District could also participate in or partially fund professional consultation and training services that can help potential partners and organizations build their capacity to help manage historic buildings and facilities. Consultation and training services could focus on topics ranging from organizational assessments, strategic planning, board development and fundraising. The Park District could partially fund such consultation with possible matching grants from local foundations and corporations.



Accessibility and Equity

A critical component of any park district comprehensive plan is understanding how well the park district is serving the community. This is especially critical in a diverse community such as Oak Park, where there is the potential that sectors of the community may be confronted with unintentional barriers which prevent them from enjoying the same opportunities as others.

This evaluation and analysis has been conducted using several methods. First, the locations of the open spaces within the District were analyzed based on reasonable walking distances to evaluate whether the community is appropriately served. Second, registration for a range of programs, classes and camps was geographically mapped and analyzed to evaluate whether location influenced participation in these activities. Third, the level of service of parks and amenities was analyzed relative to the population of the community and calibrated to the specific values and needs of the residents to identify gaps in service. Last, based on the level of service for key amenities, equity maps were developed and analyzed to identify any geographic gaps within the community where residents do not have appropriate access to these amenities.

Park Service Areas

Due to the compact character of the community, the sizes of the open spaces within Oak Park are small relative to National Park and Recreation Association standards. Therefore, for the purposes of this evaluation, the service areas are shown as one-half mile around each park, which approximates a ten minute or less walk. The only variation to this is the two “tot lots,” Wenonah Park and Randolph Park, where a one-quarter mile, or five minute, service area is shown.

Additionally, for the purposes of this analysis, the service areas have been clipped at the I-290 Eisenhower Expressway. Due to the limited locations available to cross the expressway, the service areas of adjacent parks are constrained.

Based on the map developed (Figure 3.25), the majority of the community falls within the service areas of one or more parks. There are a few small gaps, mostly located along the perimeter of the Village, that are not within any one service area.

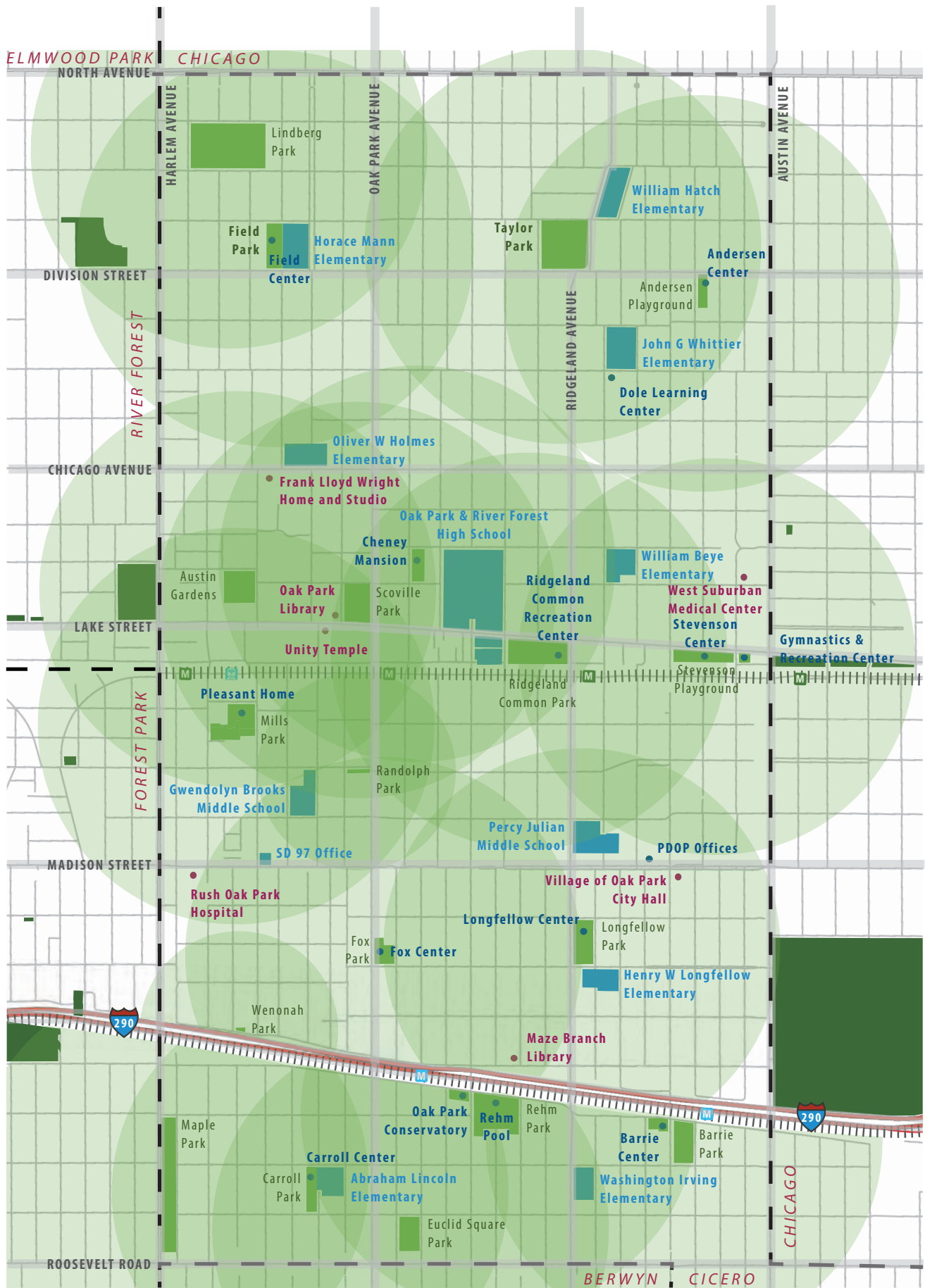


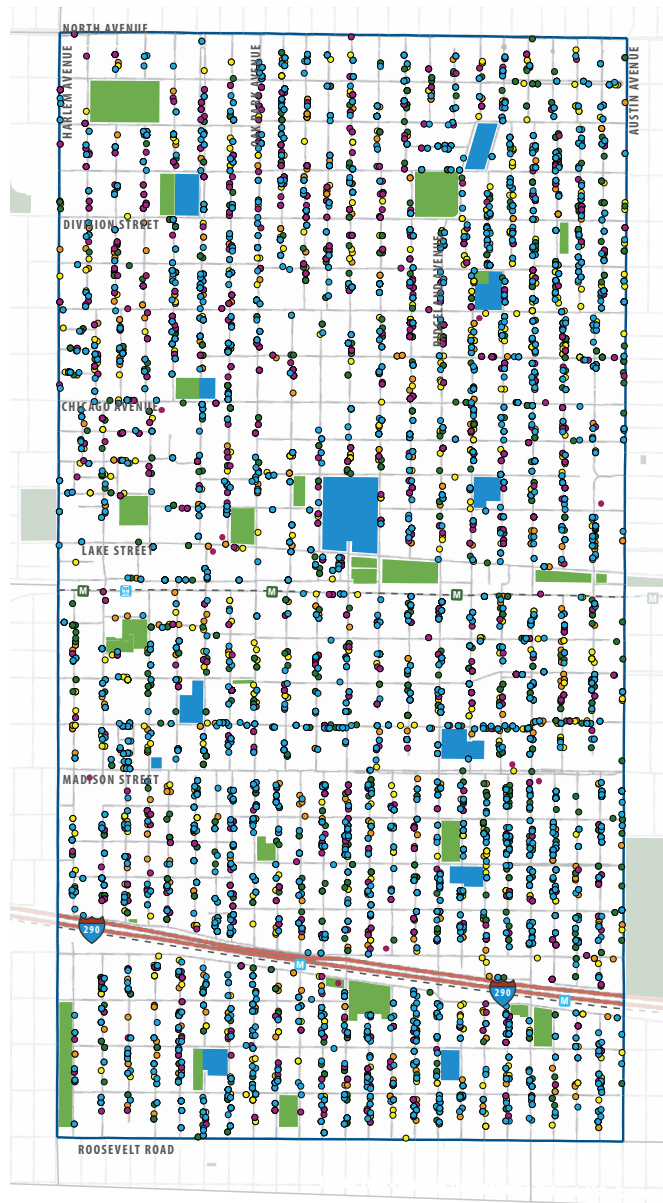
Figure 3.25 -Park Service Areas

Program Registration Mapping

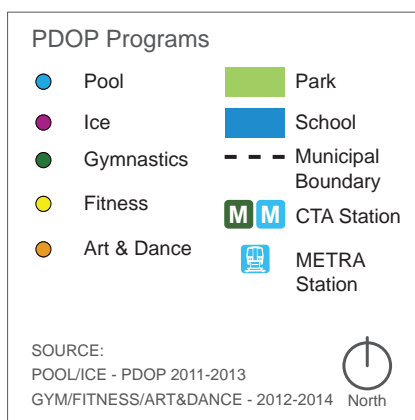
The Park District provided address only information for all registrants over a two-year period for several key programs or classifications. The consultant team mapped those addresses to allow for identification of patterns that may provide insight into use patterns or issues within the community.

Location Specific Programs

The first map (Figure 3.26) shows registration for a grouping of programs that are generally tied to one specific location. The map was reviewed to identify whether the location of where the programs were offered impacted registration. The mapping shows a generally even distribution of registrants throughout the community. There are several areas which appear to have a lower density of registrants. These can mostly be seen along commercial corridors. The other area where this appears is to the northeast and southeast of the intersection of Chicago and Oak Park Avenues. This area lines up significantly with the R-1 zoning district, where some of the largest-lot houses are located in the Village. Additionally, the area has one of the highest median income levels in the community. These two factors may play a role in why this area has a lower participation level.



**Figure 3.26 -
Location Specific
Program
Participation**



Camp Registration

Similar to the location-specific programs, the summer camp programs are each tied to a specific park (Figure 3.27). For the purposes of this analysis, camps that were conducted at Taylor, Rehm and Longfellow Parks were mapped, to represent a range of locations within the community. The mapping again shows that the location of the camp does not play a large role in participation, as registrants can be found all throughout the Village.

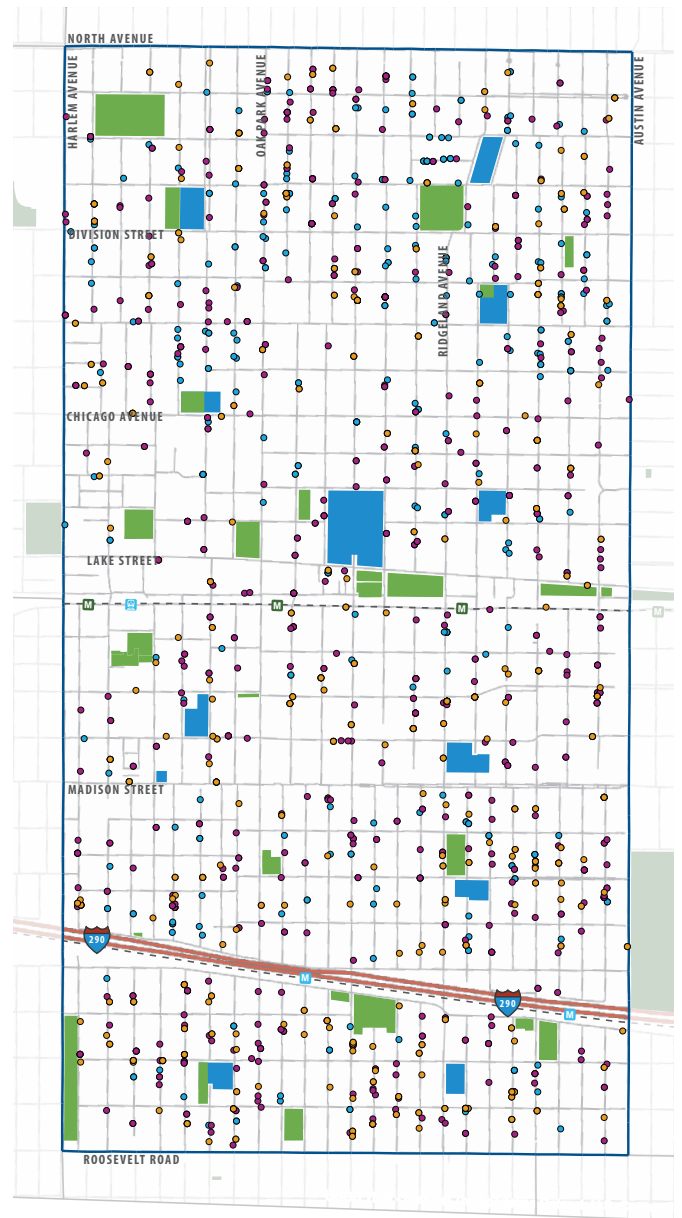



Figure 3.27-
Select Camp
Participation

PDOP Camps	
● Taylor Park	■ Park
● Rehm Park	■ School
● Longfellow Park	- - - Municipal Boundary
	M M CTA Station
	M METRA Station

SOURCE:
PDOP 2012-2014


 North

Age-Based Participation

Three separate maps (Figures 3.28, 3.29 and 3.30) were generated based on data provided by the Park District. They each focus on registration based on age, including youth athletics, 12 to 17 year old registrants and over 65 registrants. Again, participation is generally distributed throughout the community. However, there are areas of increased or decreased participation that relate more to distribution of demographics, such as concentrations of residents over the age of 65, than to equity and accessibility.

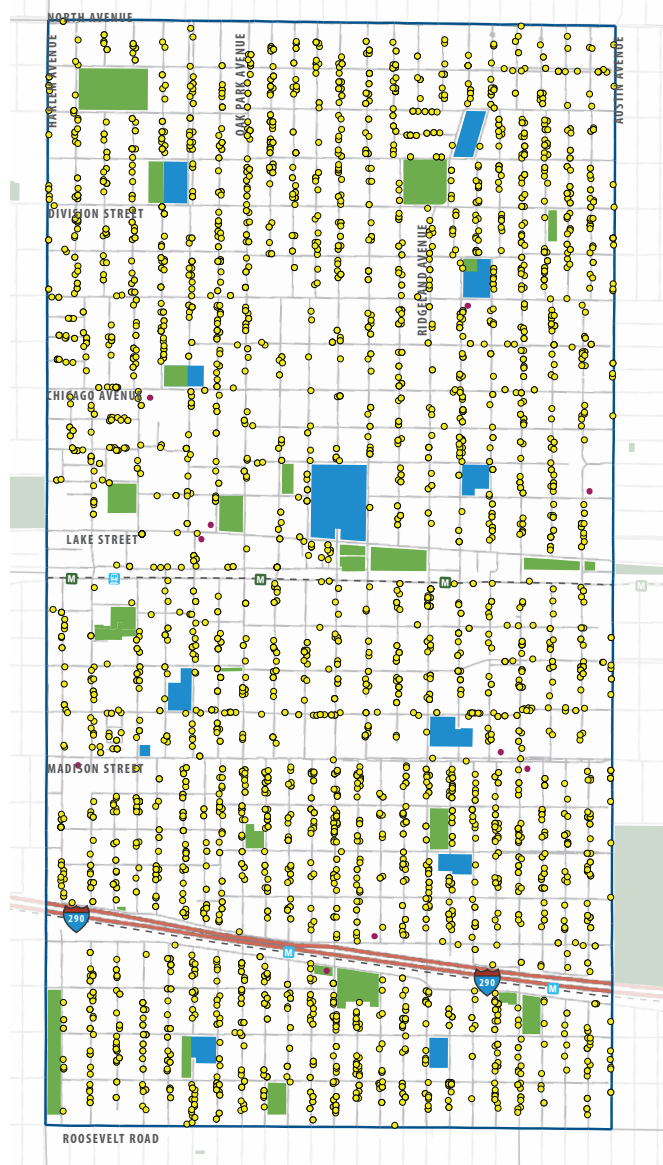
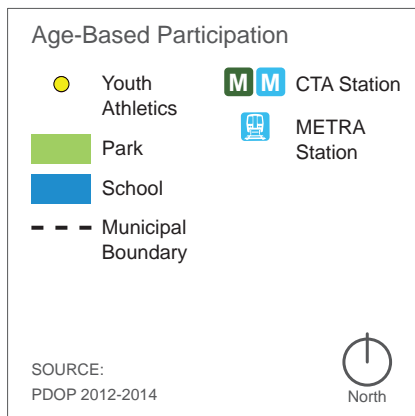
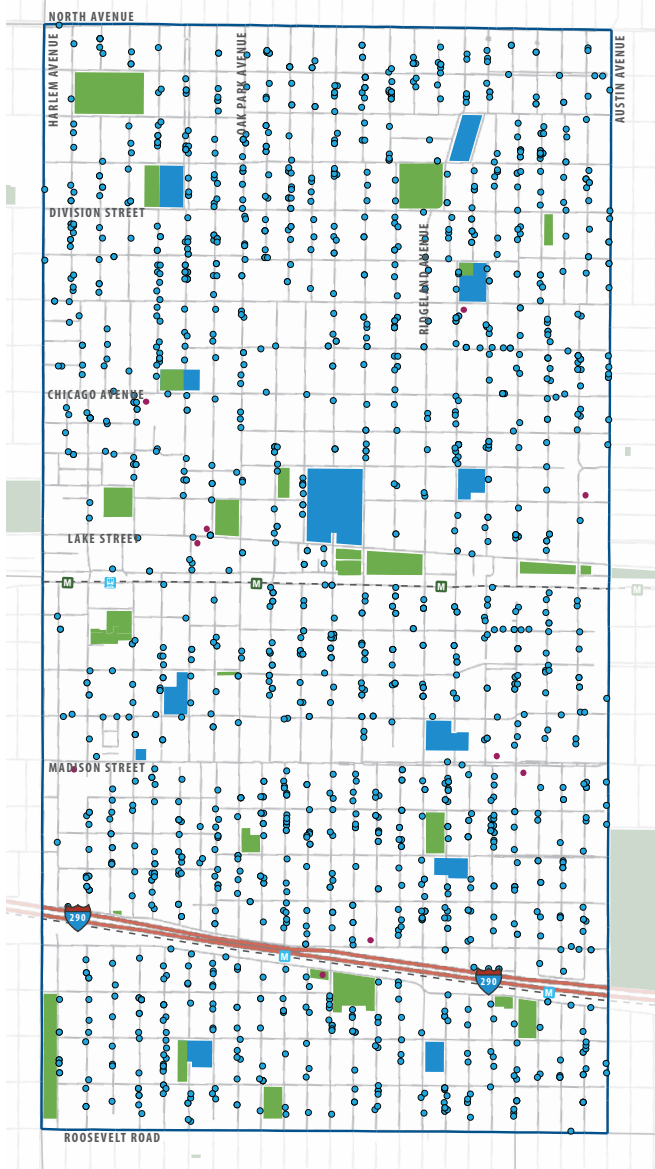
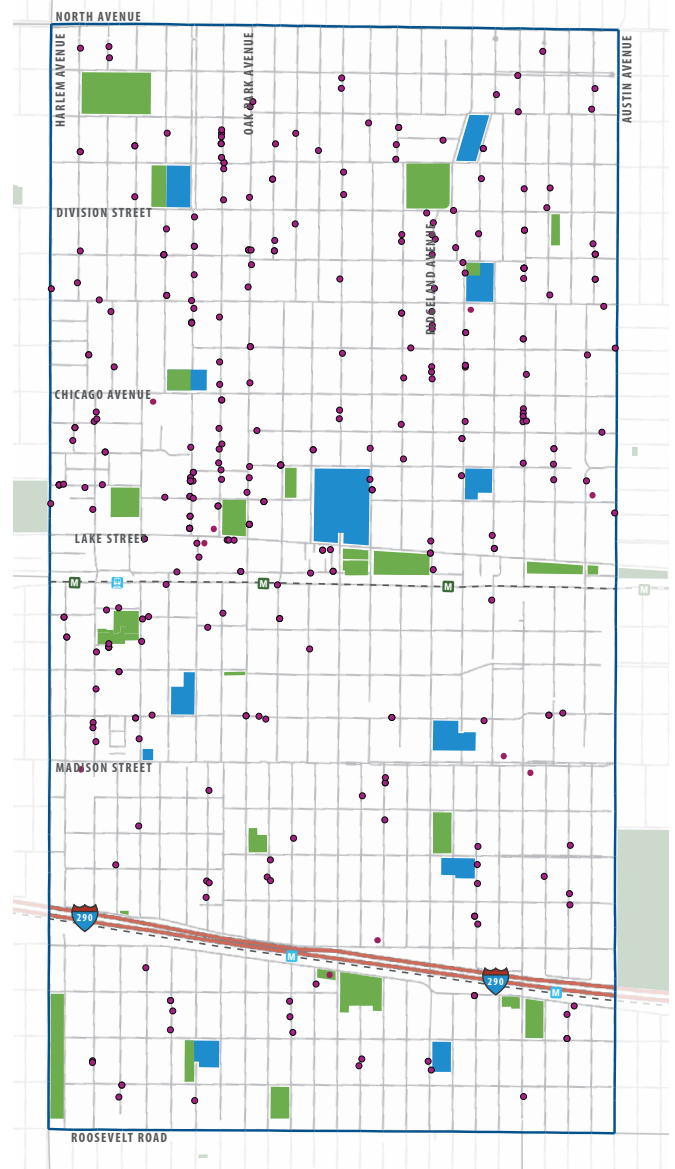
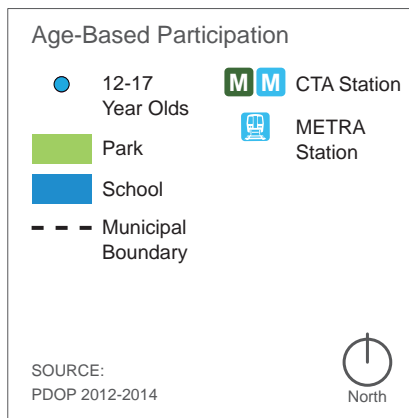


Figure 3.28 - Youth Athletics Program Participation

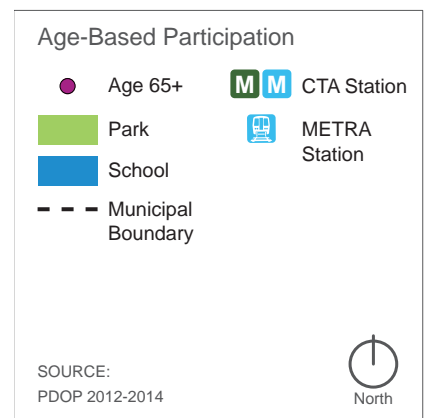




**Figure 3.29 -
13 to 17 Year
Olds Program
Participation**

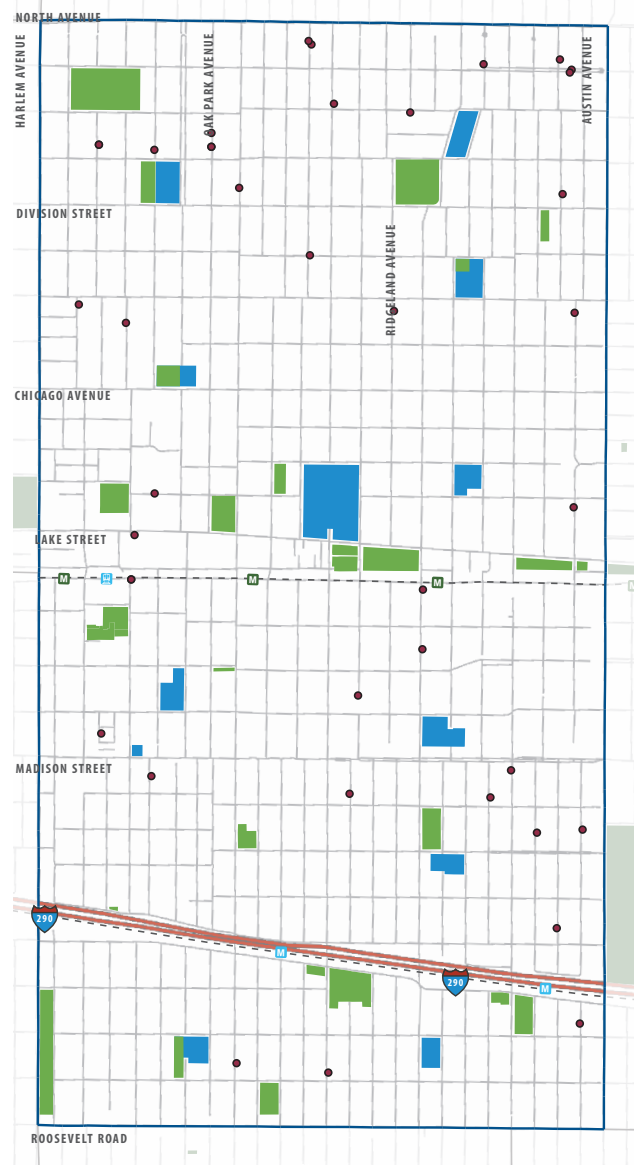


**Figure 3.30 -
Over 65 Program
Participation**

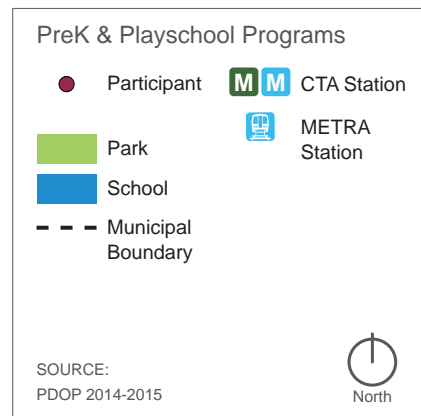


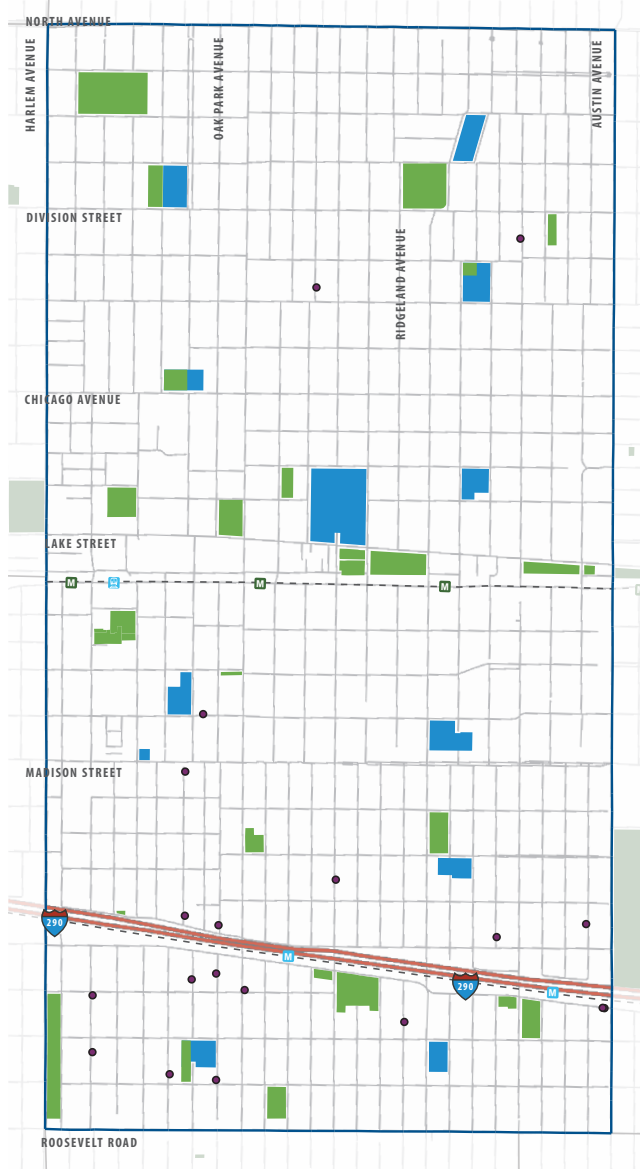
Neighborhood Centers

Specific focus was also put on the neighborhood centers, specifically the early educational uses that occurred at these centers. Several stakeholders raised concerns that these uses were critical to residents within a small, walkable area around each center. The spatial analysis (Figures 3.31 and 3.32) shows that, while there are several participants within a walkable distance from each facility, participants are spread out throughout the community. This is more pronounced for Field Park.

