



Comprehensive Master Plan 2007



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Table of Contents

	Page
Introduction	9
Executive Summary	13
CHAPTER 1 Parks & Recreation	19
CHAPTER 2 Community Profile	25
CHAPTER 3 Elmhurst Park District Profile	35
CHAPTER 4 Visioning & Community Process	57
CHAPTER 5 Classification of Parks	111
CHAPTER 6 Comparative Analysis	127
CHAPTER 7 Inventory & Assessment	137
CHAPTER 8 Recommendations	177
APPENDIX A Sources	203
APPENDIX B Community Survey Data	207

Introduction



The Elmhurst Park District is in a period of transition. Population growth has slowed as new development is very limited, and demographics are undergoing gradual changes as older properties are redeveloped. At the same time, residents are changing various aspects of their lifestyle, and expect higher quality parks and programs, and more and better services from the public agencies that serve their community. With open space, maintaining and enhancing existing parks and facilities, and improving services are the highest priorities, this Comprehensive Master Plan provides a guide for EPD to meet its future. Initiated late in 2005, EPD contracted the Chicago office of Edwards and Kelcey to prepare this Comprehensive Master Plan.

In developing the Comprehensive Master Plan, Edwards and Kelcey first gathered information about the District and the community to develop an understanding of the character and history that provide the basis for the present. An extensive visioning process was used to encourage user groups, residents, stakeholders and EPD staff to assist in the development of the Plan; a process that promotes a sense of pride and responsibility in all who participated.

The Elmhurst Park District provides services, parks, facilities and programs that are of very high quality. The residents expressed their desire to maintain this quality and to make sure that open space is a priority. While limiting future development in order to maintain open space is a philosophical priority, quality parks and facilities require the daily management of buildings, amenities and grounds in a proactive manner that utilizes state-of-the-art equipment and processes. It also requires that necessary enhancements be initiated in a timely manner that will meet the changing needs and desires of the residents of the District while being fiscally responsible to those same residents.

In developing changes and enhancements to programs and services offered by the District, the key influences will be changes to the demographics of the community and changes to the expectation levels had by District residents. An aging population, increasingly higher levels of education and the influx of immigrants and emigrants to the region will provide guidance for future programs and services.

The Elmhurst Park District Comprehensive Master Plan has been written to provide innovative ideas and recommendations that provide both a global perspective and a local focus.

Executive Summary



The Elmhurst Park District's 2007 Comprehensive Master Plan is presented in a sequence of chapters that provide park and recreation trends, a look at the Park District and the community that it serves, a description of the input received during the planning process, detailed assessments of the parks and facilities, and recommendations for the future. The Plan is designed to be a guide for the District in making operational, capital improvement and philosophical decisions; cover the next five years and beyond.

CHAPTER 1 PARKS AND RECREATION

Parks and recreation facilities offer many benefits to a community, including activities that can improve health, protect environmentally sensitive areas, open space and increased property values. As in many aspects of life in the United States, there are trends that shape park and recreation planning. Many of these trends are due to demographic shifts and lifestyle changes, but others play on such things as increased environmental awareness and on economics that affect the funding of leisure time activities. This chapter describes the benefits of parks and recreation, and presents some of the nationwide trends that are applicable to the Elmhurst Park District.

CHAPTER 2 COMMUNITY PROFILE

Understanding the history, culture and traditions of a community play a key role in planning for the future, as these are underlying principles that help shape a community as do its people. This chapter presents an understanding of the community based on its geography, U.S. Census demographic information and a history of Elmhurst.

CHAPTER 3 ELMHURST PARK DISTRICT PROFILE

Park and recreation agencies each have a unique style and character that come from its geography, history, governance and operational initiatives. This chapter provides an overview of the Elmhurst Park District that looks at the organizational structure of the agency, its history, the diverse program offerings provided to the residents and the numerous partnerships that EPD has developed with the City of Elmhurst, Community Unit School District 205, Elmhurst College, Elmhurst Memorial Healthcare and various other agencies and businesses that work with EPD toward the common good of the community.



CHAPTER 4

VISIONING & COMMUNITY PROCESS

Encouraging user groups, residents, stakeholders and staff in planning for parks and recreation promotes a sense of pride and responsibility. The Elmhurst Park District shares in a philosophy of including various points of view to develop a vision for future planning efforts that represent a variety of interests. This chapter describes the various methods used to garner the recommendations and opinions of the public, user groups and organizations, and stakeholders with whom EPD partners in providing services and facilities. The chapter presents the findings that came from these efforts, including the public visioning workshops, the Community Survey, stakeholder meetings and focus groups. The findings of visioning meetings and interviews with EPD staff and the Board of Commissioners provide an inside view of the District. Findings from the public meetings where the preliminary goals, recommendations and process were presented are also included.

CHAPTER 5

CLASSIFICATION OF PARKS

There are a variety of different types of parks within any park system that serve various functions within a community. Each of these types of park serves a distinct geographical base that ranges from a few blocks surrounding a mini-park to several miles for parks that offer amenities that are unique to a region. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) has developed a classification system that can be used as a base to describe most types of parks. These standards can be modified to address a specific agency and the unique types of parks that an agency offers. This chapter describes the various classifications of parks and facilities in the Elmhurst Park District along with a listing of parks falling within each classification.

CHAPTER 6

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Comparing park and recreation agencies provides an understanding of how well an agency provides amenities and facilities for its residents. The rationale behind this comparison is that a localized comparison offers a more accurate analysis of the needs and deficiencies of an agency. This chapter provides a comparison of the Elmhurst Park District to nineteen other park districts in the region, providing quantitative comparison of many of the more common elements found within parks in this region. Conclusions are offered that look at this comparison with respect to public needs.



CHAPTER 7 INVENTORY & ASSESSMENT

An on-site evaluation of existing parks and facilities provides the basis for formulating recommendations for improvements to each park and facility. As such, the documentation of conditions and amenities is a very important step in the comprehensive planning process. This chapter describes the process used for site evaluation, and presents a series of discussions about common elements to consider in making future design and capital improvements to the parks and facilities, including standardization to create an image for the Elmhurst Park District, quality, safety and general recommendations to be implemented system-wide. The chapter also includes assessments of each individual park and facility that present a brief description of the site, a rating of its amenities, photographs and recommendations for improvements that are specific to each site.

CHAPTER 8 RECOMMENDATIONS

The development of goals and recommendations is a key component of the master planning process. Based on all of the research, analysis, visioning and evaluation that is completed, and on the vision of an agency that is expressed in its Mission Statement, goals can be formulated that expand on the philosophies of the agency and provide direction for management and operations. This chapter presents goals in eighteen subjects, along with an associated set of recommendations expressed as action items that will work toward realization of the goals.

Parks & Recreation

1

THE BENEFITS OF PARKS AND RECREATION

The motto of the National Recreation and Park Association is “The Benefits are Endless,” and when issues such as health, property values, environmental quality and alternative modes of transportation are discussed, these benefits are evident. Studies and surveys by local organizations throughout the country, as well as national organizations like the National Association of Realtors and the National Association of Home Builders, have illustrated the importance of parks, trails and open space to homebuyers and businesses alike. Residential properties in close proximity to public



open space have been shown to have significantly greater value. Parks and open space near commercial and industrial properties are often considered a free employee benefit. Providing opportunities that allow people to walk or bike rather than use their cars promotes a cleaner environment. Park and recreation venues and programs also promote healthy lifestyles, providing opportunities to fight against obesity, heart disease and a variety of other health concerns.

PARK & RECREATION TRENDS

As the Elmhurst Park District shapes itself for the future, many regional and national park and recreation trends may affect future program and facility development. Some of these trends, and what they mean to EPD, are described below.

PARK AND RECREATION AGENCIES AS STEWARDS OF THE LAND

Preservation and stewardship of environmentally sensitive areas are falling more and more to park and recreation agencies. All public lands, including parks, conservation areas, open space, trails and greenways, lakes, streams and wetlands, may offer significant fish and wildlife habitat that require a philosophy of protection and sustainability.