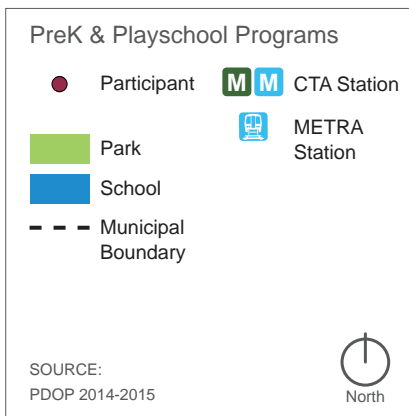


**Figure 3.31 -
Field Park
Playschool
Participation**





**Figure 3.32 -
Carroll Park PreK
Participation**



Level of Service Analysis

Level of service standards (Figure 3.33) are guidelines that define service areas based on population and are used to support investment decisions related to parks, facilities and amenities. Level of service standards can and will change over time as the program lifecycles change and demographics of a community change.

PROS evaluated park facility levels of service using a combination of resources. These resources included: recreation activity participation rates reported by the Sports & Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) as it applies to activities that occur in the United States and around the Park District area, community and stakeholder input, findings from the survey and general observations. This information allowed standards to be customized to the Park District.

PARKS: 2013 Inventory - Developed Facilities							
Park Type		Park District of Oak Park Inventory	Schools	Total Inventory	Current Service Level based upon population		
Total Park Acres	acres per	79.55	11.64	91.19	1.75	acres per	1,000
OUTDOOR AMENITIES:							
Picnic Shelters/Areas	site per	8.00	-	8.00	1.00	site per	6,510
Rectangular Fields	field per	10.93	5.78	16.71	1.00	field per	3,117
Diamond Fields	field per	8.34	11.65	19.99	1.00	field per	2,605
Basketball Courts (half courts) 2	court per	7.00	-	7.00	1.00	court per	7,440
Tennis Courts (Lit & Unlit)	court per	23.00	1.50	24.50	1.00	court per	2,126
Playgrounds	site per	16.00	9.00	25.00	1.00	site per	2,083
Off Leash Dog Parks	site per	2.00	-	2.00	1.00	site per	26,040
Skateboard Areas	site per	1.00	-	1.00	1.00	site per	52,080
On Street Bikeways/Bike Lanes (Miles)	miles per	4.50	-	4.50	0.04	miles per	1,000
Walking & Biking Trails (Miles)	miles per	6.09	-	6.09	0.12	miles per	1,000
Spraypads	site per	4.00	-	4.00	1.00	site per	13,020
Outdoor Pools	site per	2.00	-	2.00	1.00	site per	26,040
Recreation/Gymnasium (Square Feet)	SF per	42,056.37	10,358.80	52,415.17	1.01	SF per	person
2013 Estimated Population		52,080					
2018 Estimated Population		52,497					

Notes:

Because they are generally open to the public or available for use by the Park District and its affiliates, District 97 fields and playgrounds are included in this count

Because public access to some of these facilities is limited, they are only included when specifically available to the Park District unless otherwise noted. Each count is based on average annual availability

Recreation/Gymnasium square footage numbers include indoor active and passive spaces

Figure 3.33 - Level of Service

These standards should be viewed as a guide to be coupled with other analysis such as equity mapping, as well as conventional wisdom and judgment related to the particular situation and needs of the community. By applying these facility standards to Oak Park residents, gaps and surpluses in park and facility/amenity types are revealed.

Overall, this analysis reveals that the Park District does have some areas of deficit in levels of service as compared with recommended standards and the growing population. Some of the deficits, such as overall parkland and number of outdoor pools, are unlikely to change dramatically. Other items, such as basketball courts and spray pads, can be incorporated into future plans. Additionally, other items, such as tennis courts, are overserved in the community and could be reduced in the future.

			2013 Facility Standards		2018 Facility Standards		
Recommended Service Levels; Revised for Local Service Area			Meet Standard/ Need Exists	Additional Facilities/ Amenities Needed	Meet Standard/ Need Exists	Additional Facilities/ Amenities Needed	
3.00	acres per	1,000	Need Exists	65Acre(s)	Need Exists	66Acre(s)	
1.00	site per	7,000	Meets Standard	- Sites(s)	Meets Standard	- Sites(s)	
1.00	field per	5,000	Meets Standard	-Field(s)	Meets Standard	-Field(s)	
1.00	field per	5,000	Meets Standard	-Field(s)	Meets Standard	-Field(s)	
1.00	court per	4,000	Need Exists	6Court(s)	Need Exists	6Court(s)	
1.00	court per	3,000	Meets Standard	-Court(s)	Meets Standard	-Court(s)	
1.00	site per	2,500	Meets Standard	-Site(s)	Meets Standard	-Site(s)	
1.00	site per	40,000	Meets Standard	-Site(s)	Meets Standard	-Site(s)	
1.00	site per	55,000	Meets Standard	-Site(s)	Meets Standard	-Site(s)	
0.04	miles per	1,000	Meets Standard	-Mile(s)	Meets Standard	-Mile(s)	
0.25	miles per	1,000	Need Exists	7Mile(s)	Need Exists	7Mile(s)	
1.00	site per	10,000	Need Exists	1Site(s)	Need Exists	1Site(s)	
1.00	site per	20,000	Need Exists	1Site(s)	Need Exists	1Site(s)	
2.00	SF per	person	Need Exists	51,745 Square Feet	Need Exists	52,579	Square Feet

Equity Mapping

Level of service standards provide input on how well the community is served on a population basis, however, it does not take into account geography and distribution of parks, facilities and amenities. Using the recommended level of service standards, the following equity maps have been developed to identify potential gaps and overlaps in the population each is serving.

Each service area circle shown is calibrated in size to capture the number of residents that each amenity or facility serves based on the level of service standard. This methodology takes into account the quantity of an amenity into the sizing of the service area as well, so for example, a park that has two rectangular fields would have a service area that would capture twice the number of residents as the service area of a park with one rectangular field, and therefore will be shown with a larger circle.

This process provides a visual representation of how well, from a geographic perspective, the community is being served. Generally, areas within the Village that are not covered by one of the service areas represent gaps in service, while areas that are covered by more than one service area represent overlaps in service. Clearly some amenities draw users from other parts of the Village, and not just the areas most proximate, so some overlaps are expected and do not necessarily represent an issue. However, when assessed together with the overall Level of Service recommendations, some clear issues and opportunities can be noted:

- Rectangular and diamond fields are evenly distributed throughout the community and serve most of the community (Figures 3.34 and 3.35).
- Basketball courts, which are generally located in the south and east portions of the Village, do not provide for the majority of the community. (Figure 3.36).

- Tennis court service areas cover most of the community and have significant overlap in the southern part of the Village. There are some gaps in the southwest and central east portions of the community (Figure 3.37).
- Outdoor pools cover much of the community, with the unserved portions being on the north side of the Village (Figure 3.38).
- Playgrounds are clustered more in the north and especially the south sides of the community, due in part to the location of elementary schools. In these areas, there are overlaps, whereas the largest gaps are more centrally located of the Village (Figure 3.39).
- Picnic areas serve much of the Village, however there are gaps in the central and southern parts of the community (Figure 3.40).
- Dog parks serve the community well, however the placement of the dog park at Maple captures significant area outside of the Village (Figure 3.41).
- Indoor space is distributed well throughout the community. There are some gaps centrally located in the Village and around the downtown (Figure 3.42).

It should be noted that these maps only account for facilities within the District boundaries, and do not include adjacent facilities and amenities that provide for the community. For example, Columbus Park, which is located immediately east of the Village, may address some of the service found in the southeast corner of the Village.