Parks & Recreation

Park and recreation agencies possessing unique natural resources must take extraordinary measures to protect fragile resource areas for their community, especially in communities where limited natural areas exist, such as Elmhurst. This includes the need to limit or restrict access to some areas where particularly sensitive ecological systems are at work. But it also means providing access to natural areas where educational opportunities exist.

Where limited natural areas exist, limiting access to public lands may be difficult for the public to understand. So equally important and related to this stewardship role is the need to provide programs to the public that promote a greater understanding of our natural systems as well as an awareness of global environmental issues. Educational programming, whether classroom based activities or interpretive trails, can provide a way to secure support for the philosophical approaches needed for stewardship, and to assist in garnering support for needed financial resources.



SINGLE PARENT & TWO WORKING PARENT HOUSEHOLDS

Nationwide, nearly two-thirds of school-aged children are living in households with a single employed parent or two parents who are both employed. Nearly 25% of these children are unsupervised at the end of the school day. Surveys across the country suggest that many would like to participate in programs after school if they were available. Research has shown that after-school programming positively affects the health, attitude and safety of children by placing them in a continued learning or active environment where mental and physical activities are presented.

Long blocks of after-school and weekend programming, as well as programs during teacher in-service days and on minor holidays, will allow parents to maintain their normal activities while providing a stimulating environment for their children. It is imperative that park and recreation agencies and schools work in a collaborative manner to provide venues and programs to better serve the children of their communities.

AGING POPULATION

More than 75 million Americans turned 60 in 2006. By 2030 it is expected that 20% of the U.S. population will be considered a senior. Though most park and recreation agencies have significant programs for their senior constituency, and many provide dedicated venues for these activities, this surge in the senior population will not be met with current offerings. Studies also suggest that the aging baby boomer generation may not be as interested in the types of activities and programs that are typically offered today. Many more of this generation expect to be cycling, golfing, running and participating in active sports well into their senior years.

Activities that stimulate the mind are equally as important as physical activities. Cognitive health refers to maintaining and improving mental skills such as learning, memory, decision-making and planning. Studies have proven that fit seniors live longer, remain in their homes longer and participate more fully in community life.



Never has it been more important for park and recreation agencies to enhance programming for this growing population. Partnerships with hospitals, senior centers and community organizations to promote organized health, recreation, fitness programs, therapeutic recreation and mental fitness will allow the senior population to maintain and improve their quality of life.

FAMILY HEALTH INTERESTS

Families are engaging in life-long fitness and nutrition programs that are geared toward maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Healthy living is fundamental in improving one's physical and emotional health and social well being. Parks and recreation services play a vital role in encouraging people to develop and maintain healthy lifestyles by providing the programs, the facilities and the protected environment that allow people to be physically and socially active.

A study by the National Recreation and Park Association found that, in terms of overall health, local park and recreation users reported fewer visits to a physician for purposes other than check-ups than did non-park users, even when controlling for the effects of age, income, education level, health status and other possible influences. Active people have longer life spans and are at less risk of developing diseases. Physical activity has also been shown to help people become more emotionally and mentally fit.



Park and recreation agencies provide programs that families can enjoy together. These shared activities reduce family stress and allow families to share time together in constructive and healthy ways that are conducive to strengthening family bonds. In this way, the agencies foster the positive emotional and social impacts that create strong families.

EXPANDING PARTNERSHIPS

Park and recreation agencies are becoming more creative in developing partnerships for joint use of facilities and for developing funding sources for programs and facilities beyond taxes, fees, grants and the other traditional mechanisms. This creativity is a necessity as agencies are pressured to acquire more property, provide quality facilities and increase their program offerings to a more diverse and educated constituency.

The business community is becoming an active supporter of open space and recreation because they understand the benefits to their employees and to the general welfare of their patrons. This allows business to provide added revenue to park and recreation agencies that don't require agency facilities to become advertising venues for their business sponsors.

Private foundations interested in supporting community development programs and activities can sometimes be a source for partnerships or alternative funding. Unlike public grant programs, matching local needs with a private foundation can be challenging, but opportunities do exist.

Encouraging planned gifts and bequests from residents as a means of demonstrating support for needed community improvements or to establish family legacies are becoming very popular with park and recreation agencies.