Rectangular Fields
Recommended Standard of
1 Field per 5000 People

Oak Park, Illinois
Park District of Oak
Park Master Plan

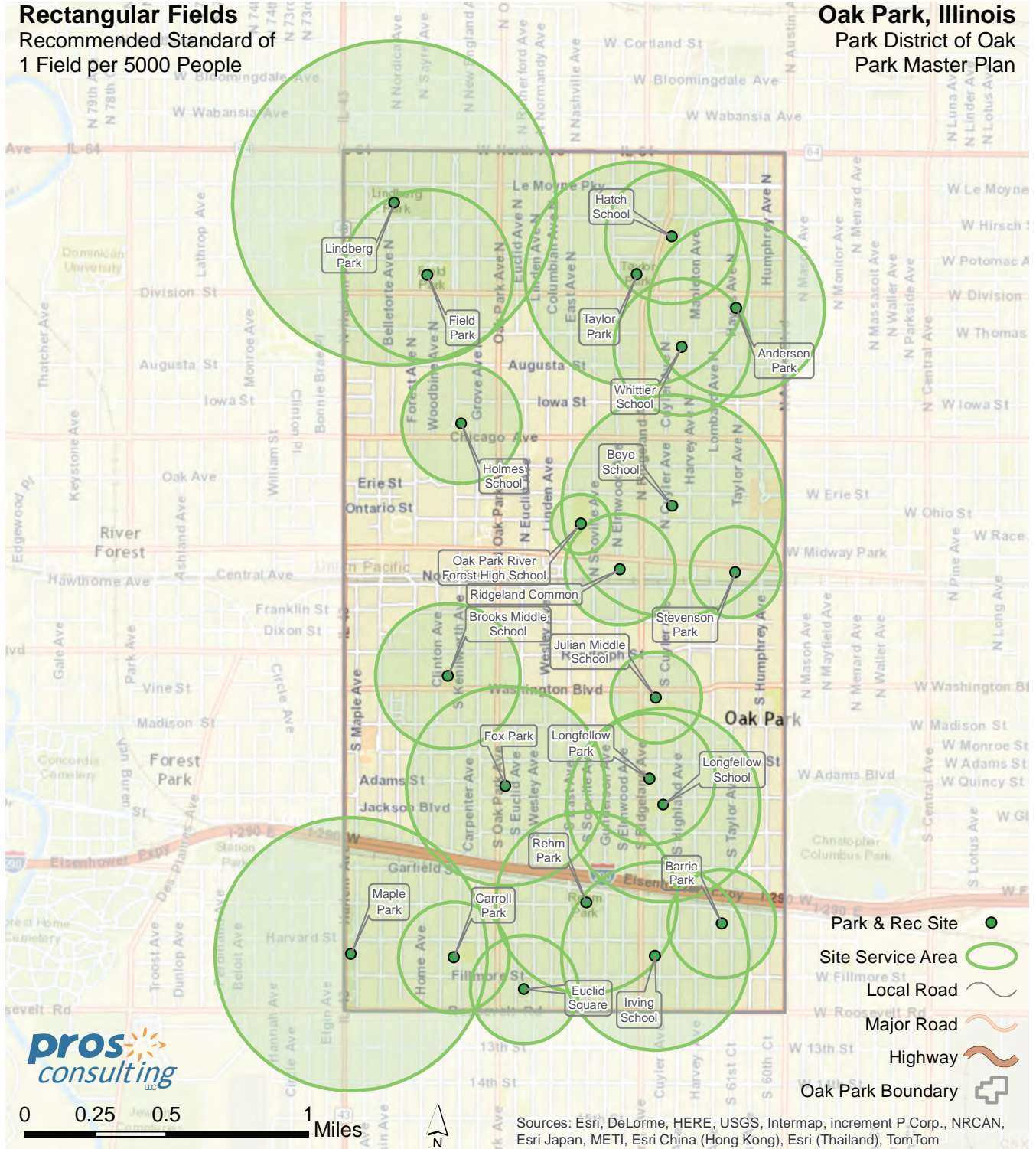


Figure 3.34 - Rectangular Fields Equity Map

Diamond Fields
Recommended Standard of
1 Field per 5000 People

Oak Park, Illinois
Park District of Oak
Park Master Plan

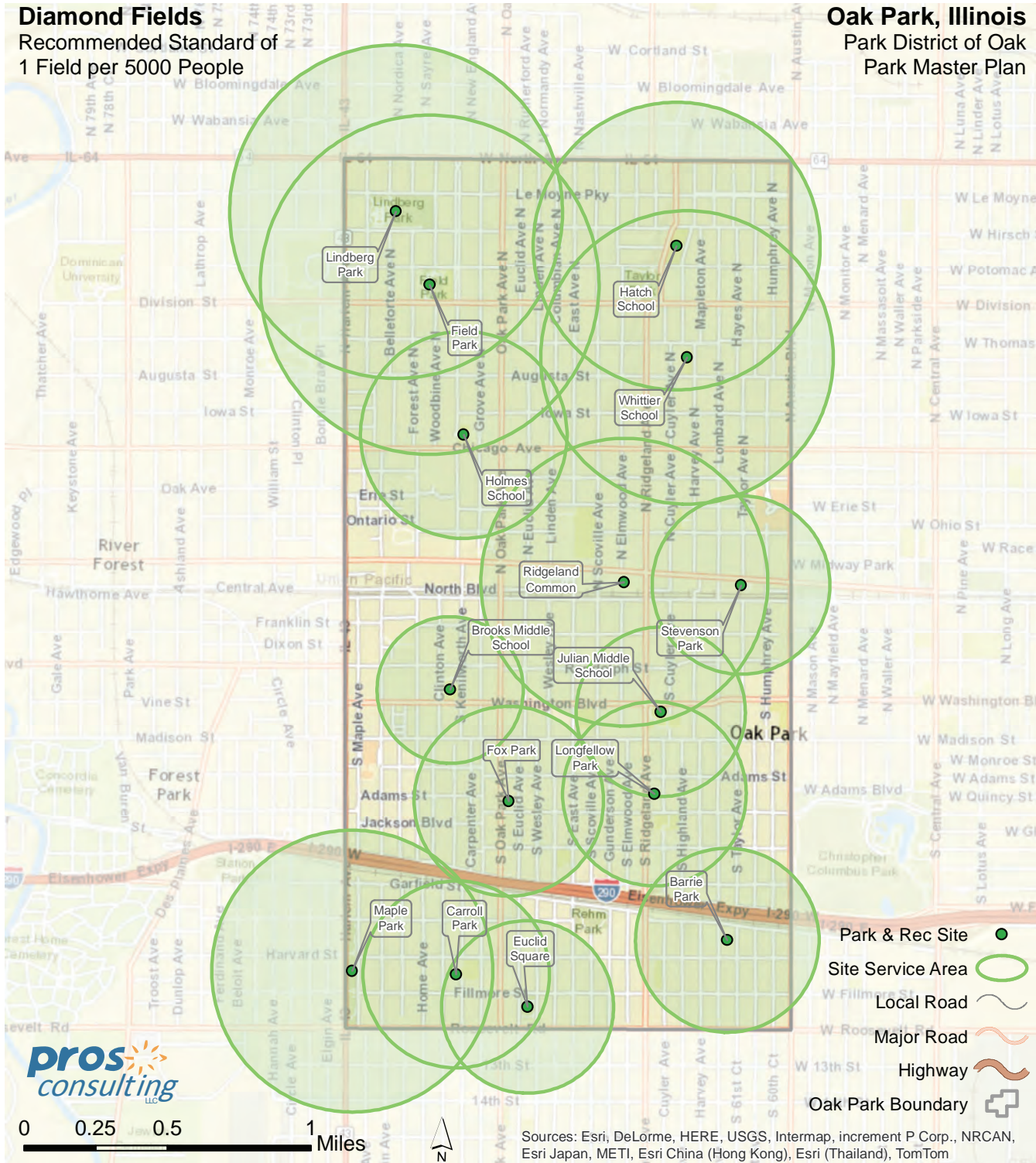


Figure 3.35 - Diamond Fields Equity Map

Basketball Half Courts
 Recommended Standard of
 1 Half Court per 4000 People

Oak Park, Illinois
 Park District of Oak
 Park Master Plan

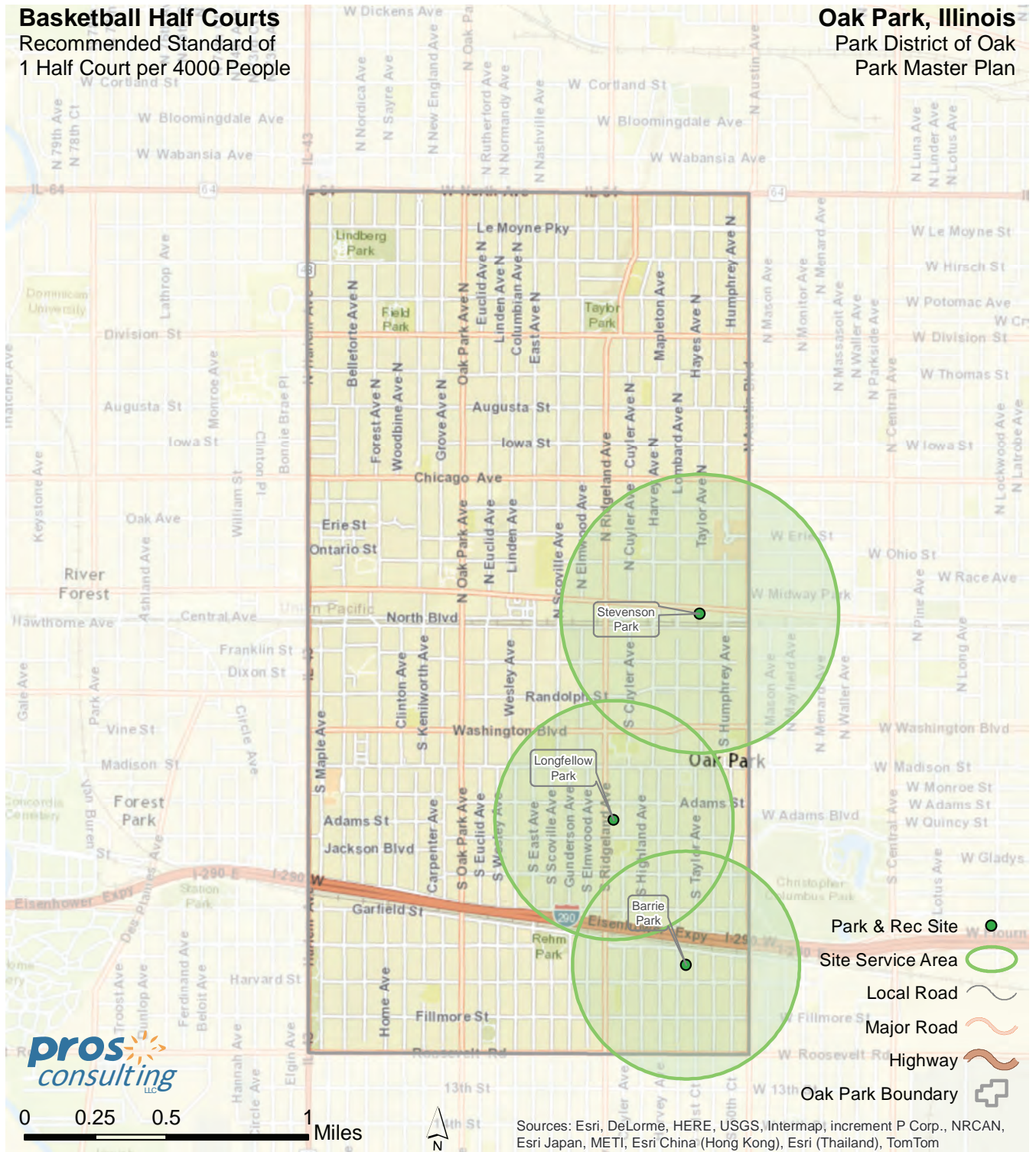


Figure 3.36 - Basketball Courts Equity Map

Tennis Courts
 Recommended Standard of
 1 Court per 3000 People

Oak Park, Illinois
 Park District of Oak
 Park Master Plan

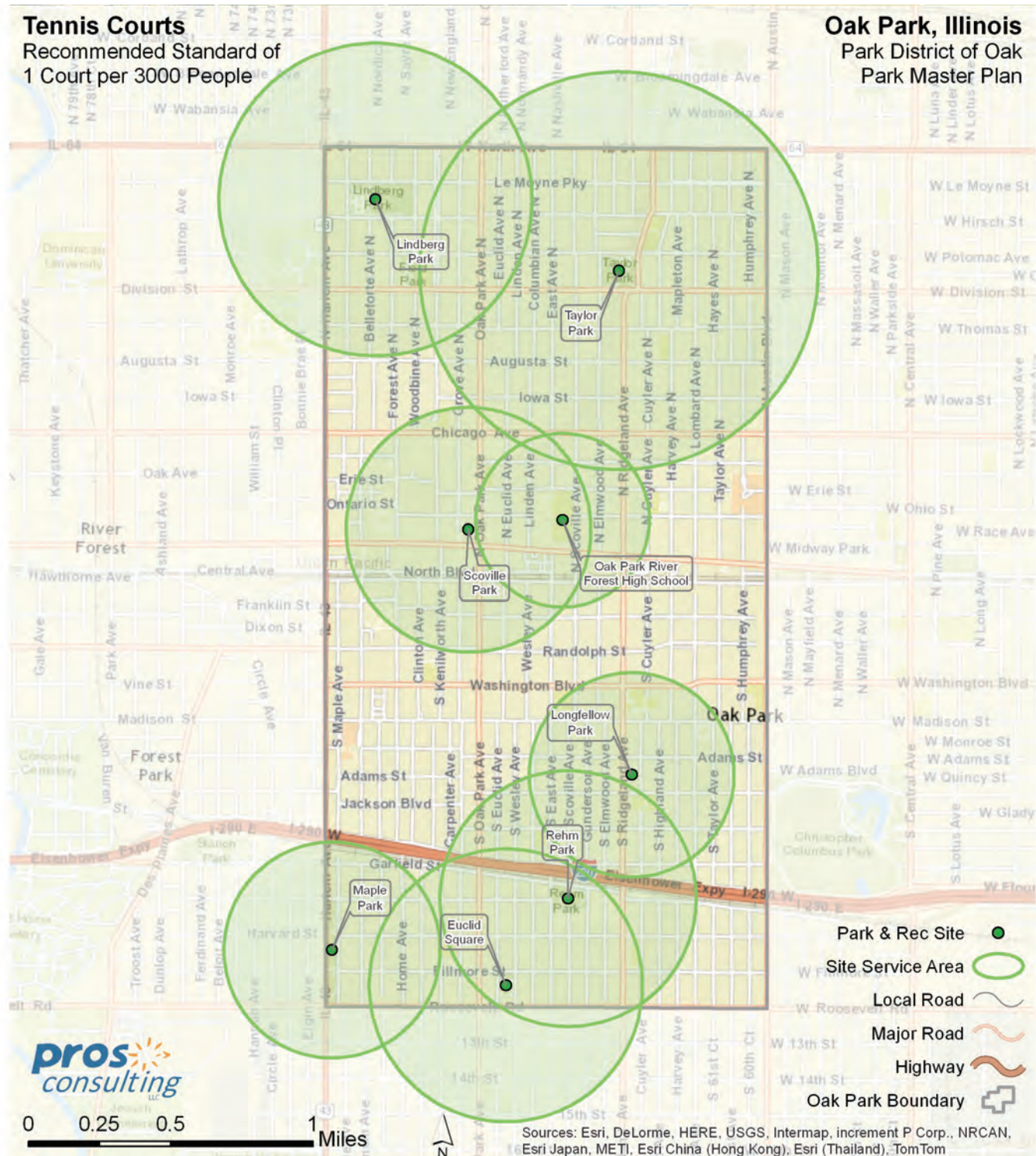


Figure 3.37 - Tennis Courts Equity Map

Outdoor Pools
 Recommended Standard of
 1 Site per 20000 People

Oak Park, Illinois
 Park District of Oak
 Park Master Plan

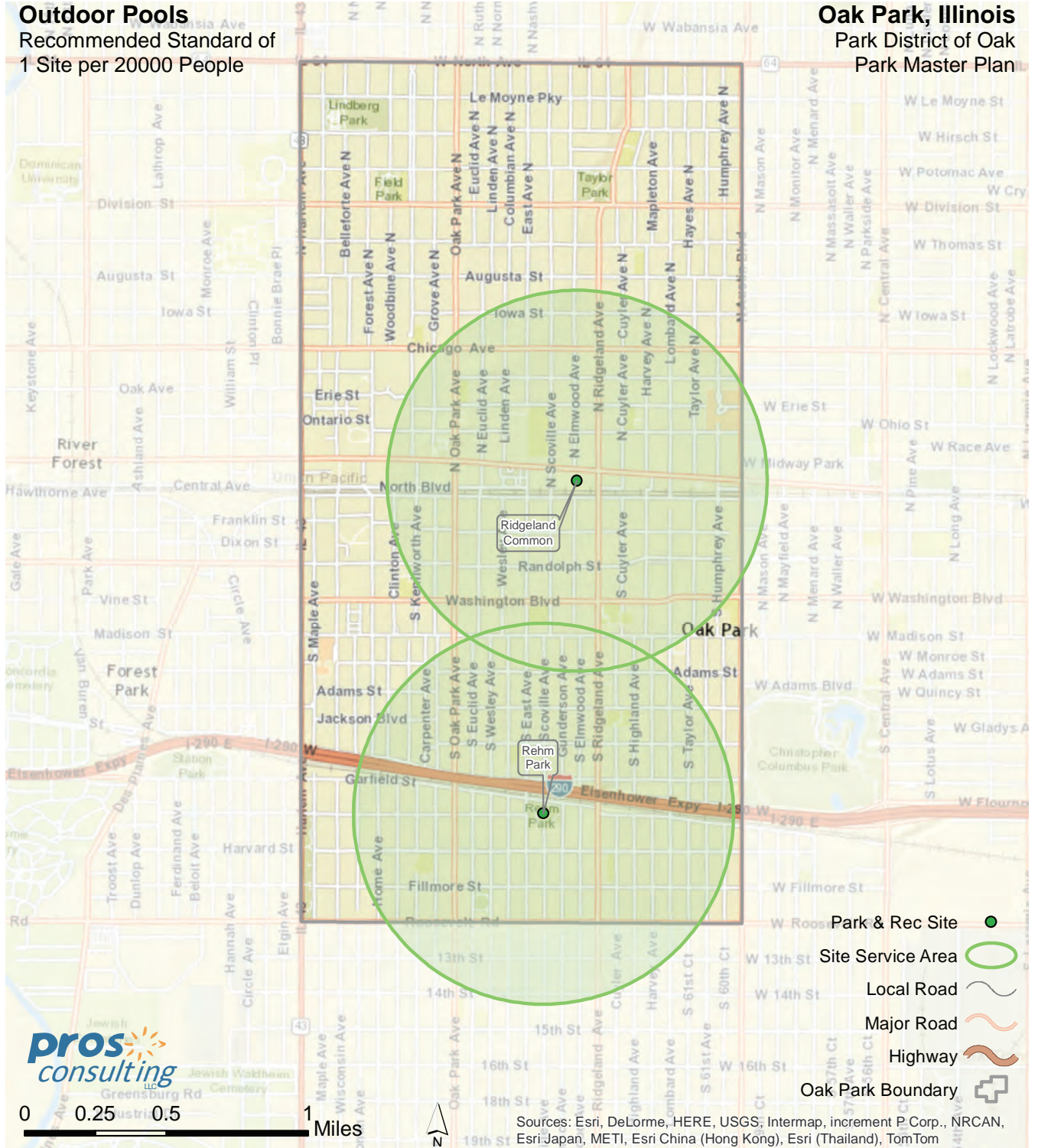


Figure 3.38 - Outdoor Pools Equity Map

Playgrounds

Recommended Standard of
1 Site per 2500 People

Oak Park, Illinois Park District of Oak Park Master Plan

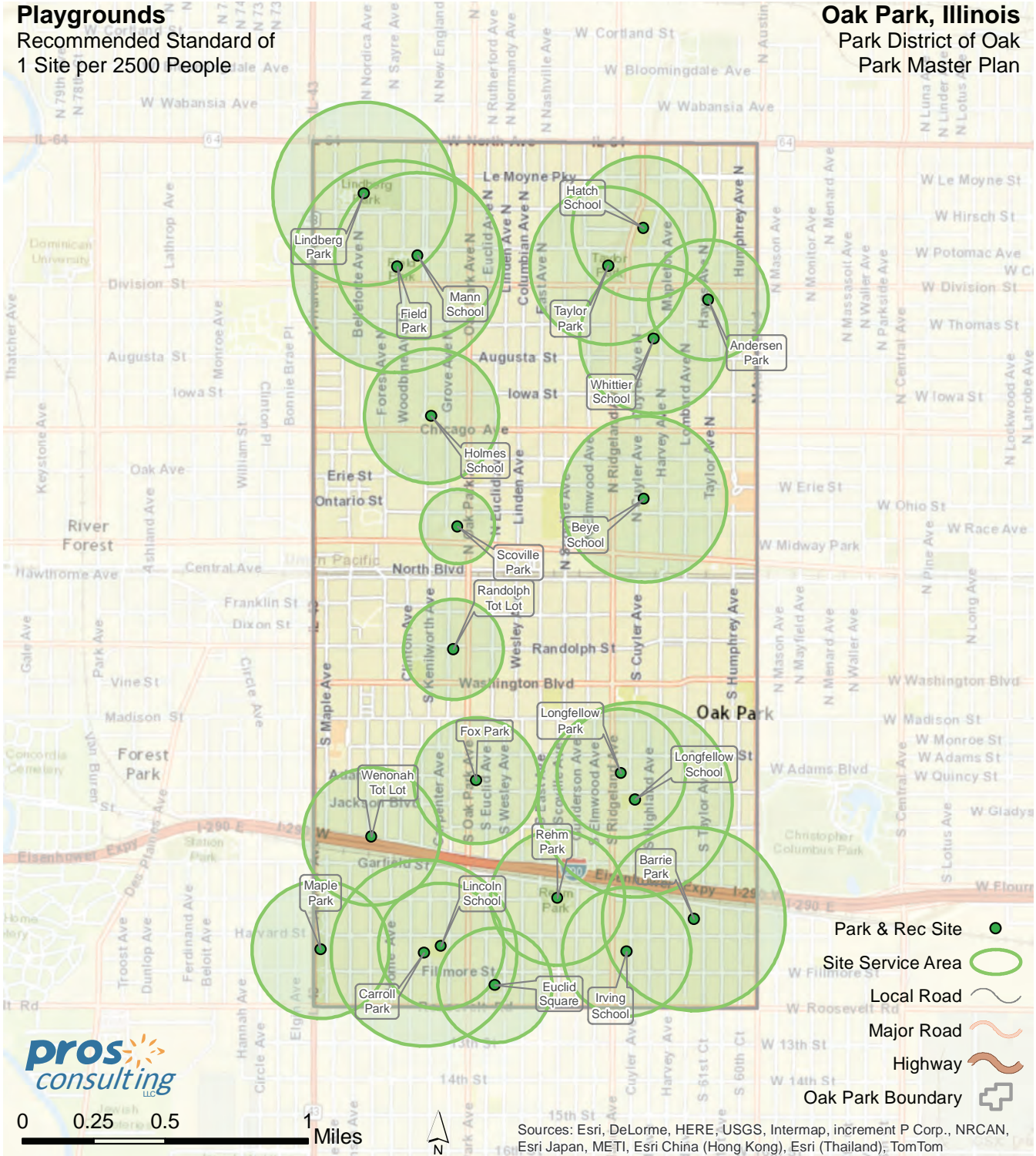


Figure 3.39 - Playgrounds Equity Map

Picnic Shelters
Recommended Standard of
1 Site per 7000 People

Oak Park, Illinois
Park District of Oak
Park Master Plan

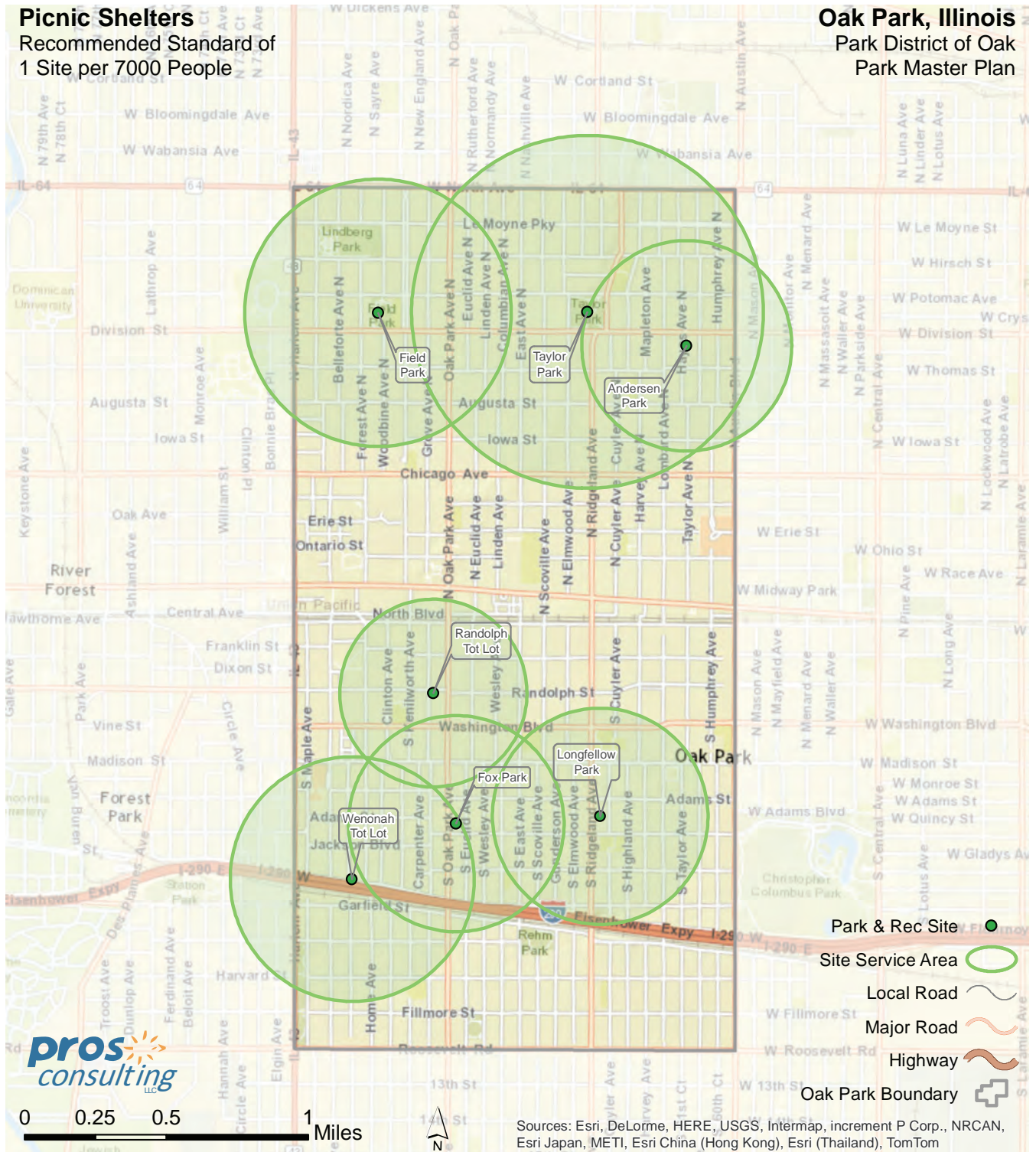


Figure 3.40 - Picnic Shelters/Areas Equity Map

Dog Parks
 Recommended Standard of
 1 Site per 40000 People

Oak Park, Illinois
 Park District of Oak
 Park Master Plan

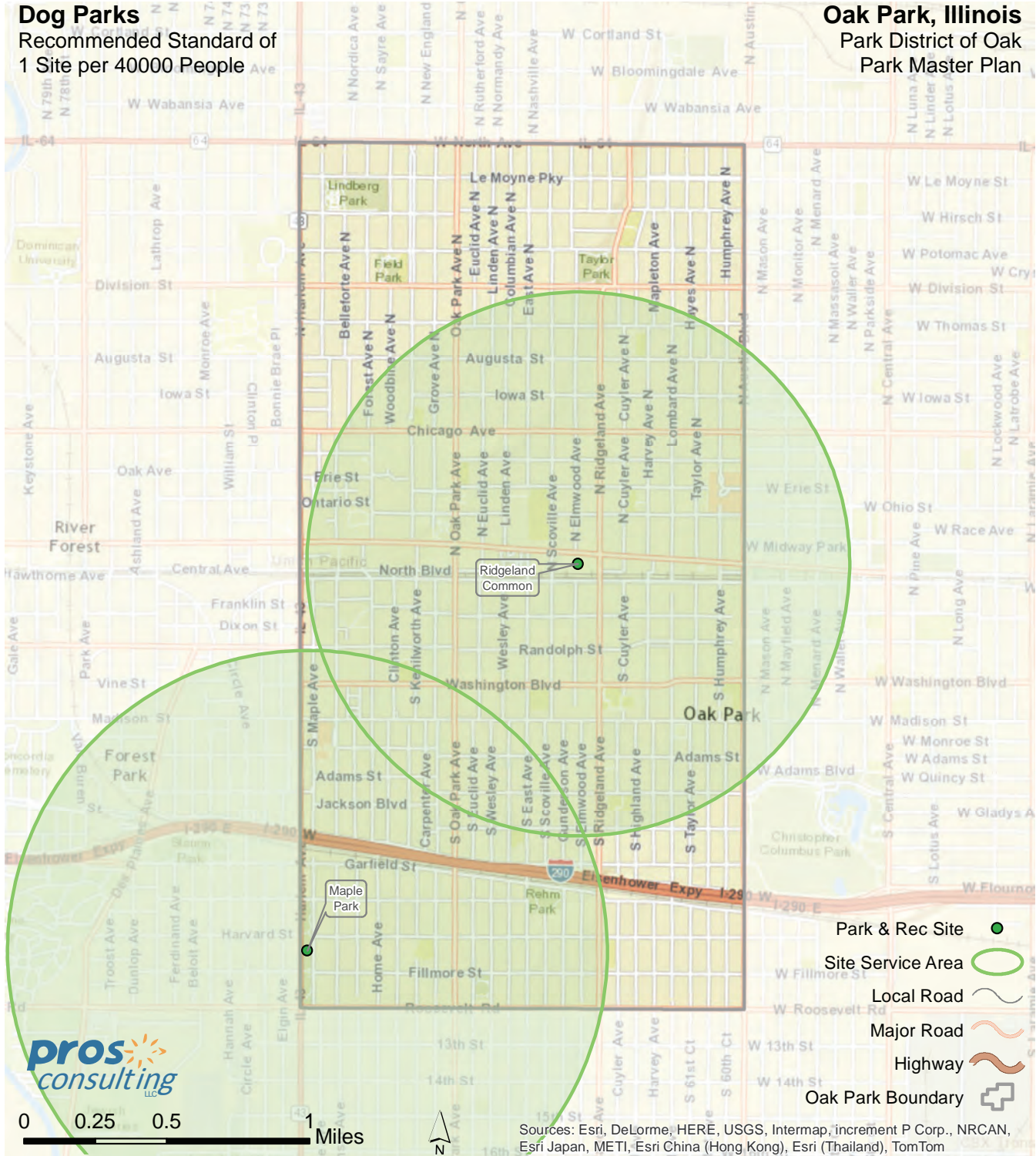


Figure 3.41 - Dog Parks Equity Map

Indoor Recreation/Gymnasiums

Recommended Standard of
 1.5 Sqft per Person for Gymnasiums
 2.0 Sqft per Person for Indoor Pools

Oak Park, Illinois
 Park District of Oak
 Park Master Plan

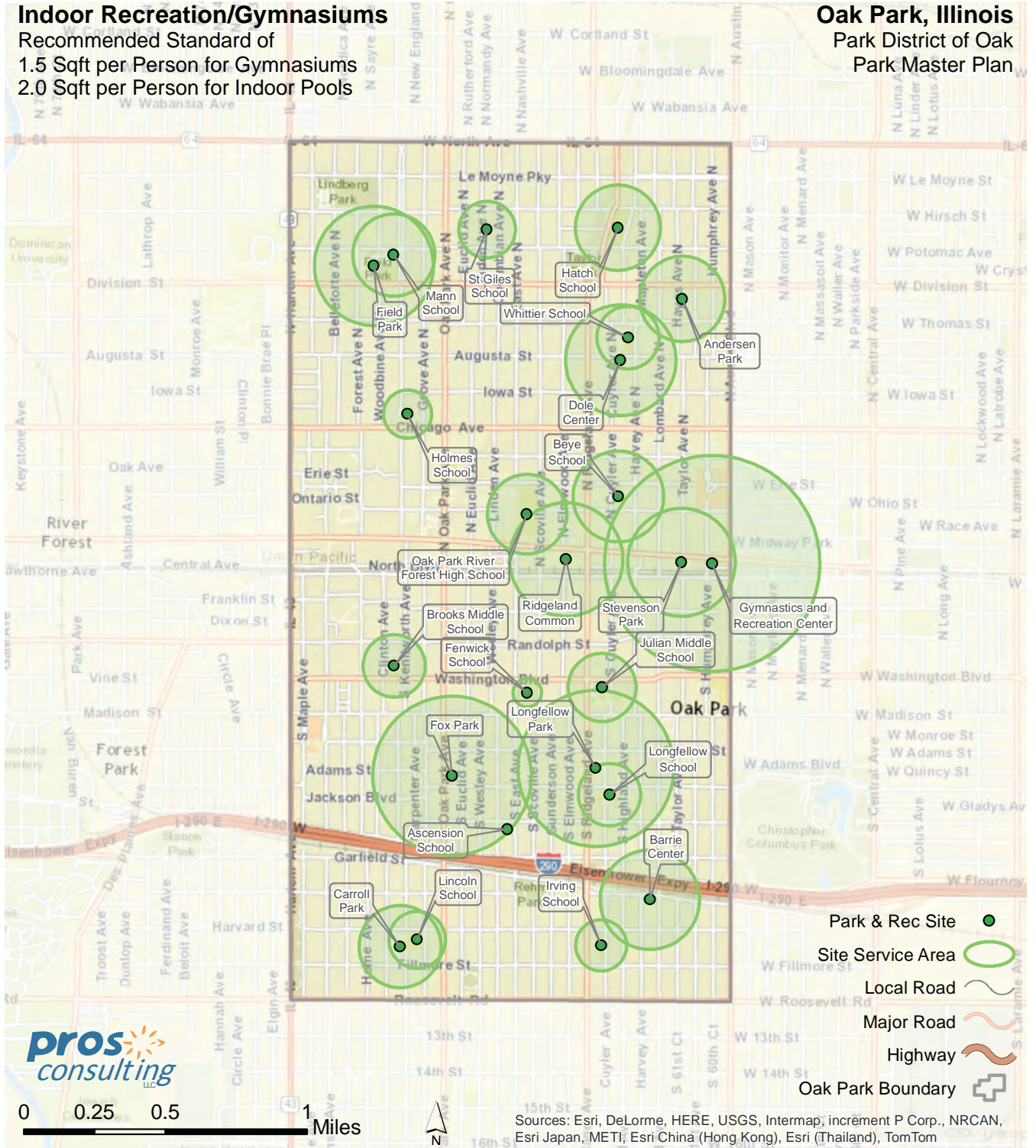


Figure 3.42 - Indoor Recreation/Gymnasiums Equity Map

Program Assessment

Introduction

PROS Consulting conducted an overall assessment of the Park District of Oak Park’s program offerings. The aim of the assessment is to identify core program areas, gaps and overlaps in services, as well as system-wide issues such as customer feedback, performance measures and marketing that is vital to the success of the District’s program growth.

The consulting team based their findings on information derived from:

- Discussions with staff members
- Program assessment forms
- Community-wide survey

The Park District staff selected the core programs / facilities to be evaluated and entered the data into the program assessment matrix provided by PROS.

The core programs areas assessed include:

- Aquatics
- Adult Sports
- Camps
- Community Events
- Early Childhood
- Gymnastics
- Health / Fitness
- Ice Programs
- Martial Arts
- Seniors
- Teens
- Visual Arts
- Youth Sports

Program Participation Results

As can be seen below (Figure 3.43), the majority (68%) of the respondents taking the survey indicated they participated in PDOP programs.

Also, from the respondents who participated, over 90% rated the quality of the programs as Good or Excellent (Figure 3.44) which is reflective of the high quality experience provided by PDOP and is certainly very commendable.

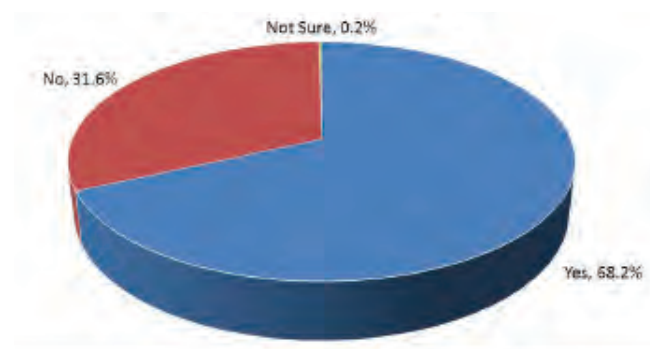


Figure 3.43 - PDOP Program Participation

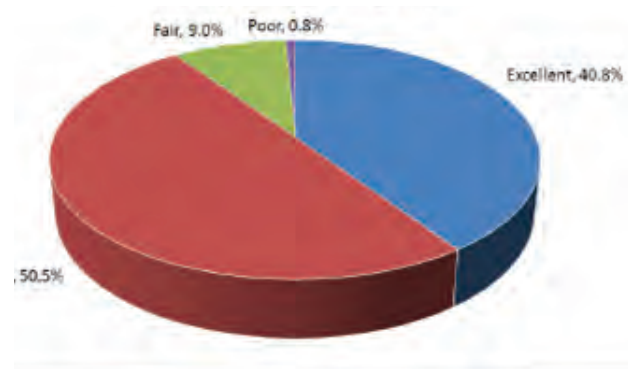


Figure 3.44 - PDOP Program Quality

Facility/Amenity & Program Priority Rankings

The purpose of the Facility and Program Priority Rankings is to provide a prioritized list of facility/amenity needs and recreation program needs for the community served by the Park District of Oak Park.

This rankings model evaluated quantitative data that was extracted from the community survey. This survey asked residents to identify if they used an existing facility or program, if their needs were met for potential facilities, and to rank their importance for programs and facilities.

This scoring system considers the following from the Community Survey:

- Participation for existing facilities and recreation programs – This is used as a factor from the total number of households that indicated that they had used an existing facility or participated in a recreational program. Residents were asked to identify their participation for 22 existing facilities and 31 recreational program areas.
- Met need for potential facilities – This is used as a factor from the total number of households mentioning whether they have a need for a new facility. Survey participants were asked to identify this for 14 different potential facilities.
- Importance ranking for facilities and recreation programs – This is used as a factor from the importance allocated to a new / potential facility desired by the community.

These scores were then summed to provide an overall score and priority ranking for the system as a whole. Priority rankings for existing facilities and programs were calculated by combining the importance ranking and participation data from the survey, while rankings for new facilities factored the importance and needs met of survey respondents for potential facilities. The results of the priority ranking were tabulated into three categories: High Priority (top third), Medium Priority (middle third) and Low Priority (bottom third).

As seen below (Figure 3.45), outdoor swimming pools, playgrounds, outdoor gardens/ natural areas, walking paths, and sled hills are the top five highest existing facility/ amenity priorities.

Existing Facility Priority Rankings	
Facility	Ranking
Outdoor Swimming Pools	1
Playgrounds	2
Outdoor Gardens/ Natural Areas	3
Walking Paths	4
Sled Hills	5
Splash Pads/ Spray Areas	6
Historic Properties	7
Nature/ Environmental Centers	8
Outdoor Soccer/ Multipurpose Fields	9
Outdoor Tennis Courts	10
Indoor Ice Rinks	11
Gymnastics Facilities	12
Picnic Shelters	13
Outdoor Baseball/ Softball	14
Outdoor Synthetic Turf Sports Fields	15
Off-Leash Dog Area	16
Outdoor Ice Rinks	17
Outdoor Basketball Courts	18
Outdoor Skate Parks	19
Dance Facilities	20
Martial Arts Facilities	21
Outdoor Volleyball Courts	22

Figure 3.45 - Existing Facility Priority Rankings

As seen below (Figure 3.46), community wide special events, youth sports/ leagues, youth aquatics/ swim lessons, youth summer camps, and youth gymnastics are the top five highest program priorities.

Program Priority Rankings	
Program	Ranking
Community Wide Special Events	1
Youth Sports/ Leagues	2
Youth Aquatics/ Swim Lessons	3
Youth Summer Camps	4
Youth Gymnastics	5
Adult Fitness	6
Family Special Events	7
Senior Programs/ Events	8
Preschool/ Early Childhood	9
Adult Aquatic/ Swim Lessons	10
Youth Ice Skating	11
Adult Sports/ Leagues	12
Youth Ice Hockey	13
Other Youth Special Interest	14
Other Adult Special Interest	15
Adult Gardening	16
Youth Martial Arts	17
Teen Programs/ Events	18
Youth Art	19
Adult Dance	20
Adult Ice Skating	21
Adult Ice Hockey	22
Adult Art	23
Youth Dance	24
Youth Fitness	25
After School Care	26
Adult Martial Arts	27
Adult Environmental	28
Youth Environmental	29
Youth Gardening	30
Adult Gymnastics	31

Figure 3.46 - Program Priority Rankings

The following table (Figure 3.47) shows that indoor swimming pools, indoor running/ walking tracks, indoor fitness/ exercise facilities, arts facilities, and indoor gymnasiums are the top five potential facility / amenity priorities.

New Facility Priority Rankings	
Facility	Ranking
Indoor Swimming Pools	1
Indoor Running/ Walking Tracks	2
Indoor Fitness/ Exercise Facilities	3
Arts Facilities	4
Indoor Gymnasiums	5
Outdoor Fitness Equipment Areas	6
Facilities for Teens	7
Facilities for Seniors	8
Indoor Synthetic Turf Sports Fields	9
Frisbee Golf Courses	10
Badminton Courts	11
Outdoor Roller Hockey Rinks	12
Platform Tennis Courts	13
Pickleball Courts	14

Figure 3.47 - New Facility Priority Rankings

Lifecycle Analysis

The program assessment included a lifecycle analysis completed by staff members. The listing of programs is included in the chart on the following page. This assessment was not based on quantitative data, but based on staff’s knowledge of their program areas. These lifecycles can, and often do, change from year to year or over time depending on how the programs fare.

The following table (Figure 3.48) shows the percentage distribution of the various lifecycle categories of the Park District’s nearly 180 recreation programs as listed by the staff:

These percentages were obtained by comparing the number of programs listed in each individual stage with the total number of programs listed in the program worksheets. The PROS team recognizes that while there is no statistically sound method for obtaining the percentage breakout of all programs by lifecycle stages, the overall pattern and trends are apparent in the Program Lifecycle table.

The lifecycles depict a declining trend. A high 25% of all programs are in the Decline stage, and an additional 13% in the Saturated stage. Part of this stems from facility / pool closures in the previous year which has skewed the participation numbers and the consultant

team is confident that these numbers will commence an upward trend again since the new facilities / pool has opened.

With 16% programs in the Introduction Stage, the District is doing an excellent job in replenishing the program pipeline and ensuring new trends and innovative ideas are constantly nurtured.

Recommendations

The PROS team recommends that the staff track program lifecycles on an annual basis to ensure there are a decreasing number of programs in the Saturated to Decline stage while ensuring an increased number of programs in the Introduction stage. It is recommended that programs from Saturated to Decline should comprise no more than 10% of the total program mix.

Additionally, the bottom 5% of all poorly performing programs must be eliminated or repositioned to ensure the cycle of program innovation continues. It would also be helpful to establish performance metric to ensure a set percentage of progress only should be in the Decline stage and any programs staying in that stage for two years should be repositioned or eliminated in favor of new programs.

Lifecycle Stage	Description	Actual Program Distribution		Recommended Distribution
Introduction	New program; modest participation	16%	47% total	50-60% total
Take-Off	Rapid participation growth	12%		
Growth	Moderate, but consistent population growth	19%		
Mature	Slow participation growth	15%	15%	40%
Saturation	Minimal to no participation growth; extreme competition	13%	38% total	0-10% total
Decline	Declining participation	25%		

Figure 3.48 - Program Lifecycle Analysis

Program Financial Assessment

Finding ways to enhance revenue year-on-year and improve service pricing strategies are a priority for PDOP. To that end, the consulting team conducted a review of program cost recovery strategies based upon information provided by District staff.

Cost Recovery Strategies

Currently, cost recovery performance is not tracked at a program level. PROS recommends using core programs areas as a basis for categorization. Cost recovery targets should be identified for each program area, at least, and for specific programs or events if necessary. The previously identified core programs would serve as an effective breakdown for tracking cost recovery metrics, which would theoretically group programs with similar cost recovery and subsidy goals.

Targets should reflect the degree to which the program area provides a public versus private good. Programs providing public benefits should be subsidized more; programs providing private benefits should seek to recover costs and/or generate revenue for other services. Generally, non-core programs, which are less critical to the organizational mission, should aim to yield a higher cost recovery rate to sustain them, leaving the limited tax-based appropriations to fund core programs.