Partnerships with business or other public agencies can often eliminate redundant construction costs that might come when two groups each build similar facilities. Joint use facilities can also significantly reduce operating expenditures. Maintaining contact with the community at large to know what needs exist helps make these types of partnerships a reality.

Park and recreation agencies have a unique understanding of local priorities and a proven track record of finding creative ways to respond to local needs. Expanding those networking resources will provide innovative approaches to partnering for the public good.

Community Profile

2



Elmhurst is a community that is rich in culture and history, dating back to its settlement in 1840s. While the suburbanization of Chicago encompassed Elmhurst and many of the other regional communities, Elmhurst clearly developed as a community with its own distinct heritage and image, casting aside its suburban label. Celebrating its 125th year, Elmhurst is a highly livable and sustainable community that has its own symphony orchestra, art museum, historical museum and various other cultural offerings that appeal to residents and visitors alike.

Located approximately 16 miles west of the Chicago Loop, Elmhurst is easily accessible via highway and rail. Interstates 294 and 290 intersect on the City's east side, providing both north-south and east-west access that links with the City of Chicago to the east and O'Hare Airport 12 miles north. The community is served by commuter rail on Metra's Union Pacific West, with a station stop in the heart of Downtown Elmhurst.

The City of Elmhurst has already realized the growth pressures of the past several decades, and is in a period of very slow growth that is fueled largely by redevelopment. In the past decade, numerous older homes have been demolished to make way for new larger homes. Luckily, much of this has been accomplished with architectural style that, while not necessarily historic in character, does not completely disregard the historic character of the community. According to the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission, the population of Elmhurst is projected to grow to 43,075 by the year 2030, an increase of less than one percent. But a special census completed in 2006 by the City of Elmhurst shows that number has already been surpassed, with 43,532 (1.8% increase) as the current population.

The 10.2 square mile City of Elmhurst has a good business and industry base, with numerous retail business areas outside the downtown. It is also home to three industrial parks located in the perimeter areas of the community. The North Elmhurst industrial park is the largest with 650 acres. This development is located in the northeast corner of the community, west of York Road and mostly on the north side of U.S. Route 20. Interstate 290 bisects the industrial park. A small industrial park is located in the northeast quadrant between the Maywood Sportsman's Club and the Elm Lawn and Arlington Cemeteries. The third is located in the southwest part of the community between Route 83 and Salt Creek.

Elmhurst offers its residents the conveniences and amenities that come with having access to one of the largest major metropolitan areas in the country, while providing its own services, character and amenities that provide a high quality of life for the residents.



Demographics

Elmhurst has seen many decades of significant growth, with the most dramatic occurring in the 1920s when the population more than tripled in size. This growth finally began to slow in the early 1970s as Elmhurst and its surrounding communities' boundaries met and available land began to diminish. The 1990 population of the City of Elmhurst reached 42,029, and a moderated growth rate of 1.7% over the next decade brought the 2000 U.S. Census population to 42,762. An additional 1.8% growth identified by the City's special census since 2000 has brought the population to 43,532. This current population reflects a community that is largely built out, but with limited new development and redevelopment continuing to bring in new residents.

While the boundary lines of the Elmhurst Park District are similar to those for the City of Elmhurst, minor additional inclusions within EPD that are outside the City boundary bring its 2000 population to 43,532. Some interesting facts about the population of the Elmhurst Park District include:

- 16% of the residents are over the age of 65
This number has decreased since 1990 as many seniors sought a more affordable cost of living elsewhere.
- 29% of the residents are under the age of 20
This is a relatively high percentage that has grown at a modest level as redevelopment has increased.
- 4% of the population is of Hispanic heritage and 4% is of Asian heritage
Two demographic groups that are growing regionally.
- 45% of the population over the age of 25 has a Bachelors Degree & Higher
This is a very high percentage considering that the national average is just over 24%.
- 68% of the population over the age of 16 are in the labor force
This illustrates that there are likely many two-working parent households.
- 8% of the population is foreign-born
This includes recent immigrants as well as people who have moved to the U.S. over the past fifty years or more. Included in this are 3.8% European, 2.6% Asian and 1.3% Latin American heritages.
- 13% of the population consider English to be a second language
This is a relatively high number that reflects representation from numerous ethnicities from around the world.



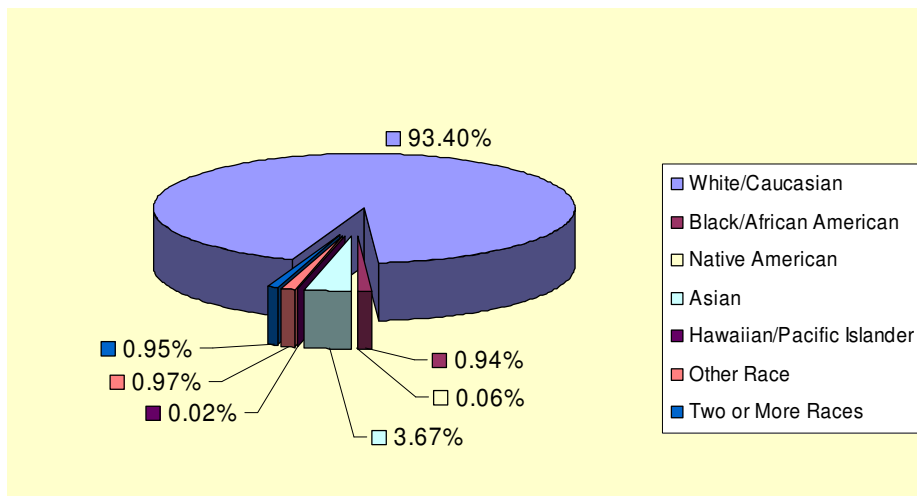
HERITAGE

The historical settling of the Elmhurst community by European immigrants and emigrants is still evident in the profile of its citizens' heritage. A listing of the predominant ancestries reported to the U.S. Census in 2000 is as follows:

German	26.5%
Irish	21.5%
Italian	14.2%
Polish	13.2%
English	8.9%
Swedish	4.0%
Czech	3.2%
French	3.0%
Dutch	2.8%
Norwegian	2.6%

RACE DISTRIBUTION

The distribution of the population within Elmhurst shows that, while a significant majority is Caucasian, other heritages are represented. It should be noted that the number of foreign born residents and those who consider English a second language also reflect on the diversity of those who identified themselves as Caucasian. The Hispanic/Latino population makes up 4% of the population, regardless of race.