To assist plan and implement cost recovery policies, PROS has developed the following definitions presented in Figure 3.49 to help classify specific programs within program areas.

Programs falling into the Important or Value-Added classifications generally represent programs that receive lower priority for tax subsidization. Important programs contribute to the organizational mission but are not essential to it; therefore, cost recovery for these programs should be high (i.e., at least 80% overall). Value-added programs are not critical to the mission and should be prevented from drawing upon limited public funding, so overall cost recovery for these programs should be near to or in excess of 100%.

To develop specific cost recovery targets, full cost of accounting should be created on each class or program that accurately calculates direct and indirect costs. Cost recovery goals are established once these numbers are in place, and the District’s program staff should be trained on this process.

Category	Description	Cost Recovery	Subsidy
Core-Essential	<input type="checkbox"/> Part of the organizational mission <input type="checkbox"/> Serves a majority of the community <input type="checkbox"/> “We <i>must</i> offer this program.”	None to moderate	High to complete
Important	<input type="checkbox"/> Important to the community <input type="checkbox"/> Serves large portions of the community <input type="checkbox"/> “We <i>should</i> offer this program.”	Moderate	Moderate
Value-Added	<input type="checkbox"/> Enhanced community offerings <input type="checkbox"/> Serves niche groups <input type="checkbox"/> “It would be <i>nice</i> to offer this program.”	High to complete	Little to none

Figure 3.49 - Cost Recovery and Subsidy Program Categories

The following table (Figure 3.50) represents where PDOP's staff portrays each program:

Introduction	Take-Off	Growth	Mature	Saturated	Decline	
Hockey Camps	public skate times	adult beginner hockey	Freestyle/practice times	Cooking	womens open hockey	
Figure Skating Camps	rink brithday parties	private ice rentals	Adult open hockey	Mad Science Spring Break Program	Adult Dance Classes	
Broom Ball	Pre-Kindergarten	Winter Design Camp	travel house hockey	Aikido	Afternoon Adventurists	
Beginner hockey	Preschool	Youth Dance Classes	Adult hockey leagues	Boys Lacrosse	No Preschool, No Problem	
In-House hockey league	Social Butterflies	Circus Performance Team	adult intermediate hockey	Girls Lacrosse	One Day Saturday Classes in January & Feb	
Free Skate Skating	Mad Science	Afterschool Art	SCAW Art Camp	parent-tot	Holiday Luncheon	
Upper level skating	Measure, Test, Pour	Pint Size with Parents	Ceramics Youth	Adult Volleyball	Martial Arts for Kids	
Hockey specialty clinics	Cooking with Parent	Summer Stay & Play	Ceramics Teen	Parent & Tot Classes (2 - 3.5 years)	Teen Night Out	
youth open hockey	Senior Lunch & Movies	One Day Saturday Play March-December	Ceramics Family	Gym Kids 1 Classes (3.5 - 4.5 years)	Battle of Bands	
Rink special events	Senior Trips	Pint Size Sports	Circus Camp	Gym Kids 2 Classes (4.5 - 6 years)	Flag Football League	
skating specialty classes	Book Worms Book Discussion Group	Princess Programs	Circus Classes	Beginner Boys & Beginner Girls (6+years)	pre swim team	
snowplow sam skating	World Art Discussion	Preschool Sports Camps	Indoor Playground	Advanced Beginner Boys / Girls (6+ years)	Jr. lifeguard classes	
basic skating	Teen Trips	School Age Sports Camps	Alphabet Action	Intermediate Boys / Girls (6+ years)		
School of Rock Music	Youth Soccer League	Preschool Traditional Camps	Shapes, Textures & More for 3-5 success with 2-3's with parent	Advanced Intermediate Boys / Girls (6+ years)		
Indoor Play Bday Parties	Pee Wee Soccer League	School Age Traditional Camps	Day in our Village	Advanced Boys / Girls (6+ years)		
Baby & Me	Instructional Baseball League	Teen Camps	Concerts in the Park	Boys Challenge (9+ years)		
12 Week Spanish Courses	camp swim time	Counselor in Training Camps	Frank Lloyd Wright Race	Tumbling & Trampoline (6+ years)		
Little Acting Classes	camp swim lessons	Fall Fest	Egg Hunt	USAG Boys & USAG Girls Competitive Teams		
Dance & Cheer	Birthday Parties	Movies in the Park	Karate	GJO Girls Team		
Historical Lectures		Teen Babysitting Class	Taekwondo	Open Gym (6+years)		
Specialty Camps		Youth Basketball League	Tai Chi	Summer Camp (6+ years)		
Winter Fest		Tennis Lessons	Teen Flashlight Egg Hunt	Gymnastics Sleepovers (6+years)		
Friday Night Ice for Teens Only		All-Star Sports Classes	Floor Hockey			
Teen CPR/FA Classes		Summer Basketball Camp	aqua aerobics			
Teen Spring Break Camps		Summer Tennis Camp	kids swim lessons			
T-Ball League		pass holder swim	family swim			
Summer Basketball League		adult beginner	public swim			
Semi-Private Tennis Lesons		adult advanced	pre-school swim			
Pool Rentals		lap swim time	Adult Soccer			
off season lap swim		Adult Softball	Specialty Fitness			
semi-private lessons		Adult Tennis	Basic Adult Fitness			
off season lessons		Preschool Playtime (1 - 6 years)	Basic Senior Fitness			
Aqua Yoga			Adult Golf			
pool birthday parties						
adult/Sr. swim						
Aqua Zumba						
Basic Kid's Fitness						
Basic Teen Fitness						
Punch Pass Fitness						
Gymnastics for Homeschoolers						
Adult Gymnastics						
	26%	12%	20%	21%	14%	8%
	41	19	32	33	22	12
	159	159	159	159	159	159
New program; modest participation	Rapid participation growth	Moderate, but consistent participation growth	Slow participation growth	Minimal to no participation growth; extreme competition	g participation	
Source: Client						

Figure 3.49 - Stage in Program Lifecycle

Age Segment Distribution

In addition to the lifecycle analysis, staff also assessed age segment distribution of programs.

Despite the fact that the adult and senior population represent nearly 60% of the local population (median age 38.8 years), the balance of age segment distribution for programs is skewed towards youth. Based on the program list provided by the staff, 56.25% of all programming is geared towards ages 24 and below. It is typical nation-wide for agencies to focus heavily on youth and families.

The Department does have a number of programs for the 55+ population as well, but as the population ages it would be appropriate for the staff to view the age segment distributions on an annual basis to ensure continued rebalancing among skewed categories.

Also, if possible, given the differences in how the active adults (55+) participate in recreation programs, the trend is moving toward having at least two different segments of older adults. The Department could evaluate further splitting program offerings into 55–74 and 75 plus program segments.

Core Programs

The consultant team believes in the importance of identifying core programs based on current and future needs and prioritizing resource allocation to meet those needs. This assists in creating a sense of focus around specific program areas of greatest importance to the community. It does not mean that non-core programs are not important – it simply allows the staff to establish priorities.

Programs are categorized as core programs if they meet a majority of the following categories:

- The program has been provided for a long period of time (over 4-5 years).
- Offered 3-4 sessions per year.
- Wide demographic appeal.
- Includes 5% or more of recreation budget.
- Includes a tiered level of skill development.
- Requires full-time staff to manage the program.
- Has strong social value.
- High level of customer interface exists.
- High partnering capability.
- Facilities are designed to support the program.

Recommended Core Programs

In evaluating survey results for new facility types desired by the community, types of indoor recreation facilities ranked very high. It certainly indicates a need for year-round, multipurpose recreation activities that the PDOP can focus on expanding based on existing available space or by developing new indoor recreation spaces to help support program delivery for Indoor Recreation.

Marketing & Website

The PDOP website has recently been updated (is also smart-phone enabled) and continues to be a visually appealing and an engaging source to provide community and users information about the offerings in Oak Park.

As stated in the program assessment worksheets provided by staff, most programs are promoted via the Print and Online Program Guide, the Website and the Smart-phone enabled site, In-facility promotions and signage, Facebook, Twitter and Email Blasts. There are also some instances of flyers and brochures, social media usage, newsletters and special events and even some paid advertisements. Areas of opportunity mentioned most frequently include building an App, using YouTube and QR codes more consistently.

Also, Department staff's email signatures should be consistent and used to promote the website, social media presence as well as upcoming events.

The use of Web 2.0 technology must be increased beyond what is currently used: Facebook and Twitter to other mediums such as YouTube, Instagram and Pinterest as well. The key to successful implementation of a social network is to move the participants from awareness to action and creating greater user engagement.



This could be done by:

- Allowing controlled 'user generated content' by encouraging users to send in their pictures from the District's special events or programs
- Leverage the website to obtain customer feedback for programs, parks and facilities and customer service
 - Expand opportunities for Crowd-sourcing
 - Some resources include www.mindmixer.com and www.peakdemocracy.com
- Provide opportunities for Donations or Crowd-funding through the website
 - www.kickstarter.org / www.indiegogo.com / www.razoo.com for Crowd funding options including printing program guides or developing marketing material
- Maximize the website's revenue generating capabilities
 - Evaluate using Google AdSense to allow for placements of relevant ads on the website.
- Continue to expand the use for Google Analytics for the website
- Add a Google Translate functionality on the site to allow the diverse user base translate pages into a language of choice
- Develop a smart-phone application listing facilities and parks based on GPS locations, programs, rentals, online registration links, contact info, hours of operations etc.
- Conduct annual website strategy workshop with the staff to identify ways and means that the website can support the PDOP

Social Media Recommendations

Nielsen’s 2012 Social Media Report provides the accompanying chart (Figure 3.51) that outlines year-over-year change in unique PC visitors to the various social networks in the United States.

While this does not track all uses (i.e. from smart phones), it is a fair indication of the popularity and extent of use of social networks.

Twitter Recommendations

Based on a study by Buddy Media – Strategies for Effective Tweeting: A Statistical Review, some key bits of information for successful engagement are presented below in Figure 3.52.

Additional Social Networks

Three other social networks, as shown in Figure 3.53, that are burgeoning in popularity and impacting social behavior and user engagement are Google +, Pinterest and Instagram.

Google+, is the closest competitor to Facebook in terms of overall user adaption, brand awareness and scale of complementary services available to make it a viable social network.

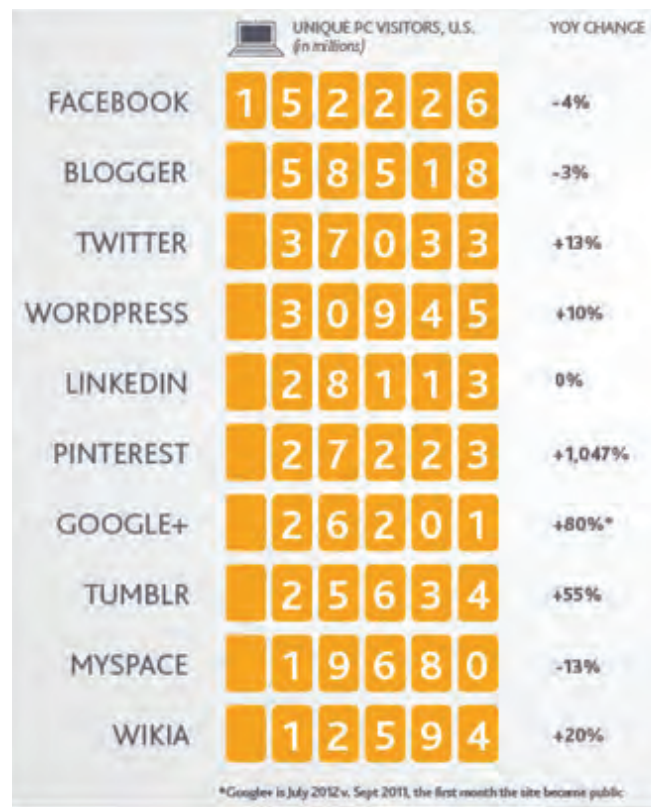


Figure 3.51- Social Media Use

Variable	Detail	Outcome
Time of Tweet	Between 8am – 7pm	30% increase in engagement
Length of Tweet	Less than 100 characters	17% increase in engagement
Using Hash Tags	With Hashtags (#)	200% increase in engagement
	More than 2 Hashtags (#)	17% decrease in engagement
Retweet	Tweet asking followers to Retweet or RT	1200% increase in engagement
	% of Brands asking followers to retweet	1%

Figure 3.52 - Effective Tweeting Recommendations

Pinterest, where users ‘pin’ images of designs, ideas and even recipes onto a board that is viewed by their friends / followers, witnessed over 1000% growth year over year based on Nielsen’s 2012 Social Media Report findings provided in the trends section earlier in this document.

Instagram, is a photo sharing website that is becoming increasingly popular especially with the younger audience. It’s acquisition by Facebook also ensures effective integration with the larger social network that one possesses and could be a viable social network for PRNS to venture into.

Overall, the keys to social media success include

- Attract attention by provide freebies and offers.
- Use catchy headlines to grab attention
- Ensure content is relevant
- Integration between various media including social networks, online tools, website etc.
- Monitor new trends for social networks to ensure relevance and maximum effectiveness

Type	URL	Description and Use for PRNS
App	http://www.arlingtontx.gov/app/ http://www.thealaskaapp.com/	Develop a smartphone and tablet app highlighting City offerings such as the one developed by Arlington, TX or Alaska
Wikipedia	www.wikipedia.com	Among Top 10 most visited websites in the world. List all parks, facilities, events and monitor links on it constantly
Online Reviews	www.yelp.com	List all parks, facilities, events on it. Seek, monitor and respond to reviews
	www.tripadvisor.com	Highlight things to do in Oak Park; monitor and respond to reviews
Video	www.vine.com	7 second video clips for rentals / events etc/
	www.youtube.com	Large videos, dedicated YouTube channel highlighting PDOP events, facilities, parks etc.
Deals	www.groupon.com www.livingsocial.com www.savelocal.com	Deals and promotions to access various PDOP offerings
Pay-per-click ads	adwords.google.com	Pay-per-click ads based on select key words for targeted outreach locally and regionally or by language through Google
	https://www.facebook.com/advertising	Pay-per-click ads based on select key words, interests, groups, affiliations for targeted outreach locally through Facebook
Check-Ins	www.foursquare.com	Foursquare Check-in letting people know they are at a PDOP facility / park
	https://www.facebook.com/about/location	Facebook Places letting people know they are at a PRNS facility /park

Figure 3.53 - Additional Social Networks

Customer Service & Feedback

Customer service is at the root of the success of any organization. A true community-service organization prides itself on identifying its customers' preferences and acting in accordance to help fulfill their needs. In order to do this, an ongoing and system-wide feedback mechanism is of vital importance and the Park District's willingness to undertake an extensive customer service training initiative for its staff is a big step in the right direction.

Currently, there is not a system wide approach to customer feedback but more through individual programs offered by the District. The following chart (Figure 3.54) shows each program and how the program gathers customer feedback.

	Pre-program evaluation		Post-program evaluation		User Surveys		Lost Customer Surveys		Focus Groups		Statistically Valid Survey	
	Current	Recommend	Current	Recommend	Current	Recommend	Current	Recommend	Current	Recommend	Current	Recommend
Martial Arts	No		Yes		Yes		No		No		No	
Adult Sports	No		Yes		Yes		No		No		No	
Teens	No		No		No		No		No		No	
Community Events	No		Yes		No		No		No		No	
Camps	No		No		No		No		No		No	
Seniors	No		No		No		No		No		No	
Visual Arts	No		No		No		No		No		No	
Health / Fitness	No		Yes		Yes		No		No		No	
Early Childhood	No		Yes		No		No		No		No	
Ice Programs	No		Yes	Continue	Yes	Continue	No		Yes	Continue	Yes	Continue
Aquatics	No	Add	Yes	Continue	Yes	Continue	No		No		Yes	Continue
Gymnastics	No		No		Yes	Continue	No		No		No	
Youth Sports	No	Add	Yes	Continue	Yes	Continue	No		No		No	

	Website		Online survey (eg. Surveymonkey.com, Wufoo)		In-park or on-site surveys		Crowdsourcing Park Democracy, Charodix, Mind Mixer, etc.		Others (please list)	
	Current	Recommend	Current	Recommend	Current	Recommend	Current	Recommend	Current	Recommend
Martial Arts	Yes		Yes		No		No		N/A	N/A
Adult Sports	Yes		Yes		No		No		N/A	N/A
Teens	Yes		Yes		Yes		No		N/A	
Community Events	Yes		Yes		No		No		N/A	
Camps	Yes		Yes		Yes		No		N/A	
Seniors	No		Yes		No		No		N/A	
Visual Arts	No		Yes		Yes		No		N/A	
Health / Fitness	Yes		Yes		No		No		N/A	N/A
Early Childhood	No		Yes	Continue	No		No		N/A	N/A
Ice Programs	Yes	Continue	Yes	Continue	Yes	Continue	No		N/A	N/A
Aquatics	Yes	Continue	Yes	Continue	Yes	Continue	No		Customer Interaction	Continue
Gymnastics	No		Yes	Continue	Yes	Continue	No		N/A	N/A
Youth Sports	Yes	Continue	No		Yes	Continue	No		N/A	N/A

Figure 3.54 - Customer Feedback

Park & Facility Evaluations

For the Comprehensive Planning process, it is important to evaluate all Park District holdings and capture their conditions as a snapshot in time to benchmark future goals and strategies against.

Park Evaluations

Overall, the parks are in significantly improved condition compared to the 2004 Comprehensive Plan. This is to be expected as the master planning process for all parks has led to implemented improvements and changes. However, there are some consistent issues noted throughout the District:

- Turf maintenance has made significant strides due to the creation and filling of a Turf Manager position. It is anticipated that the conditions of the fields will continue to improve, but this will also require additional investments over time in underdrainage and irrigation for fields where these components are missing.
- Paths and sidewalks within the park system are generally five feet wide, which makes mechanical snow removal challenging. This is often compounded by the placement of benches, trash, lighting, landscape or berming immediately adjacent to path. In many cases, the closest 6" to 12" of lawn adjacent to the path was in poor condition. While not a critical issue, it is something that should be kept in mind for any improvements in the future.
- Sand playground areas created significant maintenance issues wherever they were located, especially where they are proximate to water features. These are challenges that come with sand areas, and is unavoidable to some extent. Future modifications should carefully consider placement of these elements, and maintenance budgets and schedules should recognize the effort needed to keep these areas in good condition.

- Adequate access should be considered for maintenance vehicles. In some cases, the width or placement of gates in perimeter fences create unnecessary challenges for maintenance.
- Many of the parks only have a few bike racks. Newly renovated parks, such as Ridgeland Common, have provided significantly more racks, and they appear to be receiving heavy use. The demand for secure and convenient bike parking needs to be supported with more racks at all parks within the District.

The following pages collect key background, data and metrics for each open space to assist in the evaluation of current conditions and identify opportunities to continue to provide the highest level of services to the community. Specific facilities located at each park were separately reviewed by the consultant team and notes regarding their condition are provided as well.

Each open space has been assigned a series of evaluation scores for the amenities and features found within the park, which all contribute to an overall park score. These scores were generated through the use of a detailed evaluation tool developed by Park District staff. The intent is that this tool will be used in conducting regular evaluations which will allow for tracking of the condition of parks, but also tracking of specific amenities throughout the district. The goal is to more efficiently focus and prioritize maintenance activities in the future to help ensure the improved park conditions established through the Master Plan efforts will be maintained.

Within the context of this report, these scores allow for some base comparison of the parks and identification of some consistent themes found repeatedly within the District. The scores are based on a one hundred point system.

Additional notes for the open spaces and facilities are based on evaluations conducted by the consultant team and information gathered from Park District staff during tours of these elements.

Information from the 2015-2019 Capital Improvement Plan is provided where applicable to identify planned upgrades and additions to these facilities.

Facility Evaluations

The facilities have received a high-level review for purposes of the Comprehensive Master Plan process.

The condition of the facilities within the District is highly varied. There are several older buildings, several of which require significant maintenance. Additionally, there are brand new facilities, such as the GRC and Ridgeland Common. For purposes of this report, these newer buildings were not evaluated.

Each facility has received a score in five different categories. Each category was weighted based on relative importance. The different characteristics and weighting are shown in the chart on this page. The total adjusted rating was translated into a letter grade for ease in understanding.

The ratings are based on a visual inspection and are meant as a comprehensive level overview. Ratings would likely change as part of a full assessment.

Some specific notes on the neighborhood recreation centers, specifically Field and Carroll:

- The PDOP neighborhood centers are old and will require ongoing investment. These investments include regular repairs and maintenance costs. Additionally, there are deferred maintenance costs that would need to be factored into plans for the long-term use of these facilities.
- Many of these centers are very limited for programming, other than being used for preschool or play school. There is not appropriate storage to allow a change out

of equipment to allow for other uses and programming. This can be seen in analysis of facility usage, where these neighborhood centers are only used 30% to 50% of the time between 8:00 A.M. and 10:00 P.M. during the year.

- Operating several small buildings is less efficient and requires more maintenance than a single, larger building. It takes more staff to operate several small facilities and utility/energy costs are higher.

CHARACTERISTICS	IMPORTANCE FACTOR	OPTIMAL RATING	
		RATING	WEIGHTED RATING
FUNCTIONALITY	2	10	20
CONDITION ASSESSMENT 1=POOR; 10=EXCELLENT	4	10	40
POSITIVE REVENUE OR MINIMAL COST BURDEN TO OPERATE	2	10	20
COMPARISON TO OTHER FACILITIES IN THE PDOP	1	10	10
COMPARISON TO FACILITIES IN OTHER DISTRICTS	2	10	20
	AGGREGATE RATING		110

Note: Numerical value ratings range from 0-10 with 0 being detrimental and 10 being ideal. Importance factors range from 1-4 with 1 being the least important. Each rating is multiplied by the importance factor to provide a weighted rating. Only the weighted ratings are provided on each facility evaluation sheet.

John L. Hedges Administrative Center

218 Madison Street

OVERALL
FACILITY GRADE

D

EVALUATION SCORE CARD	Functionality	Condition Assessment	Positive Revenue	Comparison - PDOP Facilities	Comparison - Other Districts	AGGREGATE RATING
		6	16	10	4	8



Summary

The John L. Hedges Administrative Center and maintenance facility has served the District well, but has potentially reached the end of its useful life. It was originally built as a car dealership in the 1920's. It has functional limitations with physical and structural challenges including ADA accessibility limitations, mechanical and electrical inadequacies, shortage of storage, and no on-site parking. The gymnastics program was recently moved to a new site and the past gym area is now used for storage.

FUNCTIONALITY

1. Storage space is at a premium. Wherever space allows, storage for essential items has been created. Overall, there is not enough space.
2. Space is cut up and doesn't flow well.
3. ADA audit has been completed; items are being addressed.
4. Existing elevator is small.
5. Admin office space is not adequate and spread throughout the building.
6. The size of the maintenance garage is not adequate for all needs. Most everything for the maintenance department is stored here including seed which has caused a rodent problem.

AESTHETICS

1. Fair to poor – exterior and interior design elements which were added during recent renovations are not consistent with the character of the original building and detract from the overall appearance.

CONDITION OF INTERIOR FINISHES

1. Finishes are outdated.
2. Drywall surfaces don't tolerate abuse well.

BUILDING ENVELOPE & STRUCTURE

1. The building has been renovated multiple times and is in reasonably good condition with the exception of the roof structure over the gym and maintenance garage. Since roof insulation was added during a past renovation, snow doesn't melt as rapidly, builds up, and overstresses the roof trusses. As a corrective measure, reinforcement has been added to the trusses.

LIFE SAFETY ISSUES - BUILDING

1. No fire sprinkler system.
2. The open, non-compliant stair does not provide a protected means of egress.

UTILITIES, MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS

1. It was reported that the HVAC system is worn out and has exceeded its expected useful life; it's inefficient and loud. System zoning has also been an issue – there are inconsistent temperatures throughout the building.
2. Electrical capacity is limited; lighting in gym and garage are operated by the electrical panel circuit breakers.

Andersen Park

824 North Hayes Avenue

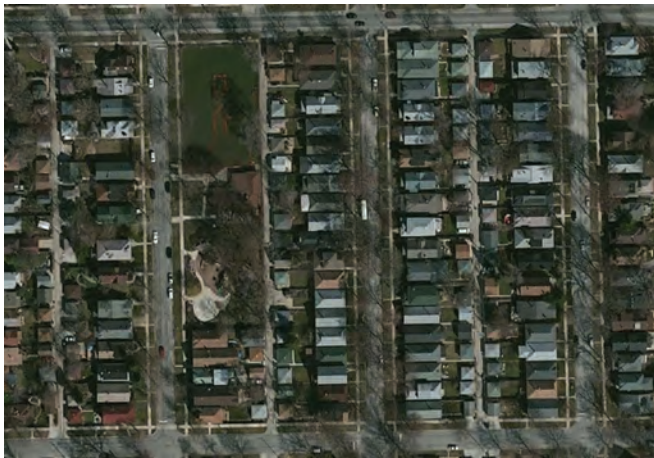
1.3 acres

OVERALL
PARK GRADE

B

EVALUATION
SCORE CARD

Athletic Fields/ Courts	Playgrounds	Paths and Walkways	Passive Green Spaces	Seating Areas	Bathrooms	Drinking Fountains	TOTAL SCORE
81	87	80	N/A	88	100	83	87



Park History

Acquired in 1916, the park is named after children's author Hans Christian Andersen and includes a center originally designed by John S. Van Bergen. The center has been significantly modified over the years. The play equipment was previously renovated in 1985.

Evaluation Notes

The park is in good condition with some small issues. There is repair needed for storm damage of the fence along the alley on the eastern property line. The walk on the west side of the building suffers from ice issues created by snow melt from the roof re-freezing at night. Permeable paving should be considered as solution. The splash pad was noted as having unexpectedly high water usage. The field is fenced along three sides and there is some use as a de facto dog run. A secondary entrance point in the northeast corner could deter this use as well as make the park more accessible. Constructing a paved connection, from the seating area to the playground would improve the area where the lawn is worn from heavy use.

Planned Improvements

2014

2015

2016

2017

2018

Park Amenities

Transportation Amenities

Number of Vehicle Parking Spaces	N/A
Access to Dedicated Bike Route	Planned Bike Lane
Number of Bike Racks	1
Distance to Train Station	1.2 mi (Austin-Green)
Bus Stop at Site	Austin & Division (70, 91)
Distance to Bus Stop	0.2 mi

Active Recreation Amenities

Multi-Use Field	Yes
Baseball / Softball Field	
Basketball Court	
Tennis Court	
Sand Volleyball Court	
Outdoor Ice Rink	
Playground	Yes
Splash Pad	Yes
Outdoor Pool	
Skate Park	
Dog Park	
Sled Hill	

Notes: Play Equipment for 0-5 yrs; Play Equipment for 5+ yrs

Park Structures

Community Center	Yes
Public Restrooms	Yes
Pavilion	
Other	Chess Tables



Andersen Center

824 N. Hayes Avenue

OVERALL FACILITY GRADE

D

EVALUATION SCORE CARD

Functionality	Condition Assessment	Positive Revenue	Comparison - PDOP Facilities	Comparison - Other Districts	AGGREGATE RATING
8	16	10	2	6	42



Summary

The Andersen Park Center is located at the northeast corner of the District and is similar to the centers at Field and Carroll Parks. It was originally built in the 1920's and renovated in 1965 at which time a brick veneer was added to the exterior wall face.