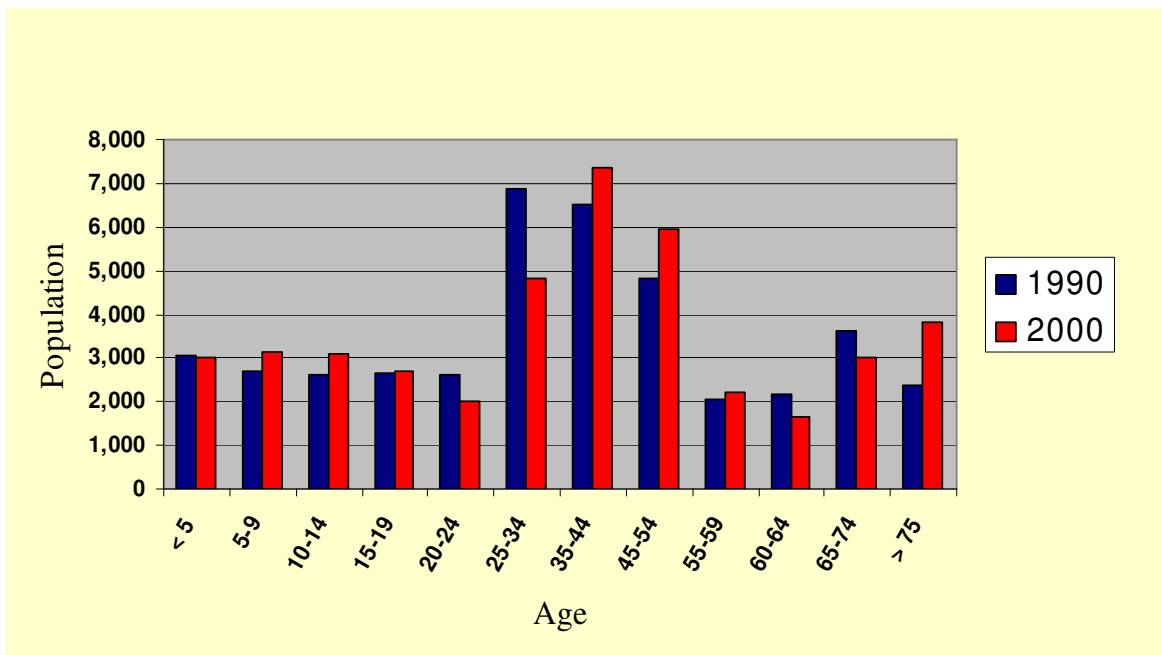




Demographics

AGE

The U.S. Census Bureau estimated the 2005 median age in Elmhurst to be 38.7 years old. Pre-school and school-age children under the age of 18 make up approximately 19% of the population, a number that has remained fairly consistent since the 1990 Census took place. The largest increases since 1990 have been in the 35-44 and 45-54 age brackets. This coupled with the school-aged children population presents a strong family demographic in Elmhurst. Across the country, a flattening in the number of children entering school was expected through the first decade of the new century as the children of the Baby Boom generation ages through their school years. In Elmhurst this is not the case, as housing redevelopment has helped to change the age demographic of the community.



The Baby Boom generation encompasses those born in the years 1946 through 1964. In the 2000 Census numbers above, these include 36 to 54 year olds, thus reflecting the spikes in those age brackets. Children of Baby Boomers, known as Echo Boomers, include those born from 1976 through 2001, illustrated in the chart as anyone under the age of 20. This generation is more level than spiked due to changes in attitude over the years regarding the mix of career and family, with many people opting to start families later in life. As such, those oldest members of the Echo Boom generation are now beginning families, a fact that will affect schools, park districts and other agencies that provide family services for the next twenty-five years.

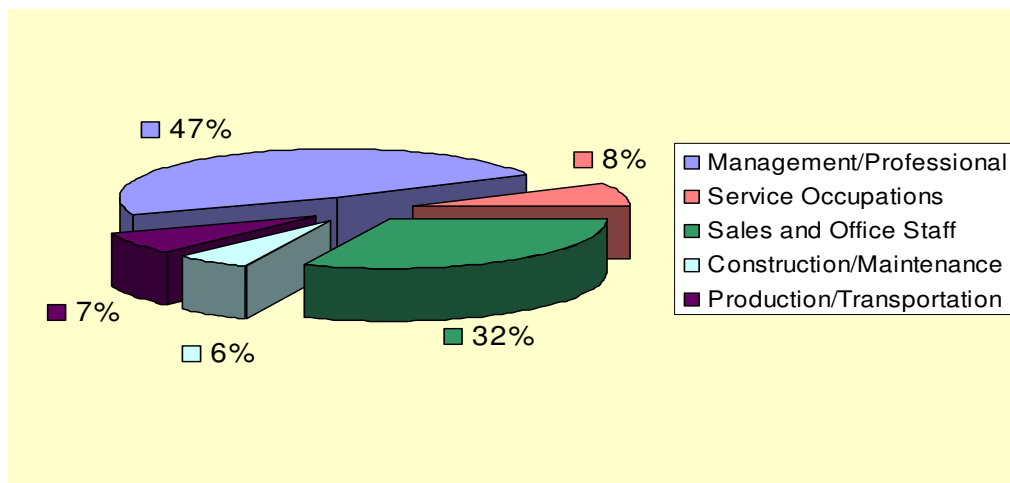
HOUSING

The mean residential real estate value in Elmhurst in 2000 was \$211,100, an increase of \$75,500, or 56%, since 1990. This median home value has increased significantly in this decade. According to Trulia Real Estate Search, the median reached \$400,000 in the third quarter of 2006 before settling to \$372,000 in the fourth quarter, reflecting a 76% increase since the 2000 Census. This increase has come through increased value seen throughout the Chicagoland area, but with a premium due to the quality of life in Elmhurst. Another key factor in this increase is the redevelopment of home sites, where modest homes built in the 1940s and 50s are being torn down and replaced with much larger and more modern homes.

In 2000, the Census reported 15,627 households in the City of Elmhurst, an increase of 492 households since 1990. There is a good mix of housing, including a small amount of residential property that could be considered affordable. This availability and the generally skyrocketing costs of housing in the Chicagoland area have, along with great schools, parks and industry, led to young affluent families coming into the community.

EMPLOYMENT & INCOME

Jobs in medical, manufacturing, retail, education and hospitality services are the largest employment sectors in Elmhurst. Resident employment in management, professional fields and sales are particularly strong, with 69% of the resident workforce in these areas of employment. This also reflects the high number of residents with at least a four-year college degree. The average per capita income in 2000 was \$32,015, with a household income of \$81,496, both amongst the highest in the area.



History of Elmhurst

Much of the Great Lakes region was occupied by the Potawatomi Nation dating back over 500 years. The Potawatomi were an Algonquian-speaking people who practiced both an agricultural and hunter-gatherer lifestyle, utilizing the abundant supplies of fish and waterfowl in the region. Fur trading allowed them to become good business leaders, and grew their Nation to include over five million acres in what are now five of the Great Lakes states. French traders set up trading posts throughout the region, but were ousted following the British victory in the French & Indian war. By the early 1800s the Potawatomi, after having sided with the French, were already being displaced by white settlers and moved further into the wilderness areas.

In the early to mid 1830s, European immigrants started staking land claims in the area, especially along Salt Creek and in the areas where the limited woodlands were available to offset the vast prairie landscape. The small community grew as a stagecoach stop was established in 1843 at the Hill Cottage Tavern. The community became known as Cottage Hill in 1845 when a post office was established. Rail was established in 1849 as the Galena and Chicago Union Railroad came through the community. In 1869, the name was changed to Elmhurst after the planting of many elm trees along the streets of the growing village area. Two years later, following the Great Fire in Chicago, Elmhurst was attracting businessmen looking for a different style of living. In 1871, the German Evangelical Proseminary was established; later to become Elmhurst College.



By 1882, Elmhurst had a population of 1,050 residents and was incorporated as a village with York Street running north south through its center and North Avenue and St. Charles Road making up the north and south boundaries. Public improvements quickly followed, and water, telephone and electric utility companies were established. In 1892, the magnificent home of Henry Glos, Elmhurst's first Village President, was built on the south side of Park Avenue.

The 1920s were a time of rapid growth for the community, as the population tripled from 4,594 residents to 14,055. Paved streets and sidewalks, sewer service and many other modern amenities were provided. The Elmhurst Park District was established to provide open space to the community in 1920. Six years later, Elmhurst hospital was established as the first hospital in DuPage County.



History of Elmhurst

By the 1930s, the rural agricultural based community was giving way to a more urbanized lifestyle as the population topped 15,000 and residents interests changed. Following World War II, housing demands increased once again as the suburbanization of Chicago hit its stride. New subdivisions and new schools were built, followed closely by business and industry. By the early 1970s, the population growth began to slow as land available for development started to be in short supply. Limited growth has continued to the present day.

In 1991, the Elmhurst Art Museum purchased the McCormick House, one of only three homes designed and built by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe in the United States. A new museum building was design around the house, and the facility was opened to the public in 1997.

Elmhurst College has undergone many improvements over the years, and the new millennium has already seen development of a new plaza known as Alumni Circle, a new Department of Education building and athletic facilities. The College continues to look to the future, having just completed a new campus master plan, with plans for a performing arts venue as well as added programs and athletics.

In 2003, the new Elmhurst Public Library opened following a land exchange agreement with the Elmhurst Park District and the City of Elmhurst. The new library is a state-of-the-art facility that provides meeting rooms, wireless internet access and space for the future.