If any of the centers are removed from the District's inventory, this center should receive strong consideration.

FUNCTIONALITY

1. The center operates primarily as a preschool building.

AESTHETICS

1. The exterior is acceptable.

CONDITION OF INTERIOR FINISHES

1. (The tour did not involve entering the building.)

BUILDING ENVELOPE & STUCTURE

1. The roof is in good condition.

LIFE SAFETY ISSUES - BUILDING

1. The stair is not compliant with current standards.

UTILITIES, MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS

1. Systems are generally in good condition and easy to manage.

SITE

1. The concrete walk/stoop behind the building has settled.

Austin Gardens

167 Forest Avenue

3.64 acres

OVERALL
PARK GRADE

B

EVALUATION
SCORE CARD

Athletic Fields/ Courts	Playgrounds	Paths and Walkways	Passive Green Spaces	Seating Areas	Bathrooms	Drinking Fountains	TOTAL SCORE
N/A	N/A	86	78	N/A	N/A	100	86



Park History

Henry W. Austin, Jr. donated the land in 1947 on the condition that it remains a public park bearing the Austin family name. The wildflower woodland habitat was planted in 1970 by the League of Women Voters. Since 1975, Austin Gardens has been used as a performance space by the Oak Park Festival Theatre. A Trust for Austin Gardens is held by the Oak Park-River Forest Community Foundation.

Evaluation Notes

The overall condition of the park is high. Intense use that the lawn receives from when the theatre operates makes it hard to maintain grass in certain areas. Some settling has occurred in the paver sections of the walkway, which is scheduled to be addressed as part of the master plan implementation in 2015. Additional maintenance attention should be given to turf management within this park in the future.

Planned Improvements

2014
2015 Environmental learning center and associated improvements
2016
2017
2018

Park Amenities

Transportation Amenities	
Number of Vehicle Parking Spaces	N/A
Access to Dedicated Bike Route	Planned Bicycle Boulevard
Number of Bike Racks	2
Distance to Train Station	0.4 mi (Harlem-Green)
Bus Stop at Site	Forest/Ontario (305)
Distance to Bus Stop	0.0 mi

Active Recreation Amenities	
Multi-Use Field	
Baseball / Softball Field	
Basketball Court	
Tennis Court	
Sand Volleyball Court	
Outdoor Ice Rink	Yes
Playground	
Splash Pad	
Outdoor Pool	
Skate Park	
Dog Park	
Sled Hill	
Notes:	n/a

Park Structures	
Community Center	
Public Restrooms	
Pavilion	
Other	Nature Area, Public Art, Seasonal Performance Space



Elizabeth F. Cheney Mansion

220 N. Euclid Avenue

OVERALL
FACILITY GRADE

B

EVALUATION SCORE CARD	Functionality	Condition Assessment	Positive Revenue	Comparison - PDOP Facilities	Comparison - Other Districts	AGGREGATE RATING
	12	32	8	8	16	76



Summary

Reminiscent of a gracious English country home, Cheney Mansion was designed in 1913 by Charles E. White, Jr., a student of Frank Lloyd Wright. This 12,000-square-foot mansion boasts many handsome reception rooms, six bedrooms, seven bathrooms, and separate servants' quarters. The two acres of beautifully landscaped grounds also include a coach house and greenhouse. These showcase gardens include a kitchen and cutting garden with an espalier fence, a woodland walk, and the great lawn for picnics. Located in the Historic District of Oak Park, the Mansion is used for special occasions and events such as weddings/receptions, private parties, corporate meetings and events, concerts and recitals, and memorial services. (Information provided by the PDOP website.)

FUNCTIONALITY

1. Given the historical nature and adaptation of the mansion to a public building, there are multiple deficiencies with which to deal when hosting an event.
2. The mansion is used for public functions three to four per week, and mostly in the summer.
3. There is no elevator access to the third floor, the location of the ball room. Therefore, accommodations must be made in other areas of the mansion.
4. The ball room has a relatively low ceiling.
5. Kitchen was redone in 2007.
6. It was noted that continuous refinement to the operation is necessary.
7. The greenhouse is being repurposed and an accessible toilet room is being added.

AESTHETICS

1. The mansion is wonderfully preserved and provides a valuable contribution to the community.

CONDITION OF INTERIOR FINISHES

1. Good condition.
2. Lead paint abatement is needed, especially in the basement.

BUILDING ENVELOPE & STRUCTURE

1. The roof was recently redone.
2. Masonry is in excellent condition.

LIFE SAFETY ISSUES - BUILDING

1. Due to the mansions age and historical nature, there are likely several areas of concern. A detailed assessment was not conducted.

UTILITIES, MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS

1. Systems are old and require constant attention. The HVAC system needs to be replaced.
2. The existing heating system is hot water.
3. There is only central A/C on the third floor/ball room.

SITE

1. The site is a true asset to the community.

Barrie Park

127 Garfield Street

4.22 acres

OVERALL
PARK GRADE

B

EVALUATION
SCORE CARD

Athletic Fields/ Courts	Playgrounds	Paths and Walkways	Passive Green Spaces	Seating Areas	Bathrooms	Drinking Fountains	TOTAL SCORE
83	72	90	N/A	N/A	N/A	78	81



Park History

A portion of this site was acquired in 1932 and named for the children's author James Barrie. The adjacent 3.3 acre park was acquired in 1965 and had been the site of a manufactured gas plant from 1893-1931. Soil contamination was discovered in 1999, and remediation was undertaken through a coordinated effort by the Park District, Village of Oak Park, ComEd, and NiCor.

Evaluation Notes

The playground in the southeast corner has received heavy use and may need some modifications in the future to help reduce maintenance needs. The sand play area, including a water spigot creates challenges. Maintaining turf grass on the sled hill throughout the year has been challenging due to inappropriate use of the hill during warmer months. The fields are in good condition. The sports court, including basketball and volleyball should be evaluated as part of a Master Plan process to determine how to attract increased use. The location, the layout of courts or the surface treatment may detract from the use.

Planned Improvements

- 2014
- 2015 Master Plan development

2016

2017

2018

Park Amenities

Transportation Amenities

Number of Vehicle Parking Spaces	N/A
Access to Dedicated Bike Route	Planned Bicycle Boulevard
Number of Bike Racks	5
Distance to Train Station	0.1 mi (Austin-Blue)
Bus Stop at Site	Austin/Harvard/Arthington (91, 315)
Distance to Bus Stop	0.2 mi

Active Recreation Amenities

Multi-Use Field	Yes
Baseball / Softball Field	Yes
Basketball Court	Yes
Tennis Court	Yes
Sand Volleyball Court	
Outdoor Ice Rink	
Playground	Yes
Splash Pad	
Outdoor Pool	
Skate Park	
Dog Park	
Sled Hill	Yes

Notes: 60' Baseball Field; 1/2 Basketball Court (2); 1-2 Tennis Court; Play Equipment for 0-5 yrs; Play Equipment for 5+ yrs

Park Structures

Community Center	Yes
Public Restrooms	Yes
Pavilion	
Other	Indoor Playground



EVALUATION SCORE CARD	Functionality	Condition Assessment	Positive Revenue	Comparison - PDOP Facilities	Comparison - Other Districts	AGGREGATE RATING
	16	28	10	9	14	77



Summary

The Barrie Park Center serves the District's southeast quadrant for preschool and summer camp. It was expanded in 1965 at which time a brick veneer was added to the exterior wall face. Overall, the building is in good condition and one of the better facilities in the district dedicated to preschool and summer camp activities.

FUNCTIONALITY

1. The center works well as a preschool center.
2. Storage space is at a premium. Basement is used and outdoor storage has been created behind the building and is not very secure.

AESTHETICS

1. Suits the neighborhood well.

CONDITION OF INTERIOR FINISHES

1. Generally, interior finishes are in good condition.

BUILDING ENVELOPE & STRUCTURE

1. All components appear to be in relatively good condition.
2. Brick veneer has developed a stress crack. Otherwise, the building is in good conditions.
3. Windows were recently replaced.
4. Basement stays fairly dry.

LIFE SAFETY ISSUES - BUILDING

1. The basement stair is non-compliant.

UTILITIES, MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS

1. Systems are generally in good condition and easy to manage. Air conditioning (cooling) was added in +/- 2003; the hot water boiler for heating the building is new.

SITE

1. An underground water reservoir is adjacent to the building with sports courts above.

Carroll Park

1125 South Kenilworth
2.68 acres

OVERALL
PARK GRADE

B

EVALUATION
SCORE CARD

Athletic Fields/ Courts	Playgrounds	Paths and Walkways	Passive Green Spaces	Seating Areas	Bathrooms	Drinking Fountains	TOTAL SCORE
74	79	87	81	N/A	N/A	88	83



Park History

Acquired in 1916, the park is named after children's author Lewis Carroll and includes a center originally designed by John S. Van Bergen. The northern part of Kenilworth Street was vacated by the Village in 1960 to expand the park and connect it to the Lincoln School grounds, creating roughly five acres of total open space.

Evaluation Notes

This park has one diamond field that is scheduled for renovation in 2014. Both playgrounds on site receive heavy use. Some longer-term maintenance issues are related to poor and compacted soil conditions where Kenilworth Avenue used to cross the site, which leads to drainage issues and challenges maintaining turf grass. Underdrainage for the fields will help counteract these conditions.

Planned Improvements

2014 Ball field and associated improvements

2015

2016

2017

2018

Park Amenities

Transportation Amenities

Number of Vehicle Parking Spaces	N/A
Access to Dedicated Bike Route	Planned Bicycle Boulevard
Number of Bike Racks	2
Distance to Train Station	0.6 mi (Oak Park-Blue)
Bus Stop at Site	Oak Park/Harvard (311)
Distance to Bus Stop	0.1 mi

Active Recreation Amenities

Multi-Use Field	Yes
Baseball / Softball Field	Yes
Basketball Court	
Tennis Court	
Sand Volleyball Court	
Outdoor Ice Rink	
Playground	Yes
Splash Pad	
Outdoor Pool	
Skate Park	
Dog Park	
Sled Hill	

Notes: 60' Baseball Field; Play Equipment for 0-5 yrs; Individual Equipment; Play Equipment for 5-12 yrs located on adjacent school site

Park Structures

Community Center	Yes
Public Restrooms	Yes
Pavilion	
Other	



EVALUATION SCORE CARD	Functionality	Condition Assessment	Positive Revenue	Comparison - PDOP Facilities	Comparison - Other Districts	AGGREGATE RATING
		8	16	10	2	6



Summary

The Carroll Park Center serves the District's southwest quadrant for preschool and summer camp. It's similar to the centers at Field and Andersen Parks. It was originally built in the 1920's and expanded in 1965 at which time a brick veneer was added to the exterior wall face. Overall, the building is in fair condition, but since it is dedicated to preschool, its usefulness is extremely limited.

FUNCTIONALITY

1. The center works well as a preschool building
2. ADA audit was completed.

AESTHETICS

1. The exterior is acceptable and suits the site well.

CONDITION OF INTERIOR FINISHES

1. Fair, but showing age.

BUILDING ENVELOPE & STUCTURE

1. All components appear to be in good condition.
2. The roof is in good condition.

LIFE SAFETY ISSUES - BUILDING

1. The stair to the basement does not comply with current standards and is in poor condition.

UTILITIES, MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS

1. There is a high water table and sump pump runs constantly and needs to be replaced approximately every three years
2. Systems are generally in good condition and easy to manage.

SITE

1. The site is located adjacent to a school and playground.

Euclid Square

705 West Fillmore

2.81 acres

OVERALL
PARK GRADE

B

EVALUATION
SCORE CARD

Athletic Fields / Courts	Playgrounds	Paths and Walkways	Passive Green Spaces	Seating Areas	Bathrooms	Drinking Fountains	TOTAL SCORE
69	81	77	N/A	N/A	N/A	98	81



Park History

Acquired in 1929, the park was originally called New South Park, or Park #9, but was subsequently named after the adjacent street.

Evaluation Notes

The northern portion, including the playground and tennis courts, is in need of upgrades. The playground equipment is dated and the edge treatment around the playground detracts from the overall character. The tennis court surfacing is showing wear and the fence enclosing the tennis is in poor condition. Additionally, there is a significant lack of bike racks and challenges to circulation around the tennis courts, specifically on the east side along Wesley Avenue.

Planned Improvements

2014
2015
2016
2017 Improvements to playground, sport courts, walking path and other elements
2018

Park Amenities

Transportation Amenities

Number of Vehicle Parking Spaces	N/A
Access to Dedicated Bike Route	N/A
Number of Bike Racks	1
Distance to Train Station	0.3 mi (Oak Park-Blue)
Bus Stop at Site	Roosevelt/Euclid (305)
Distance to Bus Stop	0.0 mi

Active Recreation Amenities

Multi-Use Field	Yes
Baseball / Softball Field	Yes
Basketball Court	
Tennis Court	Yes
Sand Volleyball Court	
Outdoor Ice Rink	
Playground	Yes
Splash Pad	
Outdoor Pool	
Skate Park	
Dog Park	
Sled Hill	

Notes: 60' Baseball Field; Tennis Court (4); Play Equipment for 0-5 yrs; Individual Equipment

Park Structures

Community Center
Public Restrooms
Pavilion
Other



Oak Park Conservatory

615 Garfield Street

OVERALL FACILITY GRADE

B

EVALUATION SCORE CARD	Functionality	Condition Assessment	Positive Revenue	Comparison - PDOP Facilities	Comparison - Other Districts	AGGREGATE RATING
	16	28	14	9	18	85



Summary

Owned and operated by the Park District of Oak Park, the Conservatory is one of the top three historical sites in Oak Park drawing up to 30,000 visitors annually. Staff and volunteers grow 20,000 bedding plants from seeds and cuttings annually that are planted at 90 public parks and sites throughout the village.

The Conservatory has an active support group, the Friends of the Oak Park Conservatory whose mission is to promote interest in the Oak Park Conservatory, offer educational and recreational opportunities and support projects that benefit the Oak Park Conservatory.

FUNCTIONALITY

1. The entry and adjacent spaces flow well.
2. The meeting room and outside patio / garden area at the west end provides ample and accessible space.
3. Being an older structure, the greenhouse has some challenges, especially with regard to ADA accessibility.
4. Aside from the greenhouse structure, the building is relatively new and modern, and functions well for its intended use.

AESTHETICS

1. The structure in total is in keeping with the surrounding character of the community and makes a strong architectural contribution.

CONDITION OF INTERIOR FINISHES

1. Generally, in good to very good condition.

BUILDING ENVELOPE & STRUCTURE

1. The older part of the greenhouse structure needs work. There are struggles with keeping the interior warm in very cold conditions. The glass and framing provides very little thermal resistance.

LIFE SAFETY ISSUES - BUILDING

1. None reported.

UTILITIES, MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS

1. The systems appear to be in good condition. As noted, however, the hot water heating systems struggles to keep the interior of the greenhouse warm during cold months.

SITE

1. The site is tight and struggles to support the needs of the conservatory.

Field Park

935 Woodbine Avenue
3.39 acres

OVERALL
PARK GRADE

B

EVALUATION
SCORE CARD

Athletic Fields/ Courts	Playgrounds	Paths and Walkways	Passive Green Spaces	Seating Areas	Bathrooms	Drinking Fountains	TOTAL SCORE
75	88	67	84	88	85	95	82



Park History

Acquired in 1916, the park is named after children’s author Eugene Field and includes a center originally designed by John S. Van Bergen. The center has been significantly modified over the years. Woodbine Avenue between Berkshire and Division was vacated by the Village in 1960 to expand the park and connect it to the Mann School grounds, creating roughly five acres of total open space.

Evaluation Notes

The two diamond fields have recently been renovated. However, there were drainage issues noticed that caused a significant amount of infield mix to wash-out into the adjacent dug-outs and seating areas. The path in the southwest corner of the park by the natural landscape area is impacted by drainage issues as well where standing water and muddy puddles were noted on more than one visit. The path system on the south side of the park has several pinch points that make snow clearing challenging. The paved area around the building maybe well served by permeable pavers to help with issues created by the lack of gutters on the building. At the time of the visit, the bocce court was unplayable and in need of maintenance if it receives enough use to be preserved.

Planned Improvements

2014
2015
2016
2017
2018

Park Amenities

Transportation Amenities

Number of Vehicle Parking Spaces	N/A
Access to Dedicated Bike Route	Planned Bicycle Boulevard
Number of Bike Racks	3
Distance to Train Station	1.4 mi (Harlem-Green)
Bus Stop at Site	Oak Park/Division (311)
Distance to Bus Stop	0.0 mi

Active Recreation Amenities

Multi-Use Field	Yes
Baseball / Softball Field	Yes
Basketball Court	
Tennis Court	
Sand Volleyball Court	
Outdoor Ice Rink	
Playground	Yes
Splash Pad	Yes
Outdoor Pool	
Skate Park	
Dog Park	
Sled Hill	

Notes: 60' Baseball Field (2); Play Equipment for 0-5 yrs; Play Equipment for 5+ yrs; Individual Play Equipment; Bocce Court

Park Structures

Community Center	Yes
Public Restrooms	Yes
Pavilion	Yes
Other	Chess Tables; Picnic Area



EVALUATION SCORE CARD	Functionality	Condition Assessment	Positive Revenue	Comparison - PDOP Facilities	Comparison - Other Districts	AGGREGATE RATING
		8	16	10	2	6



Summary

The Field Park Center is located at the north end of the District and is similar to the centers at Anderson and Carroll Parks. It was originally built in the 1920's and renovated in 1965 at which time a brick veneer was added to the exterior wall face. It was reported that the overall condition of the building is poor; "it looks better than it really is".

If any of the centers are removed from the District's inventory, serious thought should be given to eliminating this facility.

FUNCTIONALITY

1. The center operates primarily as a preschool building.
2. ADA audit was completed.

AESTHETICS

1. The exterior is acceptable.
2. The interior is worn.
3. The exposed sheet metal duct for A/C doesn't suit the interior.

CONDITION OF INTERIOR FINISHES

1. Fair.

BUILDING ENVELOPE & STRUCTURE

1. A portion of the preschool floor is a concrete slab on grade and is deteriorating.
2. High water on site causes continuous water seepage problems in the basement.
3. The roof is in good condition.

LIFE SAFETY ISSUES - BUILDING

1. The stair is not compliant with current standards.

UTILITIES, MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS

1. Systems are generally in good condition and easy to manage.

SITE

1. The site is located adjacent to a school and playground.

Fox Park

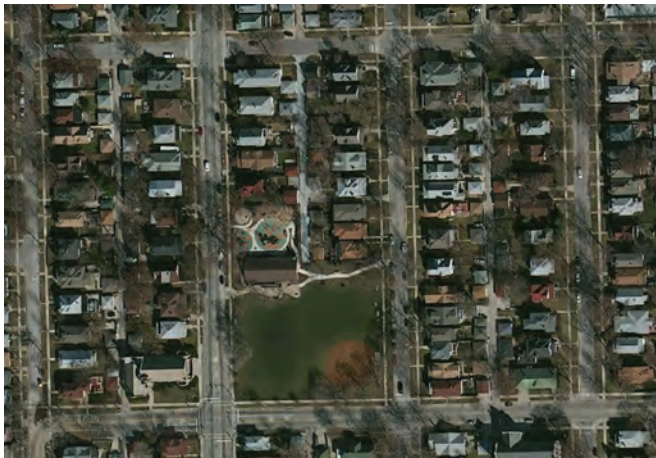
624 South Oak Park Avenue
1.54 acres

OVERALL
PARK GRADE



EVALUATION
SCORE CARD

Athletic Fields/ Courts	Playgrounds	Paths and Walkways	Passive Green Spaces	Seating Areas	Bathrooms	Drinking Fountains	TOTAL SCORE
67	87	99	74	76	50	80	77



Park History

Acquired in 1922, the park is named after William H. Fox, who served on the Park Board of Commissioners from 1919-1925. It includes a recreation center built in 1966.

Evaluation Notes

Renovations to the playground and splash pad made in 2009 were a large improvement over previous conditions. There are some maintenance issues related to the sand play area, the drinking fountain and landscape areas around the playground. The largest maintenance challenge is related to the south side of the building. There is severe deterioration of the entry ramp on the south side of the building, along with the retaining wall visible from the basement windows. These issues may be related to the quality of the construction, and have been exacerbated by stormwater run-off from the roof and freeze-thaw cycles. The Park District should budget for extensive repairs to address this issue in the near future.

Planned Improvements

2014	Ball field and associated improvements
2015	
2016	
2017	Safety improvements to stairway and foundation
2018	

Park Amenities

Transportation Amenities

Number of Vehicle Parking Spaces	N/A
Access to Dedicated Bike Route	Shared Lane
Number of Bike Racks	3
Distance to Train Station	0.5 mi (Oak Park-Blue)
Bus Stop at Site	Flag Stop (311)
Distance to Bus Stop	0.0 mi

Active Recreation Amenities

Multi-Use Field	Yes
Baseball / Softball Field	Yes
Basketball Court	
Tennis Court	
Sand Volleyball Court	
Outdoor Ice Rink	
Playground	Yes
Splash Pad	Yes
Outdoor Pool	
Skate Park	
Dog Park	
Sled Hill	

Notes: 60' Baseball Field; Play Equipment for 0-5 yrs; Play Equipment for 5+ yrs; Individual Play Equipment

Park Structures

Community Center	Yes
Public Restrooms	Yes
Pavilion	
Other	Chess Tables



EVALUATION SCORE CARD	Functionality	Condition Assessment	Positive Revenue	Comparison - PDOP Facilities	Comparison - Other Districts	AGGREGATE RATING
	12	28	10	7	12	69



Summary

The Fox Park Center is a small neighborhood facility used for general programming, rentals and summer camps. It, along with the Longfellow Center (same design), was built in 1965. Overall, the building is in good condition. However, major work will be required to replace a deteriorating retaining wall adjacent to the entrance. In addition to two general purpose rooms, there are 2 supervisor offices and exterior access to rest rooms.

FUNCTIONALITY

1. The center works well.
2. ADA audit was completed; items are being addressed.

AESTHETICS

1. Good.

CONDITION OF INTERIOR FINISHES

1. Good, however, VCT floor tile in the general purpose rooms does not last very long.

BUILDING ENVELOPE & STRUCTURE

1. The building is structurally sound and in good condition.
2. The first floor structure is poured concrete.
3. Roofing is 8 years old and in good condition.
4. Windows have been replaced with thermally insulated units and are in excellent condition.
5. Basement stays fairly dry; however, the roof drains into the area well next to the building. Accordingly, it is mandatory to keep the area drains clean.

LIFE SAFETY ISSUES - BUILDING

1. The open, non-compliant stair does not provide a protected means of egress.

UTILITIES, MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS

1. Systems are generally in good condition and easy to manage.
2. Hot water heat functions well.

SITE

1. Concrete retaining wall adjacent to the entry ramp is deteriorating severely.

Lindberg Park

On Greenfield Between
Marion & Woodbine
13.9 acres

OVERALL
PARK GRADE

B

EVALUATION
SCORE CARD

Athletic Fields/ Courts	Playgrounds	Paths and Walkways	Passive Green Spaces	Seating Areas	Bathrooms	Drinking Fountains	TOTAL SCORE
56	82	79	84	N/A	80	95	80



Park History

Acquired in 1925, this park was named after Gustav A. Lindberg, the first Superintendent of Parks at the Park District of Oak Park. In 1972 the Oak Park River Forest Community Foundation established the Presidential Walk with the planting of 17 sugar maples, one for each of the 17 former Village of Oak Park Presidents. This tradition continues with a new tree planted as each village president ends their term in office.

Evaluation Notes

Lindberg Park is the largest open space in the District, it is home to the two largest baseball fields. It also features tennis courts and a wildflower garden. The park is in generally good condition, and the areas in most need of improvement are scheduled for improvements. These include the baseball fields and the tennis courts. The condition of the fields themselves are very good likely due to irrigation, however, the dugouts and bleachers are very dated. The tennis courts and associated fences are aged and worn and need replacement or significant repair. There is limited support for bicyclists at this park and additional racks should be installed throughout.

Planned Improvements

2014 Improvements to sports fields, tennis, playground, picnic shelter and paths

2015

2016

2017

2018

Park Amenities

Transportation Amenities

Number of Vehicle Parking Spaces	N/A
Access to Dedicated Bike Route	Planned Bicycle Boulevard
Number of Bike Racks	4
Distance to Train Station	1.7 mi (Harlem-Green)
Bus Stop at Site	Harlem & Greenfield (90, 305, 307, 318)
Distance to Bus Stop	0.1 mi

Active Recreation Amenities

Multi-Use Field	Yes
Baseball / Softball Field	Yes
Basketball Court	
Tennis Court	Yes
Sand Volleyball Court	
Outdoor Ice Rink	
Playground	Yes
Splash Pad	
Outdoor Pool	
Skate Park	
Dog Park	
Sled Hill	

Notes: 90' Baseball Field (2); Tennis Court (3); Play Equipment for 0-5 yrs

Park Structures

Community Center	Yes
Public Restrooms	Yes
Pavilion	
Other	Nature Area



Lindberg Park Comfort Station

LeMoynes Parkway at Forest Avenue

OVERALL
FACILITY GRADE

A

EVALUATION SCORE CARD	Functionality	Condition Assessment	Positive Revenue	Comparison - PDOP Facilities	Comparison - Other Districts	AGGREGATE RATING
	18	36	14	9	18	95



Summary

The Lindberg Park Building is an attractive and functional facility built in 1990. It includes multiple toilet rooms, storage, mechanical, and concession service space. Its character and appearance provides an aesthetic contribution to the community.

FUNCTIONALITY

1. There are multiple unisex toilet rooms and a concession service room.
2. A storage room for youth baseball is also included.
3. The mechanical room houses the park's irrigation system.
4. The low roof attracts climbers.

AESTHETICS

1. Rich in character.

CONDITION OF INTERIOR FINISHES

1. Good condition.

BUILDING ENVELOPE & STRUCTURE

1. No issues reported.

LIFE SAFETY ISSUES - BUILDING

1. None reported.

UTILITIES, MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS

1. Systems are in reasonably good condition.

SITE

1. No issues reported.

Longfellow Park

610 South Ridgeland

Avenue

2.62 acres

OVERALL PARK GRADE



EVALUATION SCORE CARD

Athletic Fields/ Courts	Playgrounds	Paths and Walkways	Passive Green Spaces	Seating Areas	Bathrooms	Drinking Fountains	TOTAL SCORE
72	81	73	N/A	N/A	85	82	79



Park History

Acquired in 1920, the park was named after the American poet, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. The recreation center was built in 1966 in the same style as Fox Center.

Evaluation Notes

Renovations to the playground and splash pad made in 2009 were a large improvement over previous conditions. However, there are some maintenance issues related to the proximity of the sand play area and the splash pad. The sidewalk on the east side of the building has settled significantly creating tripping hazards, though it appears repairs are in the works. The largest maintenance challenge is related to the south side of the building. There is severe deterioration of the entry ramp on the south side of the building, along with the retaining wall visible from the basement windows. These issues may be related to the quality of the construction, and have been exacerbated by stormwater run-off from the roof and freeze-thaw cycles. The Park District should budget for extensive repairs to address this issue in the near future.

Planned Improvements

2014 Ball field and associated improvements

2015

2016 Safety improvements to stairway and foundation

2017

2018 Tennis courts and associated improvements

Park Amenities

Transportation Amenities

Number of Vehicle Parking Spaces	N/A
Access to Dedicated Bike Route	Bike Lane
Number of Bike Racks	4
Distance to Train Station	0.8 mi (Oak Park-Blue)
Bus Stop at Site	Flag Stop (315)
Distance to Bus Stop	0.0 mi

Active Recreation Amenities

Multi-Use Field	Yes
Baseball / Softball Field	Yes
Basketball Court	Yes
Tennis Court	Yes
Sand Volleyball Court	
Outdoor Ice Rink	Yes
Playground	Yes
Splash Pad	Yes
Outdoor Pool	
Skate Park	
Dog Park	
Sled Hill	

Notes: 60' Baseball Field; Full Basketball Court; Timer-Controlled Lighted Tennis Courts; Play Equipment for 0-5 yrs; Play Equipment for 5+ yrs; Individual Play Equipment

Park Structures

Community Center	
Public Restrooms	Yes
Pavilion	
Other	



EVALUATION SCORE CARD	Functionality	Condition Assessment	Positive Revenue	Comparison - PDOP Facilities	Comparison - Other Districts	AGGREGATE RATING
	12	28	10	7	12	69



Summary

The Longfellow Park Center is a small neighborhood facility used for general programming, rentals and summer camps. It, along with the Fox Center (same design), was built in 1965. Overall, the building is in good condition. However, major work will be required to replace a deteriorating retaining wall adjacent to the entrance. In addition to two general purpose rooms, there are 2 supervisor offices and exterior access to rest rooms.

FUNCTIONALITY

1. The center works well.
2. ADA audit was completed; items are being addressed.
3. Elevator was added 5 years ago.

AESTHETICS

1. Good.

CONDITION OF INTERIOR FINISHES

1. Good, however, VCT floor tile in the general purpose rooms does not last very long.

BUILDING ENVELOPE & STRUCTURE

1. The building is structurally sound and in good condition.
2. The first floor structure is poured concrete.
3. Roofing is 8 years old and in good condition.
4. Windows have been replaced with thermally insulated units and are in excellent condition.
5. Basement stays fairly dry; however, the roof drains into the area well next to the building. Accordingly, it is mandatory to keep the area drains clean.

LIFE SAFETY ISSUES - BUILDING

1. The open, non-compliant stair does not provide a protected means of egress.

UTILITIES, MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS

1. Systems are generally in good condition and easy to manage.
2. Hot water heat functions well.

SITE

1. Concrete retaining wall adjacent to the entry ramp is deteriorating severely.

Maple Park

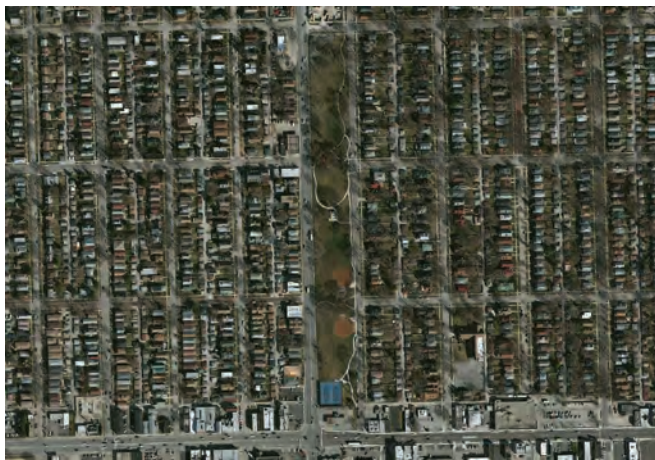
1105 South Maple on
Harlem Avenue
6.98 acres

OVERALL
PARK GRADE

B

EVALUATION
SCORE CARD

Athletic Fields/ Courts	Playgrounds	Paths and Walkways	Passive Green Spaces	Seating Areas	Bathrooms	Drinking Fountains	TOTAL SCORE
77	70	94	85	N/A	68	92	81



Park History

Acquired in 1921, the linear park was formerly railroad property. It was originally called Park #6 or Perennial Gardens for the formal plantings installed there, but was later renamed for the adjacent Maple Street. A comfort station was built in the center of the park around 1960. Renovations in the early 1980s added new landscaping and curving walkways. The playground equipment was replaced in 1998.

Evaluation Notes

Several renovations were completed in 2011, including relocated and improved tennis courts at the south end, an off-leash dog park at the north end, and a continuous path system. The condition of the remaining amenities are keeping the overall park score low, but are planned to be addressed in the coming years. The frontage along Harlem Avenue creates a challenging condition. One long range consideration for the park would be to create a more protected condition for the sidewalk along Harlem and potentially bring it inbound of any perimeter fence.

Planned Improvements

2014	
2015	Comfort station improvements
2016	Improvements to playground, ball fields and new picnic shelter
2017	
2018	

Park Amenities

Transportation Amenities	
Number of Vehicle Parking Spaces	N/A
Access to Dedicated Bike Route	N/A
Number of Bike Racks	2
Distance to Train Station	0.6 mi (Harlem-Forest Park-Blue)
Bus Stop at Site	Flag Stop (307)
Distance to Bus Stop	0.0 mi

Active Recreation Amenities	
Multi-Use Field	Yes
Baseball / Softball Field	Yes
Basketball Court	
Tennis Court	Yes
Sand Volleyball Court	
Outdoor Ice Rink	
Playground	Yes
Splash Pad	
Outdoor Pool	
Skate Park	
Dog Park	Yes
Sled Hill	

Notes: Multi-urpose Field (2); 60' Baseball Field (2); Tennis Court w/ Button-Controlled Lighted Court and Hit Boards (2); Play Equipment for 0-5 yrs; Play Equipment for 5+ yrs

Park Structures	
Community Center	
Public Restrooms	Yes
Pavilion	
Other	



Maple Park Comfort Station

1105 S. Maple Avenue

OVERALL
FACILITY GRADE

B

EVALUATION SCORE CARD	Functionality	Condition Assessment	Positive Revenue	Comparison - PDOP Facilities	Comparison - Other Districts	AGGREGATE RATING
	16	28	16	7	14	81



Summary

The Maple Park Building, built in the 1960's, provides support for the park. It houses two toilet rooms, and two storage rooms. Although its age is about 50 years, its character and appearance still suit the park.

FUNCTIONALITY

1. There are two toilet rooms.
2. Due to the low roof, it attracts climbers.

AESTHETICS

1. Acceptable.

CONDITION OF INTERIOR FINISHES

1. Average.

BUILDING ENVELOPE & STRUCTURE

1. The roof is about 8 years old.
2. The roof structure is precast concrete.

LIFE SAFETY ISSUES - BUILDING

1. None reported.

UTILITIES, MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS

1. Systems are in reasonably good condition.

SITE

1. No issues reported.

Mills Park

217 South Home

4.43 acres

OVERALL
PARK GRADE

B

EVALUATION
SCORE CARD

Athletic Fields/ Courts	Playgrounds	Paths and Walkways	Passive Green Spaces	Seating Areas	Bathrooms	Drinking Fountains	TOTAL SCORE
N/A	N/A	92	84	N/A	N/A	83	87



Park History

Acquired in 1939, the historic John Farson House, known as "Pleasant Home", is a National Historic Landmark designed in 1897 by architect George W. Maher. Outbuildings on the attendant grounds were subsequently razed and Mills Park has been maintained as open space for many years.

Evaluation Notes

Mills Park is located in the western central part of the Village, just south of the downtown and within the Pleasant District. It is also the location of the historic Pleasant Home. The park is in very good shape, having undergone Master Plan improvements in 2011/2012. There are some areas of the limestone path that have washed out and should be addressed. Additionally, the removed wrought iron fence is being stockpiled along the southern boundary of the site. This should be addressed either through reuse, recycling, disposal or off-site storage.

Planned Improvements

2014
2015
2016
2017
2018

Park Amenities

Transportation Amenities

Number of Vehicle Parking Spaces	N/A
Access to Dedicated Bike Route	Planned Bicycle Boulevard
Number of Bike Racks	4
Distance to Train Station	0.2 mi (Harlem-Green)
Bus Stop at Site	Harlem/Pleasant/Franklin (305, 307, 318)
Distance to Bus Stop	0.2 mi

Active Recreation Amenities

Multi-Use Field
Baseball / Softball Field
Basketball Court
Tennis Court
Sand Volleyball Court
Outdoor Ice Rink
Playground
Splash Pad
Outdoor Pool
Skate Park
Dog Park
Sled Hill
Notes: n/a

Park Structures

Community Center	
Public Restrooms	
Pavilion	
Other	Nature Area



Pleasant Home

217 S. Home Avenue

OVERALL
FACILITY GRADE



EVALUATION SCORE CARD	Functionality	Condition Assessment	Positive Revenue	Comparison - PDOP Facilities	Comparison - Other Districts	AGGREGATE RATING
	8	16	6	8	16	54



Summary

Designed in 1897 by noted Prairie Style architect George W. Maher for investment banker and philanthropist John W. Farson, Pleasant Home is one of the earliest and most distinguished examples of the Prairie School of Architecture.

After John Farson's death in 1910, the estate was purchased by Herbert Mills, owner of Mills Novelty Company, which manufactured coin operated gambling and music machinery in Chicago. The Mills family sold the home and its five-acre grounds to the Park District of Oak Park in 1939, to create Mills Park. It is now a National Historic Landmark.

The park and its mansion have had various community uses. In 1970, The Historical Society of Oak Park and River Forest moved into a bedroom on the second floor and today the organization leases all of the second and third floors from the Park District of Oak Park. However, the Historical Society will be moving to a new location.

The overall rating score for this building is impacted most by the roof repairs scheduled for 2017.

FUNCTIONALITY

1. Given the historical nature and adaptation of the mansion to a public building, there are limitations with which to deal when hosting an event.
2. There is no elevator access in the structure. However, there is a chair lift from grade to the main level.
3. The mansion is used for rentals, public functions, summer social events, and art programs.
4. Once the Historical Society moves out, space will be repurposed; potentially into exhibit space.

AESTHETICS

1. The mansion is wonderfully preserved and provides a valuable contribution to the community.

CONDITION OF INTERIOR FINISHES

1. Very good condition.

BUILDING ENVELOPE & STRUCTURE

1. It was reported that the roof tile roof needs to be replaced.
2. The summer dining porch was recently renovated; windows were added.
3. Masonry is in excellent condition.

LIFE SAFETY ISSUES - BUILDING

1. Due to the mansions age and historic nature, there are likely several areas of concern. A detailed assessment was not conducted.

UTILITIES, MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS

1. The existing heating system is hot water.
2. There is no central A/C system; only window units.

SITE

1. The site is a true asset to the community.

Randolph Park

300 South Grove Avenue

0.32 acres

OVERALL
PARK GRADE

B

EVALUATION
SCORE CARD

Athletic Fields/ Courts	Playgrounds	Paths and Walkways	Passive Green Spaces	Seating Areas	Bathrooms	Drinking Fountains	TOTAL SCORE
N/A	81	92	75	87	N/A	100	86



Park History

The parcels were acquired by Village of Oak Park in 1924. Randolph Tot Lot was conveyed to the Park District by quit-claim deed in 2006 and the property to the east was transferred in 2009, doubling the size of the park. This land and other similar strips along Randolph Street were set aside for rail stations along the "Dummy line railroad" into Chicago that was never developed.

Evaluation Notes

It is divided into two separate sections by a public alley, with the west half being used for playground equipment and the east half as a passive seating area. The park is in generally good condition, but due to the small enclosed area it received intense use and has some maintenance issues. The landscape, including bermed lawn areas, receive heavy foot traffic and are hard to maintain. The District should consider other treatments, including synthetic turf, as solutions if the issues cannot be overcome with maintenance. The bench in the northwest corner seemed disconnected and encouraged traffic on some of the heavily worn lawn and landscape areas. This bench should be considered for relocation in the future.

Planned Improvements

2014
2015
2016
2017
2018

Park Amenities

Transportation Amenities

Number of Vehicle Parking Spaces	N/A
Access to Dedicated Bike Route	N/A
Number of Bike Racks	1
Distance to Train Station	0.4 mi (Oak Park-Green)
Bus Stop at Site	Flag Stop (311)
Distance to Bus Stop	0.0 mi

Active Recreation Amenities

Multi-Use Field	
Baseball / Softball Field	
Basketball Court	
Tennis Court	
Sand Volleyball Court	
Outdoor Ice Rink	
Playground	Yes
Splash Pad	
Outdoor Pool	
Skate Park	
Dog Park	
Sled Hill	

Notes: Chess Tables (2); Play Equipment for 0-5 yrs; Individual Play Equipment

Park Structures

Community Center	
Public Restrooms	
Pavilion	
Other	Chess Tables



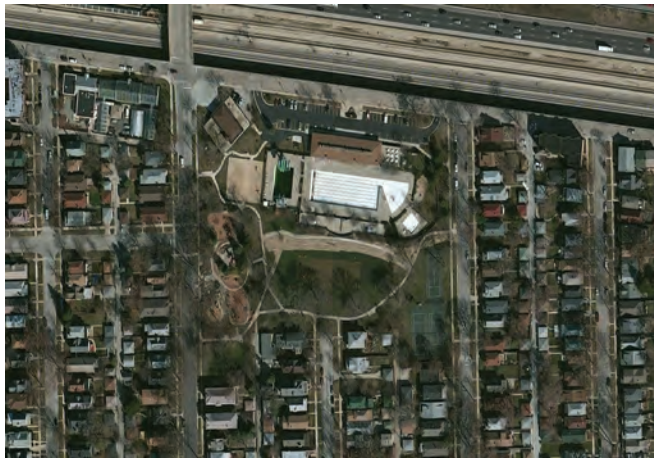
Rehm Park

515 Garfield at East Avenue
6.51 acres

OVERALL PARK GRADE



EVALUATION SCORE CARD	Athletic Fields / Courts	Playgrounds	Paths and Walkways	Passive Green Spaces	Seating Areas	Bathrooms	Drinking Fountains	TOTAL SCORE
	68	85	80	N/A	N/A	N/A	86	79



Park History

Acquired in 1913, Rehm Park was named after Colonel Arthur D. Rehm, a member of the Park District's first Board of Commissioners and its second Board President. The original park was designed by Jens Jensen, although little of Jensen's design remains. An outdoor pool was constructed in 1966 and quickly became a regional destination.

Evaluation Notes

Several characteristics make for heavy use of this park, including the proximity to the pool, the unique character of the playground, the self-propelled play trains, and the sand volleyball courts. The tennis courts are scheduled for improvements in 2018, which will help improve the athletic space score, as will continued turf grass maintenance. Opportunities should be explored to better integrate the open lawn at the southwest corner of the site into the rest of the park or address other District-wide needs.

Planned Improvements

2014

2015 General improvements and repairs

2016 New pool play feature

2017

2018

Park Amenities

Transportation Amenities

Number of Vehicle Parking Spaces	46
Access to Dedicated Bike Route	Planned Shared Lane
Number of Bike Racks	15
Distance to Train Station	0.1 mi (Oak Park-Blue)
Bus Stop at Site	Ridgeland/Garfield (315)
Distance to Bus Stop	0.1 mi

Active Recreation Amenities

Multi-Use Field	Yes
Baseball / Softball Field	
Basketball Court	
Tennis Court	Yes
Sand Volleyball Court	Yes
Outdoor Ice Rink	
Playground	Yes
Splash Pad	
Outdoor Pool	Yes
Skate Park	
Dog Park	
Sled Hill	

Notes: Tennis Court (3); Volleyball Court (2);

Park Structures

Community Center	
Public Restrooms	
Pavilion	
Other	Chess Table; Trains (Hand-Powered)



Ridgeland Common

415 Lake Street at
Ridgeland
6.06 acres

OVERALL
PARK GRADE

A

EVALUATION
SCORE CARD

Athletic Fields/ Courts	Playgrounds	Paths and Walkways	Passive Green Spaces	Seating Areas	Bathrooms	Drinking Fountains	TOTAL SCORE
98	N/A	86	N/A	N/A	N/A	96	93



Park History

Ridgeland Common was named for the adjacent street and was designed by Jens Jensen, although little of Jensen's design remains. The pool, building, and outdoor ice rink were constructed in 1962. Ridgeland Common is the Park District's flagship facility.

Evaluation Notes

Ridgeland Common is centrally located in the District. Having recently reopened after significant renovations, including the installation of synthetic turf fields, the park is in excellent condition. The score is brought down due to issues with the perimeter sidewalk within the public rights-of-way on the Lake Street and Scoville Avenue sides of the park. It appears that the Village is planning repairs, though the parkways should be reviewed in the future as there may be drainage issues that will not be resolved though repair to the sidewalk.

Planned Improvements

2014

2015

2016

2017

2018

Park Amenities

Transportation Amenities

Number of Vehicle Parking Spaces	27
Access to Dedicated Bike Route	Planned Bike Lane
Number of Bike Racks	36
Distance to Train Station	0.2 mi (Ridgeland-Green)
Bus Stop at Site	Flag Stop (86, 309, 313, 315)
Distance to Bus Stop	0.0 mi

Active Recreation Amenities

Multi-Use Field	Yes
Baseball / Softball Field	Yes
Basketball Court	
Tennis Court	
Sand Volleyball Court	
Outdoor Ice Rink	
Playground	
Splash Pad	
Outdoor Pool	Yes
Skate Park	
Dog Park	Yes
Sled Hill	Yes

Notes: 60' Baseball Field (2)

Park Structures

Community Center	
Public Restrooms	Yes
Pavilion	
Other	Program Registration



Taylor Park

400 West Division at
Ridgeland
11.75 acres

OVERALL PARK GRADE

B

EVALUATION SCORE CARD

Athletic Fields/ Courts	Playgrounds	Paths and Walkways	Passive Green Spaces	Seating Areas	Bathrooms	Drinking Fountains	TOTAL SCORE
78	86	92	88	75	72	81	82



Park History

Acquired in 1914, Taylor Park was originally called “North Park” but was subsequently named after the first President of the Park Board of Commissioners, Henry A. Taylor. Taylor Park was designed by Jens Jensen and still retains some of Jensen’s original design. The park sits on the edge of a moraine from the remains of what was once glacial Lake Chicago.

Evaluation Notes

Updates to the tennis courts and playground have raised the overall quality of this park. Areas in most need of improvement, such as the seating area with outdoor grills along the park’s northern edge, are identified as future phases of improvements in the park’s master plan. The athletic field suffers from some drainage issues, due to the high water table in this part of the Village. Underdrainage may be the only permanent solution and should be considered in the future. The rain garden feature in the southeast corner has started to establish and will require specialized maintenance to be successful. Overflow for this feature should be revisited, as stormwater quantity appears to exceed the design expectations for some storm events. The overflow channel may need to be modified and lined with rock to accommodate storm conditions.

Planned Improvements

2014
2015
2016
2017
2018

Park Amenities

Transportation Amenities

Number of Vehicle Parking Spaces	N/A
Access to Dedicated Bike Route	Planned Bike Lane
Number of Bike Racks	4
Distance to Train Station	1.1 mi (Ridgeland-Green)
Bus Stop at Site	Flag Stop (86)
Distance to Bus Stop	0.0 mi

Active Recreation Amenities

Multi-Use Field	Yes
Baseball / Softball Field	
Basketball Court	
Tennis Court	Yes
Sand Volleyball Court	
Outdoor Ice Rink	Yes
Playground	Yes
Splash Pad	
Outdoor Pool	
Skate Park	
Dog Park	
Sled Hill	Yes

Notes: Tennis Court with Manual Button-Controlled Lighted Court and Hit Boards (6); Play Equipment for 0-5 yrs; Play Equipment for 5+ yrs; Chess Tables (4)

Park Structures

Community Center	
Public Restrooms	Yes
Pavilion	Yes
Other	Chess Tables; Nature Area; Picnic Area



Scoville Park

800 West Lake at Oak Park Avenue
3.98 acres

OVERALL
PARK GRADE

B

EVALUATION
SCORE CARD

Athletic Fields/ Courts	Playgrounds	Paths and Walkways	Passive Green Spaces	Seating Areas	Bathrooms	Drinking Fountains	TOTAL SCORE
98	99	81	74	N/A	84	92	87



Park History

Acquired in 1913, Scoville Park was named after Charles B. Scoville, the previous owner of the land and an advocate for the creation of the Park District. Scoville Park was originally designed by Jens Jensen retains the much of Jensen's design. Grove Avenue was vacated in 2001 and a new plaza was constructed adjacent to the park. Scoville Park was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2002.

Evaluation Notes

The recent renovations and restoration of the World War I Memorial have elevated the quality of the park. One of the few issues facing the park relates to drainage in the large open field. The creation of a new path at the bottom of the hill has impacted drainage patterns and created an area that is often wet. This could be resolved through the addition of an underdrain or other small adjustments. The addition of a permanent stage has opened some less desirable views out to Lake Street and created a steeper hill at the front of the stage where it is hard to maintain grass. Along Grove at the northwest corner of the park, the light poles and parking meters are staggered in a way that clutters the sidewalk and makes snow removal challenging. The Park District should coordinate with the Village to resolve this issue by relocating the meters.

Planned Improvements

2014

2015

2016

2017

2018

Park Amenities

Transportation Amenities

Number of Vehicle Parking Spaces	N/A
Access to Dedicated Bike Route	Planned Shared Lane
Number of Bike Racks	12
Distance to Train Station	0.2 mi (Oak Park-Green)
Bus Stop at Site	Flag Stop (309, 311, 313)
Distance to Bus Stop	0.0 mi

Active Recreation Amenities

Multi-Use Field	
Baseball / Softball Field	
Basketball Court	
Tennis Court	Yes
Sand Volleyball Court	
Outdoor Ice Rink	
Playground	Yes
Splash Pad	
Outdoor Pool	
Skate Park	
Dog Park	
Sled Hill	

Notes: Tennis Court with Manual Button-Controlled Lighed Court and Hit Boards (3); Play Equipment for 0-5 yrs

Park Structures

Community Center	
Public Restrooms	Yes
Pavilion	
Other	Nature Area



Scoville & Taylor Park Comfort Stations

800 W. Lake Street & 400 W. Division Street

OVERALL
FACILITY GRADE



EVALUATION SCORE CARD	Functionality	Condition Assessment	Positive Revenue	Comparison - PDOP Facilities	Comparison - Other Districts	AGGREGATE RATING
	18	36	14	9	18	95



Summary

The Scoville Park and Taylor Park Restroom facilities are generous amenities for the public and there is a high level of expectation to make them available for use. Their character and appearance provide a positive aesthetic contribution to the community. Photos of the Scoville Park facility are included.

FUNCTIONALITY

1. There are dedicated toilet rooms for men and women, and a third unisex toilet room meeting ADA requirements. Each building also includes a small storage room.
2. Due to the low roofs, they attract climbers.
3. It was noted that the park has changed a lot over the years.

AESTHETICS

1. Rich in character.

CONDITION OF INTERIOR FINISHES

1. Good condition.

BUILDING ENVELOPE & STRUCTURE

1. No issues reported.

LIFE SAFETY ISSUES - BUILDING

1. None reported

UTILITIES, MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS

1. Systems are in reasonably good condition.
2. The water and electrical systems are new.

SITE

1. No issues reported.

Stevenson Park

49 Lake Street

3.3 acres

OVERALL
PARK GRADE



EVALUATION
SCORE CARD

Athletic Fields/ Courts	Playgrounds	Paths and Walkways	Passive Green Spaces	Seating Areas	Bathrooms	Drinking Fountains	TOTAL SCORE
70	66	66	75	N/A	N/A	78	71



Park History

Stevenson Park was acquired by the Village of Oak Park in 1916 and named after author Robert Louis Stevenson. The Park District entered into a 99-year lease agreement with the Village in 2006, rather than purchasing the property outright, because the park contains two underground water reservoirs.

Evaluation Notes

The park provides the only skateboard park for the District and one of three basketball facilities. The majority of the park is located above underground reservoirs that create a large grade change from the adjacent sidewalk. This has led to some run-off issues along the sidewalk. The athletic fields benefit from having lighting, which is a key reason why the field is slated to be converted to synthetic. Planned improvements to the fields and playground will help improve the overall quality and appearance of the park. Maintenance opportunities include addressing settling of the concrete path at the entrance to the courts, surface treatments for the skate park and courts and treating the access drive with a different material that will not suffer from wash-out. Potential enhancements include additional bike parking, improved ADA access into the park, public bathrooms and modifications to the skate park to allow for BMX bikes.

Planned Improvements

2014
2015 Synthetic turf ball field, lighting and path improvements
2016
2017
2018

Park Amenities

Transportation Amenities

Number of Vehicle Parking Spaces	N/A
Access to Dedicated Bike Route	Planned Shared Lane
Number of Bike Racks	3
Distance to Train Station	0.2 mi (Austin-Green)
Bus Stop at Site	Flag Stop (309, 313)
Distance to Bus Stop	0.0 mi

Active Recreation Amenities

Multi-Use Field	Yes
Baseball / Softball Field	Yes
Basketball Court	Yes
Tennis Court	
Sand Volleyball Court	
Outdoor Ice Rink	
Playground	Yes
Splash Pad	
Outdoor Pool	
Skate Park	Yes
Dog Park	
Sled Hill	

Notes: 60' Baseball Field; 1/2 Basketball Court (3); Play Equipment for 0-5 yrs; Play Equipment for 5+ yrs; Individual Play Equipment

Park Structures

Community Center	Yes
Public Restrooms	
Pavilion	
Other	



Stevenson Center

49 Lake Street

OVERALL FACILITY GRADE



EVALUATION SCORE CARD	Functionality	Condition Assessment	Positive Revenue	Comparison - PDOP Facilities	Comparison - Other Districts	AGGREGATE RATING
	10	28	10	5	8	61



Summary

The Stevenson Park Center, built in 1965, is a small neighborhood facility used for general programming, rentals and summer camps. Overall, the building appears to be in good condition, but outdated aesthetically. In addition to two general purpose rooms, there are 2 supervisor offices.

Significant improvements needed, including the additional of an elevator, addressing ADA issues and providing public restrooms accessible from the exterior of the building. However, given the age and condition of the building and its proximity to newer District facilities, these types of long-term investments do not appear to make financial sense. Future planning should consider the removal of this building.

FUNCTIONALITY

1. The Center does not comply with ADA accessibility standards. With no elevator access, the second floor is not accessible.
2. This Center is not used as much as other centers, mainly due to parking issues and its location near Ridgeland Common.
3. The lower level provides good space for the Teen Center.

AESTHETICS

1. Generally, the building's design is out dated.

CONDITION OF INTERIOR FINISHES

1. Good condition.

BUILDING ENVELOPE & STRUCTURE

1. It was reported that the flat roof leaks.
2. Windows have been replaced with thermally insulated units and are in excellent condition.
3. The masonry appears to be in good condition, but its appearance is dated.

LIFE SAFETY ISSUES - BUILDING

1. The open, non-compliant stair does not provide a protected means of egress.

UTILITIES, MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS

1. Systems are generally in reasonably good condition, but maintaining consistent temperature throughout the building is difficult.

SITE

1. An underground water reservoir is adjacent to the building.
2. Its vicinity in the District is not as desirable as other locations due to its proximity to the train tracks and Lake Street.

Wenonah Park

844 Wenonah Avenue

0.12 acres

OVERALL
PARK GRADE

B

EVALUATION
SCORE CARD

Athletic Fields/ Courts	Playgrounds	Paths and Walkways	Passive Green Spaces	Seating Areas	Bathrooms	Drinking Fountains	TOTAL SCORE
N/A	90	N/A	74	N/A	N/A	97	85



Park History

This playground was acquired in 1962 and is named for the adjacent street.

Evaluation Notes

The park benefits from being close to the pedestrian bridge that crosses the Eisenhower, approximately in line with Home Avenue. The park is in generally good condition, but similar to the Randolph Tot Lot, the small enclosed area and intense use and has created some maintenance issues. The landscaped and lawn areas within the fenced portion of the site receive heavy foot traffic and are hard to maintain. The District should consider other treatments, including synthetic turf, as solutions if the issues cannot be overcome with maintenance. Additionally, the sand play area at this site creates maintenance issues as the sand tends to migrate within the park.

Planned Improvements

2014

2015

2016

2017

2018

Park Amenities

Transportation Amenities

Number of Vehicle Parking Spaces	N/A
Access to Dedicated Bike Route	N/A
Number of Bike Racks	1
Distance to Train Station	0.7 mi (Harlem-Forest Park-Blue)
Bus Stop at Site	Harlem/Jackson (307)
Distance to Bus Stop	0.3 mi

Active Recreation Amenities

Multi-Use Field	
Baseball / Softball Field	
Basketball Court	
Tennis Court	
Sand Volleyball Court	
Outdoor Ice Rink	
Playground	Yes
Splash Pad	
Outdoor Pool	
Skate Park	
Dog Park	
Sled Hill	

Notes: Chess Tables (2); Play Equipment for 0-5 yrs; Individual Equipment

Park Structures

Community Center	
Public Restrooms	
Pavilion	
Other	Chess Tables



Key Take-Aways

This State of the District report represents the foundation of information that will be used to inform the strategic recommendations and action plan that will guide the Park District for the next ten years. It provides a significant body of background information and data pulled from numerous sources.

In the next phase of work, recommendations and concepts will be developed and tested with the Park District staff, Board and the community as a whole. There are several key take-aways that should be noted that will need to be addressed by the recommendations, including:

- The District does not meet level of service quantities for park acreage due to the built-out urban character of the community. Creative solutions for providing additional space will need to be explored.
- The community provided input indicating a desire for additional indoor recreational facilities. Level of service and equity analysis indicate gaps for these facilities and spaces.
- Several of the neighborhood community centers require significant maintenance, are inefficient and no longer serve the community to an appropriate level and recommendations will need to address their future.
- Walking and biking continue to be a priority for the community and will need to be integrated into future plans for the District.
- Specific amenities do not meet recommended levels of service and/or are not located to provide access for all members of the community. Adjustments should be suggested to address these imbalances.
- Programming will need to be continually reevaluated and balanced to meet the needs of the community. Recommendations should be provided to address some of the key opportunities, such as adult fitness and environmental education.



5. Envision

With the Envision phase of the project, the team used the analysis and input collected and worked with Park District staff to develop ideas for changes to the District that will help support residents and address their needs into the future. A series of draft Key Strategic Recommendations were developed intended to address the more unique or critical issues and opportunities facing the Park District of Oak Park.

These twelve Key Strategic Recommendations were shared with the Park Board on September 11, 2014. The Board discussed the recommendations and provided input. The recommendations were then refined and brought to the community at a series of Public Input Sessions held in various locations around the Village on three consecutive weeks. These sessions were held on:

- September 23rd, 2014 at The Conservatory
- September 30th, 2014 at Cheney Mansion
- October 7th, 2014 at the Gymnastics Recreation Center

The presentation given at these Input Sessions and a summary of the comments received can be found in the appendices.

Based on the input received from the public, these recommendations form the core of the following section. The original recommendations have been supplemented with additional supportive recommendations and information pertinent for moving each recommendation forward.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTION ITEMS

The following recommendations and action items have been organized into seven major categories:

- Parks & Open Space
- Recreation Facilities & Buildings
- Programming
- Marketing
- Organization & Planning
- Administration, Maintenance & Operations
- Funding

These categories represent key components of the Park District and the organization of these categories will help in assigning responsibilities and tracking completion.

Parks & Open Space

The items in this category focus on the open space components of the Park District and the modifications necessary to ensure they meet the needs of the community.

Pursue Park/Recreation Space Acquisition & Development

Oak Park's urban and land-locked character are intrinsic to the community itself. It creates challenges for meeting any one group's desire for indoor or outdoor recreation space within the Park District, and creates an atmosphere that requires communication and collaboration with other entities in the area. However, the need for more park and recreation space should always be kept in mind, so that when opportunities arise to address it, the Park District has plans in place and are prepared to capitalize on these opportunities.

The Park District should focus on priority sites that include:

- Properties adjacent to existing parks to allow for the expansion of these sites.
- Properties available within an area that is underserved with open space – the most notable being the area bordered by Madison Street on the north, Oak Park Avenue on the east, the Eisenhower Expressway on the south and Harlem Avenue on the west.

Additional secondary sites should include:

- Properties along any of the planned bike routes within the Village.
- Properties adjacent to other community or institutional uses.

Once potential properties have been identified, the Park District should monitor them to see if any opportunities arise. This may include the creation of a "right of first refusal" agreement or the donation of land. The Parks Foundation could serve a larger role with advancing this recommendation. The Parks Foundation is well positioned to contact property owners and work to identify agreements or donations that the property owner may be willing to participate in.

Currently, the Park District has a yearly set-aside of \$200,000 to build a fund that can be applied to future purchasing of land. This amount should be re-evaluated on an annual basis to identify if the District is able to appropriately take advantage of potential opportunities that arise. If not, the fund amount may need to be adjusted.

Creatively Use Underused Exterior Spaces in the Village

Stakeholders identified a frustration with vacant spaces within the Village and encouraged the Park District to work collaboratively with the Village to temporarily activate these spaces. This desire dovetails well with recent urban planning trends and studies regarding “parklets.” These are unique, temporary spaces, often times created in an on-street parking space within a commercial shopping district. A recently released study from the Metropolitan Planning Council identified that these spaces contribute to the vitality of a community and enhance the shopping environment, causing 34% of visitors to make an unplanned food or beverage purchase and increasing sales at nearby businesses. They would also create increased awareness of the Park District.

The Park District should work with the planning department of the Village as well as the Oak Park Economic Development Corporation to identify and prioritize potential underused spaces. The Arts and Culture section of the Village’s Comprehensive Plan has a similar objective, which states that the Village should “partner with developers and property owners to adaptively reuse underutilized properties for arts and culture purposes.” While the Park District’s emphasis should be reuse for recreational purposes, there is compatibility between the two.

At the same time, the District should identify potential legal and funding mechanisms that would allow for temporary use and maintenance of these types of spaces. The District should develop a standard agreement that they can use in approaching a property owner. This could also provide a role for the Parks Foundation to work on behalf of the Park District, especially if any tax incentives can be identified to entice the property owner into providing the Park District with a low or no cost lease of the space.

The District should consider creating a budget for funding the use, temporary improvement and maintenance of these spaces.



“Parklets” can be small in size, but still create active, engaging spaces. They can include seating, compact activities, or community garden spaces, for example.

Enhance Walking & Biking Amenities

Over the last decade there has been a growing trend toward walking and biking as forms of transit, not just for recreation and fitness. Within the Chicago region, this can be seen in the growing number of bike lanes and the increase in bike-share programs, such as Divvy.

The District should work to support residents who are looking for increased opportunities to walk and bike, whether it is for recreation, fitness or transit. Due to the urban character of the Village, there are limited opportunities to directly integrate additional paths into the parks. Through the process of developing Master Plans for each of the parks, additional loops have been incorporated where feasible, such as at Lindberg Park. Stevenson Park is the only remaining park that does not have a loop, but has the potential for one, which has been identified in its Master Plan. Additional enhancements can be made in these parks by adding signs identifying the distances of the loops.

There are additional ways the District can support walking and biking.

The first is to coordinate with the Village, and partner with them when appropriate, to implement recommendations from the Village's 2008 Oak Park Bicycle Plan. This document identifies a network of different bike lanes that would touch almost every park and facility within the District, with the exception of Wenonah Tot Lot, Maple Park and Euclid Square Park. The plan calls for a series of "bicycle boulevards" that would create safer and more comfortable routes for younger bicyclists who may not be ready to bike on the street. The Park District should support the Village in their efforts to implement these initiatives, or others that arise, such as identifying locations for local bike-share stations.

The second way to further support bicyclists in the Village is to make small improvements to the parks to provide amenities. These may be as simple as creating curb cuts where bike parking is located to ease the transition from the roadway into the park for a bicyclist. Additionally, there should be ample bike parking at each park, conveniently located near recreation facilities and amenities.

While establishing standards or ordinances for automobile parking is very common in communities, there are few in the Country that create standards for bicycle parking. Those that do generally focus on bicycle parking for residential or commercial uses. Therefore, there are no common "best practices" to provide guidance on for the amount of bike parking.



The Oak Park Bicycle Plan establishes goals for a network of bike lanes throughout the Village.

The following standard was developed based on a few collected examples, tested against the District Parks and compared to the amounts of available bike racks. This standard should be used to develop a goal, but final amount of bike parking will depend on the site plan and the space available.

Proposed Bike Parking Standard:

Each park is recommended to have parking for one (1) bike for every half (1/2) acre of land, plus parking for four (4) bikes for each amenity, such as a playground, ball field, or set of tennis courts.

The chart on this page compares the amount of bike parking at each park and facility to what would be recommended according to the standard above.

During future rounds of Master Plan reviews for the parks, the amount of bike parking should be revisited and increased to address the recommended quantity where applicable. Additionally, in the Master Plan review, the access to the parking areas should be analyzed and improvements should be made to allow for easy transitions. Additional bike parking and related improvements should be budgeted for and included in the Capital Improvement Plan.

In addition to physical improvements to the parks, walking and biking can be supported and encouraged through some changes in programming. This may include the creation of walking and running programs or clubs and expanded bike safety lessons.

Park/Facility	Existing Bike Parking	Recommended Bike Parking
Andersen Park & Center	8	11
Austin Gardens	0	12
Barrie Park & Center	20	33
Carroll Park & Center	12	18
Euclid Square	4	18
Field Park & Center	12	23
Fox Park & Center	16	16
Lindberg Park	16	48
Longfellow Park & Center	17	26
Maple Park	8	30
Mills Park & Pleasant Home	10	13
Randolph Park	1	5
Rehm Park & Pool	60	34
Ridgeland Common	36	29
Scoville Park	12	20
Stevenson Park & Center	17	27
Taylor Park	16	40
Wenonah Park	1	5

Integrate Arts Into Parks

The Village of Oak Park has a proud heritage of arts and culture. In addition to the Park District's Art Advisory Committee (AAC), the Village has its own Public Art Advisory Commission. Also, the Oak Park Area Arts Council (OPAAC) is an independent group that's mission is to support and promote art and artists in the Oak Park, River Forest and Forest Park area.

While not part of the recreation focus of the Park District, the integration of art into the parks supports the District's mission of enriching lives and creating meaningful experiences in the parks. Several parks have already incorporated locations for public art into their Master Plans, such as Longfellow Park. The District needs to work collaboratively to integrate art into these and other parks.

One opportunity will be to collaborate with the Village and the OPAAC. In the Arts and Culture section of the Village's Comprehensive Master Plan, it comments that the Village could "identify potential locations for local public art, and work with partners to fund the development and installation of pieces." The District can provide many visible locations for either permanent or temporary art that other groups and agencies may be willing to assist in funding.

A second opportunity would be to encourage the Parks Foundation to take a leadership role in advancing this initiative. The Parks Foundation is uniquely placed to fund-raise for art to enhance the parks. Public art is an element that is traditionally difficult to budget for, and not generally supported by typical recreation grants. Whereas with fund-raising from private sources, the ability to associate the donated money with a physical element that enhances the park experience can be attractive to potential donors.

The Park District should encourage the Parks Foundation to establish a plan for a fundraising campaign. Concurrently, the Park District should establish priority locations for the placement of public art. When fund raising goals are met, the Parks Foundation, the Park District and the AAC can work together to make final artist, design and placement decisions.



Platforms were integrated into Longfellow Park for future public art.

Enhance District Signage

When entering one of the Park District's parks, there should be consistently delivered information about the District, its "brand," and the hours and rules of conduct for the park. Over time, as elements have changed, the consistency from park to park has decreased. The Park District should implement a clear District-wide sign program with consistent wording and symbol use.

The Park District is already establishing the standards for the rules of conduct and hours. Once complete, the cost of the signs for all the parks should be budgeted for so that they can be implemented throughout the District over a short period of time.

Additionally, the Park District is currently updating its logo. Once that initiative is complete, modifications should be identified for the park identification signs to make them consistent with any changes to the District branding. This may involve completely new signs, or modifications to or replacement of sign panels. Again, the cost of these changes should be budgeted for to allow all the signs to be modified within a short time frame.



Consistent information is needed across all parks.

Update and Implement Master Plans and ADA Transition Plan

The Master Plan process that was established following the 2004 Comprehensive Plan has been successful in elevating the quality of the parks as well as ensuring they provide for the community's needs. The process of revisiting and refining the Master Plans on a regular basis is critical to maintaining this quality. The current Capital Improvement Plan establishes target timeframes for revisiting certain Master Plans through 2019, which should continue beyond that point.

Additionally, the Park District has been regularly implementing scheduled improvements to its parks and facilities to bring them into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. These scheduled improvements are identified in the District's ADA Transition Plan, which details the work to be completed and the year it should be addressed. The District should budget for these improvements and address them in a logical and efficient manner along with any other park facility upgrades or maintenance activities.



Barrie Park is scheduled for a Master Plan in 2015.

Conduct Field Maintenance Management

As noted several times throughout the process, the Park District's current efforts to improve field maintenance management has been successful and residents and affiliate groups have noticed the improvement in the fields. This include the Districts efforts to implement the Integrated Pest Management polict. These efforts should be continued as they have increased the playability of the fields and improved the user-experience. Additionally, through the recently approved Intergovernmental Agreement, the Park District should work to bring District 97's fields up to the Park District's standards.

Staff should identify additional long-term goals for improving the field conditions, such as underdrainage, irrigation and re-grading. These are more expensive enhancements, but will further improve the conditions of the fields, and therefore should be evaluated as part of updates to Park Master Plans and built into the Capital Improvement Plan where feasible.



Field maintenance impacts the level of play and enjoyment for the District's ball fields.

Recreation Facilities & Buildings

The recommendations in this category address the built structures and specific recreation amenities within the District.

Plan for Deconstruction of Select Neighborhood Centers

The 2004 Comprehensive Plan began to layout the need for developing a long-term approach to the neighborhood centers. While much of the 2004 Comprehensive Plan was implemented, the issue of the neighborhood centers is still present.

As identified in the analysis of the District, the neighborhood centers at Field and Carroll Parks are in fair to poor shape, with low levels of use and not appropriately sized to support current space needs.

Additionally, the “Free-standing Recreation Centers” model, that was the norm fifty or more years ago when these buildings were built, is no longer appropriate for addressing the needs of Oak Park residents.

More specifically, in the cases of Field and Carroll, these one-story, free-standing recreation centers only allow for one use at a time, and do not provide appropriate and accessible storage to allow for easy change-over to a different use. When they were built, these centers were intended to provide duplicative services to each other, which makes it difficult to provide a range of uses in each building. A related issue is there are few buildings within the District able to provide multiple uses within the same building so that several members of a family can participate in activities or programs simultaneously.

The ownership and day-to-day maintenance of these neighborhood centers is a cost to the District. To address larger on-going maintenance issues would be cost prohibitive. Additionally there are opportunity costs, in that the expense attributed to the preservation of these centers could be applied toward a new facility that could more efficiently provide for the community or provide services and programs currently unavailable in the District. These costs and potential savings should be identified and evaluated.

To move this initiative forward, the first step will be to identify the current programs offered at these locations. Many of the current programs focus on early childhood learning and are critical to the community. Therefore, new or future buildings that can house these programs will need to be identified and secured. Next, the cost associated with the deconstruction should be estimated and incorporated into the Capital Improvement Plan identifying when this item should be budgeted for completion.

While the removal of the neighborhood center is identified in the Carroll Park Master Plan, it is not addressed in the Field Master Plan but currently being discussed. As these plans are updated, they should include the deconstruction of these buildings and plan for how the park will be modified. The need for permanent bathrooms at these parks was stressed by stakeholders, so the Master Plans will need to incorporate a bathroom solution for when the buildings are removed.

Any final decision on this topic will require approval from the Park Board as well as clear communication with neighbors and residents.



Field Center

Align Park Master Plans with District Level of Service

The Level of Service analysis and standards established in this process should serve as guidance for decisions made in the future, especially as it pertains to updates to Park Master Plans. These standards allow for informed decisions that acknowledge a network of complementary parks that provide for the community. Over time, changes to the parks should be made to address any gaps or surpluses within the District and bring the overall quantities closer to alignment with the recommended service levels. Specifically the following:

Basketball Courts

As identified in the Level of Service and Equity Mapping analysis, the District is under-served on basketball. The goal would be to add seven (7) half courts within the District. Several residents attended the Community Input Sessions to voice support for creating additional opportunities.

Tennis Courts

The community has a much higher service level for tennis than recommended, so no new courts are needed within the District. Courts can be removed or repositioned if it creates a benefit to the overall park. The focus should be on un-lit courts as they have more limited hours of use. Additionally, the equity map can provide geographic guidance to where in the community a reduction of courts can occur that would create fewer impacts on users. Potential repositioning to other uses such as basketball, pickle ball or a multi-use court should be evaluated as well.

Spray Pads

Another amenity that the Level of Service analysis revealed the community was under-served is spray pads. Currently, these are located in Fox, Longfellow, Andersen and Field Parks. The recent Master Plan for Rehm Pool identified an opportunity to create a spray

pad that would have public availability at times when the pool is not open. The goal would be to add one (1) additional spray pad within the District.

However, there are maintenance and operational considerations that should be taken into account. During the park and facility reviews it was apparent that the spray pads created increased maintenance issues, especially where they were located proximate to sand play areas. It was noted that mechanical pump systems, like the one at Fox, were easier to maintain than electrical pump systems. Additionally, the use of water for the spray pads should be evaluated and the potential for capturing, treating and reusing the water may be a more sustainable solution with long-term cost savings.

As Park Master Plans are updated, each park should be evaluated as a location for any changes that would help bring the District closer to the recommended service levels. If the changes are considered appropriate for incorporation into a Park Master Plan, the cost and timing for installation or modification should be identified within the Capital Improvement Plan.



Additional basketball opportunities was supported by the community at the Public Input Sessions

Incorporate Batting Cages Into Future Improvements

The recently opened Ridgeland Common incorporated two batting cages, which have seen heavy use and allow for practice in a compact area, which reduces some of the demand on field usage. The baseball affiliate groups have identified a desire for additional batting cages.

Batting cages are more difficult to site due to the noise associated with them. Potential locations that may be feasible include:

- Barrie Center – on top of the underground water tank
- Maple Park

When these parks conduct their next round of Master Plan reviews and updates, the inclusion of a batting cage should be tested with the community. If supported by the community and incorporated into the Master Plan, the Capital Improvement Plan should be updated to budget appropriately for implementation.



A batting cage could be incorporated at Barrie Center as part of the sport court

Conduct a Feasibility Study for an Indoor Recreation Facility

As mentioned in a previous recommendation, the ability to create a multi-use indoor facility will allow the Park District to provide concurrent programs and serve multiple age groups within the community. As the Park District has no current indoor gymnasium space of its own, a new indoor recreation facility would provide significant opportunities to provide new or expanded programs.

This concept was supported by 59.7% of respondents to the Park District's recent survey, who indicated they thought the District should own and operate a multi-use indoor facility. Based on stakeholder input, some of the preferred components within the facility would be basketball courts, an indoor walking and running track, and multi-purpose rooms for programming. However, the facility could include other components such as a fitness club or indoor pool.

Before the feasibility study can be conducted, a decision will need to be made in the approach to the facility. One approach would be to assume this is a multi-use facility with an indoor pool. The other approach would be to assume this is a stand alone facility. It is recommended that the indoor pool should be included in the feasibility study unless an opportunity to partner with School District 200 or another entity has been identified by that time.

A budget will need to be established for the feasibility study and included in future budgets. The consultant should be selected through a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) process, so a formal RFP will need to be developed.

The results of the feasibility study will ultimately have to be brought to the Park Board for discussion and a decision about budgeting in the Capital Improvement Plan for the next steps of implementation. Any decision should be communicated clearly to the public, as well as consistent communication throughout the process.



An indoor recreation facility could support basketball, an indoor track, and fitness, as well as other uses

Assess Opportunities to Increase Indoor Pool Capacity

An indoor pool within the Park District would address a stated desire of the residents, as 60.3% of respondents to the Park District's survey indicated they thought the District should own and operate an indoor pool. It would also provide for additional indoor recreation, fitness and aquatic opportunities and would address community needs as well as respond to national and local fitness trends. However, community stakeholders stressed the need for local taxing agencies to collaborate wherever possible.

With an indoor pool, there may be an opportunity to work with School District 200 depending on the outcome of their current pool study. Additionally, there may be other public or private agencies that may be interested in partnering. If these entities are identified in the coming years, they should be reviewed and considered.

If no realistic partnerships are identified at the time, the pool should be incorporated into the feasibility study for the indoor recreation facility to test if the use and revenue generated by the pool would support the cost of including it into a new facility.

As any decision is made, appropriate funds will need to be identified in the Capital Improvement Plan and budgeted for.



Stakeholders have identified a desire for additional indoor pool capacity within the Village

Manage & Refine Partnership Opportunities

Due to existing space constraints, the Park District has been diligent in establishing and maintaining partnerships that provide additional spaces for recreational programming. These include the use of indoor and outdoor spaces owned by School Districts 97 and 200. The Park District has continued to refine these partnership opportunities over the last several years by partnering with District 97 on enhancements to some of the school fields, and through the recently approved Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) for the maintaining the school district's fields.

The District should review and evaluate these agreements to identify opportunities to address level of service goals, such as additional pool or indoor gymnasium usage. Additionally, the District should search for other partnerships, which could include private or public groups, health/medical entities or other adjacent park districts.

Manage District Historic Resources

The Park District has three historic properties: The Oak Park Conservatory, Pleasant Home and Cheney Mansion. These properties contribute to the unique character of the community and should continue to be managed by the Park District.

As established in the Park District's Historic Property Management Plan, the District should continue to provide staff for the operations of both Cheney Mansion and the Conservatory and coordinate with its partner entity, the Pleasant Home Foundation, which provides staff for the day-to-day operations of Pleasant Home. The District should also continue to work with the Friends of the Conservatory, a volunteer group which provides funds for both programming and capital projects for this facility. These existing partnerships are important to the success of the District's historic resources.

The Park District of Oak Park should continue to provide capital funds for all three properties and identify and budget for expenditures in the Capital Improvement Plan. Historic resources create opportunities for different types of funding and grant opportunities than traditional recreational sources. These sources, such as Federal-level funds aimed at planning and rehabilitation, should be explored and pursued where applicable and when available.

Another consideration for further managing the District's historic properties would be to fund and conduct training services to grow capacity and build skills for partner organizations such as the foundations or other volunteer groups. Strategic planning and fundraising are the two most important skills as well as leadership development and training of Foundation board members. Enhanced capacity in these partner groups will ultimately help the District as it relates to historic properties.

Programming

This section includes recommendations focused on changes to the specific programming within the District.

Increase District Participation Levels

Park District staff is encouraged to conduct annual program lifecycle evaluations using the matrix developed as a part of the program assessment process, and found in the State of the District report. The goal is to ensure continuous program innovation and eliminating or repositioning programs with declining participation in favor of new trends or those better aligned with community needs. This will ensure that program offerings continue to be modified and updated and continue to grow in the future with the addition of newer facilities.

Nationwide, one of the biggest reasons why people do not participate is lack of awareness about new offerings. Continuing to leverage the new website and the marketing / branding plan will be effective for advertising and promoting new offerings. In today's 'social' age, targeted ad buys through Facebook, Twitter, YouTube etc. are highly recommended as ways to maximize outreach and generate maximum return on investment for marketing and advertising spend.

Creating an on-going feedback loop, potentially through the use of existing or new technology, will be helpful to track for trends in performance and assign key performance indicators to the same. Intercept surveys, online surveys and, if possible, developing an App for real-time customer feedback capture are best practice strategies that PDOP could incorporate into existing practices as it continues to evaluate progress moving forward.

Best practices, changing trends and community demographics require an update every 5 years to ensure the data and community needs are still relevant. To identify true community needs, it is important to conduct a statistically valid survey, as discussed in its own recommendation in a later section, as a part of the plan to ensure true community representation and an objective process to justify decision-making.



The Park District should identify and track goals for increasing participation within the community

Improve Adult Fitness Programming

One of the areas where there is potential for increased participation levels is in adult fitness. The Park District is already testing changes to delivery of service, including punch passes and the inclusion of day care for participants at Stevenson Center. The results of these changes should be evaluated, and made more permanent when successful.

Another component of improving adult fitness is to ensure that the programs offered are innovative, fresh, interesting and respond to the needs of the community. This requires that program lifecycles are evaluated and tracked annually so that programs near the end of their lifecycle are retired or repositioned. Additional targeted surveys can be used to identify program specific community needs and priorities. Any new programs should be marketed to target user groups to maximize exposure and enrollment.

With the aging demographics of the District, the growing baby boomer population and the active adult lifestyle of the 55+ age group, adult fitness and wellness is an area poised for even more growth. While PDOP is currently hindered with facility space, with potentially increased multi-generational recreation space, it will have the ability to offer a wide variety of recreation offerings that target the adult fitness and wellness space in a customized manner.



Adult fitness programs should be expanded and improved to better serve the community

Improve Environmental Education Programming

With concern for growing childhood obesity and the reduction in kids and youth being outdoors, there is a lot of support for bringing kids outdoors and exposing them to a wide variety of outdoor recreation and environmental education opportunities. Additionally, there is interest in the adult population for more environmental education opportunities. With the kind of facilities PDOP has (e.g. Oak Park Conservatory) and is planning to create at Austin Gardens, it should continue to expand outdoor recreation and environmental education opportunities as well.

The District should identify potential environmental programs that can be paired with specific District facilities, with consideration given not only to buildings, but also some of the specialty features within the parks. The District should work with the Greening Advisory Committee to develop ideas for programs. Additionally, local school districts and colleges may offer opportunities for partnerships.

Similar to adult fitness programming, surveys should be used to identify community needs, lifecycles will need to be tracked and evaluated for environmental programs and new programs will need to be marketed to the community.



The Environmental Learning Center at Austin Garden will provide a key location for increased educational programming

Create & Support Cultural Enhancement Opportunities

The Park District currently supports culture within the Community in several ways, ranging from concerts in the park, supporting community theatre and a variety of youth and adult programs, including ceramics and dance. The Park District should continue to support cultural opportunities and work with partner organizations to further enhance them within the Community, which is detailed in the District's Cultural Plan.

The Oak Park Area Arts Council is currently developing a Cultural Plan for the Community, and the District should participate in the process and help identify existing and potential roles for the Park District. As mentioned in a separate recommendation, there are opportunities for the District to partner with the other entities, such as the Village's Public Art Advisory Commission, to integrate art into the parks.

The Village's Comprehensive Plan dedicates a section to Arts & Culture and identifies several goals for the Village, which the Park District could participate in. One specific objective is to develop a coordinated and balanced calendar of cultural events, which the Park District should work with the Village to achieve this goal.



Summer concerts in Scoville Park are one of the ways the Park District currently creates cultural enhancement opportunities

Marketing

The recommendation in this section addresses activities necessary to create further awareness of the Park District and its offerings.

Implement Recommendations from Branding Study

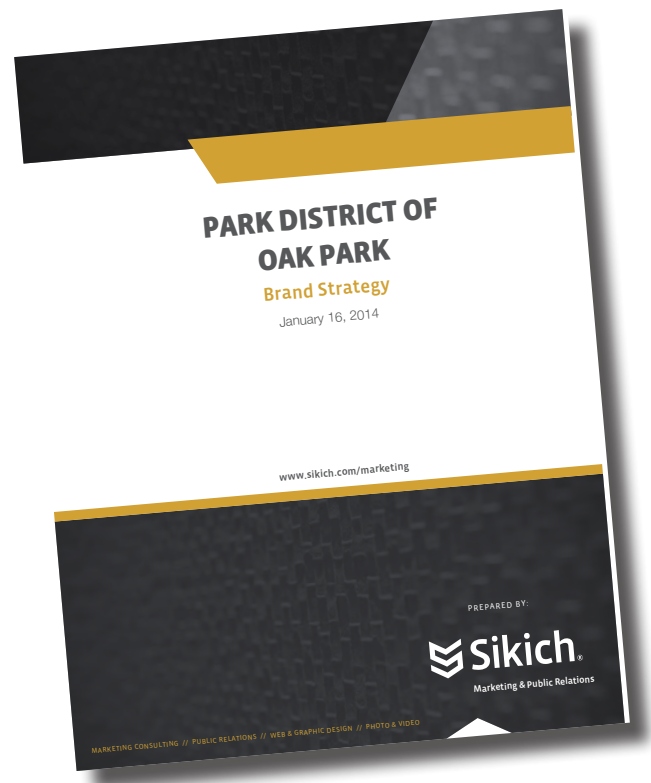
In 2014 the Park District completed a Brand Strategy Report which provides clear, thoughtful direction on many brand and marketing-related items. The District is already moving forward on several initiatives mentioned in the report, and should continue to work to implement the recommendations of the report.

The first task currently in progress is to refresh the District's logo. While a completely new logo was not recommended in the study, the design needs to be updated to make sure it represents the Park District well to the intended audience.

The results of survey that was conducted as part of the Brand Strategy study revealed that the Park District was not seen as innovative, which is one of the establish PDOP values. The report indicates that the brand and associated messaging can help educate residents about innovative actions of the Park District.

As part of this process, a Brand Standards Guide will be prepared that provides appropriate guidance for supporting the refreshed logo and reinforcing the overall Park District brand. This includes establishing color palettes, font families and templates for support materials. The report also recommends developing related "sibling" looks for the District's revenue centers so that they are independent, but still relate to the overall District look.

Other actions include developing a photography calendar, updating and refining the message in promotional tools, and conducting a follow-up branding survey in five years to evaluate the effectiveness of branding efforts, allowing for adjustments to be made as necessary.



The Brand Strategy establishes clear next steps for enhancing and communicating the Park District's brand.

Organization & Planning

This section includes recommendations on activities that will keep the District organized, focused and prepared for the key issues of the next 10 years.

Update the Capital Improvement Plan Annually

The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is a powerful document in that it clearly establishes the goals, future plans, and associated costs and benefits for the next five years for each park and facility in the District. This provides clarity for the Park Board, and the community as a whole, on how capital expenditures are to be distributed in the near future. While plans may be adjusted from year to year, it still outlines priorities and creates transparency for the planning and budgeting process.

This effort should continue in the future on an annual basis. As has been done to date, the District should monitor the outcomes of the Master Plan updates, and any feedback on the conditions of the parks or the needs of the community and the data that is collected through the analysis of maintenance work orders, through park ambassador outreach and from other sources. The District should use these sources to evaluate priorities, issues and opportunities and update the CIP accordingly.



The Capital Improvement Plan is a powerful document for organization and communication of District goals

Communicate Collaboration & Active Partnership Efforts

Through the stakeholder outreach portion of the Comprehensive Master Plan process, it became apparent that Village residents strongly desire that all taxing agencies work collaboratively to ensure efficient governance. However, it also became clear that most residents were not aware of the multiple ways that the Park District of Oak Park works collaboratively with the Village, School Districts, Township and Library to share knowledge and resources. This desire for collaboration has led to the i-Gov Assembly that brought the various taxing bodies together to talk about issues facing them in the coming years.

The State of the District report identified these cooperative efforts, but a master list should be developed and updated on an annual basis. With this list in hand, the Park District should then identify opportunities to communicate these efforts. There are several audiences that should be targeted. One is elected officials on the Boards of the different agencies. A secondary audience is the general public. Different methods should be used to address the different audiences, but some of the potential resources for communicating include the District's annual report and website, as well as the Oak Park FYI mailer that goes out to every household. In addition to print or electronic communication, the message can also be incorporated into presentations, such as educational sessions for newly elected officials. The selected communication efforts should be conducted on a regular basis along with the update of the master list.



Day in our Village is one of the many ways the Park District collaborates with the Village

Update Needs Assessment in Five Years

The Park District should schedule and plan to update the Needs Assessment in five years. This will be the halfway point of the 10 year plan, and will provide a good opportunity to collect input from the community and adjust the action plan if necessary to ensure it continues to align with the needs of the residents.

This Needs Assessment will include the development and administration of a new statistically valid Community Attitude and Interest Survey. This will provide the information needed to identify if service level recommendations and priorities need to be refined. It also provides an opportunity to ask target questions about recommendations or issues. For example, the Park District's 2010 public survey asked specific questions about Ridgeland Common that informed the decisions on the renovations to the building.

A consultant will need to be selected and hired to write and administer the survey, and help review, evaluate and communicate the results. The District's Level of Service recommendations and the Capital Improvement Plan should both be updated to reflect any changes in the results from 2014.



Updating the Needs Assessment will help reevaluate progress and changes in community needs

Administration, Maintenance & Operations

The recommendations in this section work to address the day-to-day activities that occur “behind the scenes” that keep the District operating in an efficient manner.

Advance the Park Ambassador Program

Currently, the Park District conducts a Park Ambassador program where the Center and Court Supervisors are asked to engage with park users to collect feedback and suggestions on how to improve the park. This process serves as an opportunity for identifying and addressing community needs between larger community surveys or workshops.

Some of the opportunities that exist that the District can address include formalizing the type of information collected and finding ways to collect data from parks without centers. Additionally, the District should develop a process for regularly evaluating and sharing the input with District leadership. Park District staff currently uses MPower to track facility useage and other metrics. This type of data tracking and evaluation could be applied to the data collected from the “intercept surveys” the Park Ambassadors are conducting. This improved feedback loop between park users and the District can help with goals for increased innovation and improved experiences for users.

Evaluate District Sustainability Opportunities

Within the Parks, Open Space and Environmental Features section of the Village’s Comprehensive Master Plan, a goal is presented to “Promote sustainable development and maintenance practices in parks and open spaces.” Oak Park as a whole has always been a leader in the region related to sustainability, and the Park District clearly plays a key role in this. The District already operates in a progressive and environmentally responsible manner. However, the District could develop a defined set of policies and goals relative to sustainability.

These policies and goals would influence decisions made relative to maintenance and operations as well as capital investments. For example, sustainable initiatives incorporated into new facilities or amenities may have a larger initial cost, but the long term benefits, in environmental stewardship or long-term cost recovery or both, could make them worth inclusion. The Park District has an Environmentally Aware Purchasing policy in place that allows for additional money to be spent on environmentally preferable products. New Master Plan and capital improvements should seek to take advantage of this policy and especially if the improvements have a cost-recovery associated with them over their lifetime.



Unique features at locations like Taylor Park can be used for educational opportunities

Collect, Analyze & Use Maintenance Data

When the Park District's 2004 Comprehensive Master Plan was completed, there was a significant amount of deferred maintenance that impacted the quality of the parks and facilities. In following the recommendations in that Comprehensive Master Plan, including establishing a permanent source of funding, developing Master Plans for all the parks and implementing improvements detailed in those plans, the Park District has elevated the quality of its holdings. However, the District needs to diligently monitor the condition of the parks and facilities to ensure that it maintains and increases the current level of quality.

The District currently has a work orders tracking system, MicroMain, which collects the data from all preventative, corrective and routine work orders. Additionally, staff has developed an innovative tool for regularly evaluating the condition of the parks. These two data points will be helpful in understanding and anticipating maintenance needs, which can create efficiencies in maintenance practices. However, this analysis process needs to be developed. Additionally, a tool to evaluate District buildings should be developed in the near future to create a more complete picture of the state of the District's holdings.

Another component to this process is to establish a deferred maintenance baseline for the existing buildings. This will establish any outstanding, unresolved maintenance issues for the buildings, along with associated costs. The risk with deferred maintenance is that issues can become exacerbated over time and become more costly. By identifying these items they can be evaluated with other proposed capital improvements or maintenance activities are appropriately planned for and programmed into budgets.

Funding

The recommendations of this section address items critical to the future financial health of the District.

Manage Revenue Growth

In order to continue to build and maintain the PDOP system and to successfully implement the Master Plan, new, sustainable funding sources are essential. As a Park District, PDOP has a more secure funding structure compared to agencies solely dependent on General Fund support, however the key to sustaining and accomplishing the initiatives in this plan will be to diversify sources of funding. Additionally, practices focused on cost recovery and business planning will ensure that revenue growth is complemented by cost control to create long term financial sustainability.

Some key recommendations include:

- Continue using the cost of service model and pricing philosophies to establish cost recovery goals for key areas and programs
- Utilize the classification model to institute price changes based on cost recovery goals
- Identify and implement new revenue sources to offset spending to grow the financial pie – e.g. Parks Foundation, Crowdfunding through kickstarter.org, razoo.com or NRPA's Fund Your Park initiative; Partnerships, Corporate Sponsorships or Naming Rights
- Evaluate the potential value sponsorship for all the assets owned by PDOP based on visitation numbers and user demographics. Using that data, create an enhanced sponsorship catalog to target local and regional sponsors in the Chicagoland area for corporate partnership and activation opportunities.
- Continue to communicate the true cost of offering services to the users to ensure they are educated and knowledgeable about what they pay versus what the offerings cost

Identify Opportunities to Engage Parks Foundation

Park Foundations can be powerful partners in helping Park Districts meet project goals. In comparable communities, the Parks Foundation is able to help address funding gaps on capital projects or provide “value added” or wish list elements that often get cut from budgets. This supplemental funding comes from the Parks Foundation’s ability to accept tax-deductible donations from residents, which can be impactful in a community that values its open space like Oak Park.

However, the Parks Foundation, which received its charitable organization status in 2012, is still in its infancy. The Foundation is currently developing its Master Plan to guide priorities. The Park District should participate in this process and provide input on these priorities.

Previous recommendations in this report have identified opportunities for the Parks Foundation to assist in integrating public art into the parks and helping approach private property owners about selling or donating their land to the Park District. In general, the Park District should establish key giving areas for the Parks Foundation to approve and focus on. Through discussions with the Parks Foundation, other opportunities may become apparent, and the Park District and Foundation can work to build complementary plans and strategies.



6. Implement

Using the input of the Park District of Oak Park’s Leadership Committee and the project Task Force, an implementation matrix was developed to organize and structure the necessary steps for moving each one of the envisioned recommendations forward. Additional detail provides roles and responsibilities, potential costs associated with each recommendation and targeted completion dates. This matrix, provided in the Appendix, is intended to be updated on an annual basis, dependent on changing priorities, budgets and other factors. The monitoring and updating of this matrix will make this a “working document” that will maximize the value of the overall Comprehensive Master Plan.

The recommendations have not only been categorized by type, but they also have been organized by timeframe using input from Park District staff. These initial timeframes may be adjusted in the future depending on budgets and other factors. Additionally, implementation of any of the recommendations may include key actions or tasks that need to be accomplished in the short-term to allow that recommendation to move forward.

Short-Term (1 to 3 Years)

- Enhance District Signage
- Conduct a Feasibility Study for an Indoor Recreation Facility
- Improve Adult Fitness Programming
- Improve Environmental Education Programming
- Implement Recommendations from Branding Study
- Collect, Analyze & Use Maintenance Data
- Identify Opportunities to Engage Parks Foundation

Mid-Term (4 to 7 Years)

- Plan for Deconstruction of Select Neighborhood Centers
- Assess Opportunities to Increase Indoor Pool Capacity
- Update Needs Assessment in Five Years
- Manage Revenue Growth

On-Going

- Pursue Park/Recreation Space Acquisition & Development
- Creatively Use Underused Exterior Spaces in the Village
- Enhance Walking & Biking Amenities
- Integrate Arts Into Parks
- Update and Implement Master Plans and ADA Transition Plan
- Conduct Field Maintenance Management
- Align Park Master Plans with District Level of Service
- Incorporate Batting Cages Into Future Improvements
- Manage & Refine Partnership Opportunities
- Manage District Historic Resources
- Increase District Participation Levels
- Create & Support Cultural Enhancement Opportunities
- Update the Capital Improvement Plan Annually
- Communicate Collaboration & Active Partnership Efforts
- Advance the Park Ambassador Program
- Evaluate District Sustainability Opportunities

Appendix

A: Implementation Strategy Matrix

LEGEND

\$ less than \$100,000
 \$\$ \$100,000 to \$1,000,000
 \$\$\$ greater than \$1,000,000

Recommendation	Page	Timeframe	Responsible Parties and Partners (Project Lead in BOLD)	Funding Sources	Cost Level	Actions/Key Tasks	Target Completion
PARKS & OPEN SPACE							
PURSUE PARK/RECREATION SPACE ACQUISITION & DEVELOPMENT	129	On-Going	Executive Director Parks Foundation of Oak Park Buildings & Grounds Superintendent Finance Director	Capital Projects Fund Donations	\$\$ - \$\$\$	Monitor and update list of potential properties Work with Parks Foundation to approach property owners Develop agreements with property owners when opportunities arise Re-evaluate and adjust fund set-aside as needed as part of the annual CIP	On-going
LOOK FOR OPPORTUNITIES TO USE UNDERUSED SPACES	130	On-Going	Executive Director Buildings & Grounds Superintendent Finance Director	Capital Projects Fund Grants	\$ - \$\$	Identify and prioritize potential underused spaces within the Village Contact and communicate with land owners Identify potential mechanisms for temporary or long-term use Develop agreements Budget for improvements and maintenance	On-going
ENHANCE WALKING & BIKING AMENITIES	131	On-Going	Executive Director Buildings & Grounds Superintendent Finance Director Recreation Superintendent	Capital Projects Fund Corporate Fund Recreation Fund	\$	Coordinate with Village on planned bike improvements Evaluate quantities and identify locations for additional racks Identify opportunities to expand walking opportunities Incorporate additional bike racks into future Master Plans Provide signage for path distances in each park Budget for site improvements and additional racks in CIP Create walking and running programs for youth and adults Create programs for bike safety lessons	On-going
INTEGRATE ART INTO PARKS	133	On-Going	Parks Foundation of Oak Park Executive Director Buildings & Grounds Superintendent Recreation Superintendent Finance Director Arts Advisory Committee Oak Park Area Arts Council Village of Oak Park Public Art Advisory Commission	Donations Grants Corporate Fund	\$	Coordinate with other local agencies Parks Foundation to begin fund raising Identify priority locations within District Seek grants from art focused foundations Implement art when fund raising goals achieved Set goals, policies and procedures that support local artists	On-going
ENHANCE DISTRICT SIGNAGE	134	Short-Term (1 to 3 Years)	Executive Director Buildings & Grounds Superintendent Finance Director Marketing and Communication Director	Capital Projects Fund Corporate Fund	\$	Develop standards and consistent information for rules/hours signs Budget for new signs in CIP Integrate new branding into park identification signs Interchange park rule signs as needed	2015/016
REGULARLY UPDATE MASTER PLANS & ADA IMPROVEMENTS	135	On-Going	Executive Director Buildings & Grounds Superintendent Asst. Superintendent of B & G Recreation Superintendent Finance Director Marketing and Communication Director Revenue Facilities Superintendent	Capital Projects Fund Corporate Fund Revenue Facilities Fund	\$	Continue with scheduled Master Plan reviews and updates Continue implementing ADA Transition Plan Prioritize the ADA transition plan, identifying sites and incorporate into the budget. Continue to record ADA improvements Incorporate Level of Service Standards	On-going
CONTINUE WITH FIELD MAINTENANCE MANAGEMENT	136	On-Going	Executive Director Buildings & Grounds Superintendent Sport Field Manager Finance Director	Corporate Fund Capital Projects Fund	\$	Identify long-term goals for underdrainage, irrigation and re-grading Incorporate long-term goals into Master Plans and CIP Work to raise D97 fields up to PDOP standards	On-going
RECREATION FACILITIES & BUILDINGS							
PLAN FOR DECONSTRUCTION OF NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS	137	Mid-Term (4-7 Years)	Executive Director Buildings & Grounds Superintendent Finance Director Recreation Superintendent Project Manager Marketing and Communication Director	Capital Projects Fund Corporate Fund	\$	Identify cost savings associated with removal Identify locations to relocate current programs Identify costs with deconstruction and include in CIP Receive Park Board Action Incorporate deconstruction into Master Plans Relocate programs Deconstruct buildings Create Communication Plan for neighbors, users and media	2019

LEGEND

\$ less than \$100,000
 \$\$ \$100,000 to \$1,000,000
 \$\$\$ greater than \$1,000,000

Recommendation	Page	Timeframe	Responsible Parties and Partners (Project Lead in BOLD)	Funding Sources	Cost Level	Actions/Key Tasks	Target Completion
ALIGN PARK MASTER PLANS WITH DISTRICT LEVEL OF SERVICE	138	On-Going	Executive Director Buildings & Grounds Superintendent Recreation Superintendent Finance Director Marketing and Communication Director	Capital Projects Fund Corporate Fund Grants	\$\$	Evaluate opportunities for additions/changes during Master Plan updates Incorporate changes into CIP Implement changes	On-going
INCORPORATE BATTING CAGES INTO FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS	139	On-Going	Executive Director Buildings & Grounds Superintendent Recreation Superintendent Finance Director Marketing and Communication Director	Capital Projects Fund Corporate Fund Grants	\$	Identify and evaluate potential batting cage locations Test locations with community during associated Master Plan updates Incorporate planned additional batting cages into CIP Implement additional batting cages	On-going
CONDUCT FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR INDOOR RECREATION FACILITY	140	Short-Term (1-3 Years)	Executive Director Buildings & Grounds Superintendent Finance Director Recreation Superintendent Marketing and Communication Director Project Manager	Capital Projects Fund	\$ - \$\$\$	Identify if indoor pool or other elements should be incorporated into feasibility study Identify budget for study and budget funds Prepare RFP for feasibility study Select consultant and conduct feasibility study Identify potential program opportunities facility would allow Communicate the decision to the public	2016
ASSESS OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDOOR POOL	141	Mid-Term (4-7 Years)	Executive Director Buildings & Grounds Superintendent Revenue Facilities Superintendent Recreation Superintendent Finance Director	Capital Projects Fund Revenue Facilities Fund	\$ - \$\$\$	Continue to track D200 progress and keep communication open Identify other public & private agencies in community for potential partnerships Include indoor pool in recreation feasibility study if D200 opportunities do not exist Make decision based on results and budget in CIP if appropriate	2019
CONTINUE TO MANAGE PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES	142	On-Going	Executive Director Recreation Superintendent	Recreation Administration Fund	\$	Identify additional opportunities for use of spaces/facilities Update and refine agreements with existing partners as needed Identify funding partnerships with user groups	On-going
CONTINUE TO MANAGE HISTORIC RESOURCES OWNED BY THE DISTRICT	142	On-Going	Executive Director Buildings and Grounds Superintendent Conservatory Manager Cheney Mansion Supervisor Pleasant Home Foundation Friends of the Oak Park Conservatory	Capital Projects Fund Museum Fund Corporate Fund Cheney Mansion Fund	\$\$	Continue to build and refine partnerships with foundations and friends groups Continue to budget for on-going maintenance and improvements Explore and pursue additional funding and grant opportunities Fund and conduct training services to build partner capacity and skills	On-going
PROGRAMMING							
INCREASE PARTICIPATION LEVELS WITHIN THE DISTRICT	143	On-Going	Executive Director Recreation Superintendent Revenue Facilities Superintendent Conservatory Manager Marketing and Communications Director	Corporate Fund Revenue Facilities Fund Recreation Fund	\$	Evaluate programs lifecycles and participation levels on annual basis Modify program offerings to increase participation levels Advertise and promotes new program offerings Conduct in-person and online survey on an annual basis to evaluate progress Use 5 years Needs Assessment update as statistically valid survey to track progress	On-going
IMPROVE ADULT FITNESS PROGRAMMING	144	Short-Term (1 to 3 Years)	Executive Director Recreation Superintendent Revenue Facilities Superintendent Finance Director Communication and Marketing Director	Recreation Fund Communications & Marketing Fund Recreation Administration Fund	\$	Identify potential changes to delivery of service Test and implement changes Retire or reposition programs near the end of their lifecycle Conduct additional targeted surveys to identify program specific community needs/priorities Introduce new or repositioned programs to address identified needs/priorities Conduct and track program lifecycles on an annual basis Marketing efforts to target user groups	2015
IMPROVE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAMMING	144	Short-Term (1 to 3 Years)	Executive Director Conservatory Manager Recreation Superintendent Friends of the Oak Park Conservatory	Corporate Fund Recreation Fund Grants	\$	Identify potential environmental programs that can be paired with specific District facilities Conduct additional targeted surveys to identify program specific community desires Introduce new programs to address identified needs/priorities Conduct and track program lifecycles on an annual basis Use GAC to assist in ideas and marketing options to get the word out on our new programs. Partner with D97 and D200 and local colleges for program offerings	2016

Recommendation	Page	Timeframe	Responsible Parties and Partners (Project Lead in BOLD)	Funding Sources	Cost Level	Actions/Key Tasks	Target Completion
CREATE & SUPPORT CONTINUED CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES	145	On-Going	Executive Director Recreation Superintendent Arts Advisory Committee Oak Park Area Arts Council	Corporate Fund Recreation Administration Fund	\$	Participate in current Oak Park Cultural Plan development process Coordinate with other local agencies Evaluate opportunities to continue/expand concerts and theater in parks Integrate Art into Parks (see previous recommendation)	On-going
MARKETING							
IMPLEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS FROM BRANDING STUDY	146	Short-Term (1 to 3 Years)	Executive Director Marketing and Communications Director Finance Director	Corporate Fund	\$\$	Refresh Logo Develop Brand Standards Guide Develop similar looks for revenue centers Develop a photography calendar Adjust and tune the focus of marketing materials and messaging Ensure messaging reflects unique attributes of PDOP: Convenience, Variety, Affordability, Quality Conduct a branding study/survey in 5 to 10 years	2017
ORGANIZATION & PLANNING							
CONTINUE TO UPDATE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CIP) ANNUALLY	147	On-Going	Executive Director Finance		\$	Monitor outcomes of Master Plan updates Monitor feedback from maintenance analysis, park ambassador outreach and other sources Evaluate priorities, issues and opportunities and modify CIP accordingly	On-going
COMMUNICATE COLLABORATION & ACTIVE PARTNERSHIP EFFORTS	148	On-Going	Executive Director Marketing and Communications Director Recreation Superintendent	Corporate Fund	\$	Update list of collaboration efforts on an annual basis Identify opportunities (annual report, website, program brochure) to communicate efforts Implement communications on a regular basis Use VOP's FYI to highlight	On-going
UPDATE NEEDS ASSESSMENT IN FIVE YEARS	148	Mid-Term (4-7 Years)	Executive Director Marketing and Communications Director	Corporate Fund Capital Projects Fund	\$	Identify additional information goals of updated assessment Select consultant to write and administer survey Review, evaluate and communicate results Make changes/improvements as appropriate	2019
ADMINISTRATION, MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS							
ADVANCE PARK AMBASSADOR PROGRAM	149	On-Going	Executive Director Revenue Facilities Superintendent Recreation Superintendent	Corporate Fund	\$	Identify opportunities to collect additional data at parks without centers Work with park ambassadors to collect additional information Develop process for regularly evaluating and sharing input Provide additional training on software to increase functionality Incorporate a continuous improvement model	On-going
EVALUATE NEW OPPORTUNITIES TO FURTHER SUSTAINABILITY WITHIN DISTRICT	149	On-Going	Executive Director Buildings & Grounds	Buildings & Grounds Fund Facilities Fund	\$	Develop policy for evaluating cost recovery on sustainable upgrades to capital projects Identify potential target projects or sustainable goals Integrate sustainable practices where appropriate opportunities arise Monitor and track impacts - communicate and market successes	On-going
CONDUCT FURTHER ANALYSIS & USE OF MAINTENANCE FEEDBACK	150	Short-Term (1 to 3 Years)	Executive Director Buildings & Grounds Superintendent Finance Director Revenue Facilities Superintendent	Corporate Fund Revenue Facilities Fund	\$	Continue to track work orders Continue to evaluate open spaces on a regular basis Develop tool for evaluating facilities on a regular basis Implement process for analysis of information collected and development of recommendations	2015
FUNDING							
MANAGE REVENUE GROWTH	151	Mid-Term (4-7 Years)	Executive Director Finance Director Buildings & Grounds Superintendent Revenue Facilities Superintendent Recreation Superintendent	Recreation Administration Fund Revenue Facilities Fund	\$	Conduct and track program lifecycles on an annual basis Continue to track and analyze use of facilities Establish cost recovery goals for programs or program areas Develop full cost accounting for each program or class Implement changes based on lifecycle, use, and cost recovery analysis Meet tax/earned revenue ratio goal of 50/50	2020
IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES TO ENGAGE PARKS FOUNDATION	151	Short-Term (1 to 3 Years)	Executive Director Parks Foundation of Oak Park Finance Director Buildings & Grounds Superintendent	Donations	\$	Participate in the development of the Foundation's Master Plan Identify key opportunities for Foundation to support District goals Establish key giving areas for Foundation to approve	2016