Berens Park was redeveloped in 2004 to provide a great new destination park for the residents of Elmhurst. The park includes five new ball fields, five soccer fields, twelve lighted tennis courts, two playgrounds, a batting cage, an 18-hole miniature golf course and a water play area amongst other amenities. Completion of the master plan amenities is slated for the near future.

In 2005, the Downtown Plan for the City of Elmhurst was completed as a guide to the redevelopment and enhancement of the downtown area. The downtown consists of a mix of residential, commercial, cultural and entertainment uses that provide a successful mixed-use attraction that draws residents and visitors to the community. With these initiatives and many more, Elmhurst is poised to continue promoting itself as a highly livable community.

Elmhurst Park District Profile

3



The Elmhurst Park District (EPD) covers approximately 10.7 square miles and serves a population of nearly 44,000 residents. The District maintains approximately 462 areas of land that includes 28 parks and numerous facilities that meet special recreation needs throughout the District. Facilities include Courts Plus, Wagner Community Center, Abbey Leisure Center, Wilder Mansion, Wilder Park Conservatory, The Hub, Smalley Pool, East End Pool and Sugar Creek Golf Course.

The boundaries of EPD are largely co-terminus with those of the City of Elmhurst, with limited exceptions. The only area outside the EPD boundaries of significant acreage is the Pick neighborhood bounded by Salt Creek and Villa Avenue on the west, and running from the Union Pacific rail line on the north to St. Charles Road on the south. Significant areas within the Park District but outside the City boundary include:

- An area west of Route 83 bounded by Salt Creek and running from Diversey Avenue in the north to just south of Fay Avenue. This area includes the Cricket Creek Forest Preserve.
- The Maywood Sportsmen's Club
- The Conrad Fischer neighborhood west of Mount Emblem Cemetery
- Sugar Creek Golf Course

The Elmhurst Park District faces many challenges that come with being a largely built-out community with limited opportunities for expansion. Maintaining and enhancing existing parks and facilities while preserving open space is a key priority, while continuing to meet the program needs of the residents is of importance as well. There are many capital improvement needs both large and small, as redevelopment of some facilities and park enhancements both need to be addressed.

General maintenance of some parks and facilities is generally of very high quality, but additional resources in the form of more trained maintenance and horticulture staff will provide an opportunity to schedule redevelopment projects over a greater length of time. Playgrounds, site furnishings and other amenities are replaced as needed, with many amenities on a cyclical schedule for replacement.

Continuing to address park and facility accessibility through compliance with the guidelines established through the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is another area that the District has taken a proactive approach, with accessibility to more athletic fields and other park amenities in process.

Organization

The Elmhurst Park District parks and facilities are generally in excellent condition and offer great recreational opportunities for the community. Some of the parks and facilities are amongst the finest in the region as is evidenced by the Chicago Magazine award to Wilder Park as the ‘Number 1 Suburban Park for 1997.’ The needs of the parks and facilities do not represent that there is a specific quality issue that needs to be addressed, but rather more ongoing proactive maintenance to dovetail with redevelopment efforts. The challenges come from how the energies of the District have been directed in the recent past, and what direction those energies should be focused on in the future. Balancing the maintenance needs with the enhancement needs is of primary importance.

ORGANIZATION

The Elmhurst Park District is governed by a seven-member Board of Commissioners. Commissioners are elected by the residents of the District to six-year terms that stagger every two years. The Board provides the policy direction of the District, and employs an Executive Director to administer the day to day operations of the District.



The organizational structure of the staff is a traditional pyramid structure, where five Directors of Finance, Parks/Recreation Services, Enterprise Services, Marketing/Communications and Information Systems report to the Executive Director. There is a very open door policy within the District that transcends the management levels. EPD staff members are empowered to use their own creativity in their jobs and to participate in various aspects of operations that broaden their knowledge and understanding of the District. These elements combine to present a staff that is excited about their work and the agency that they represent.

There are approximately 70 full time EPD staff members, many in administrative and supervisory roles, finance, communications, operations, planning and programs, plus the staff of Courts Plus, Wagner Community Center and other year-round facilities. During the summer season, the staff swells to over 600, including seasonal full and part-time staff that fill roles in maintenance, aquatic safety, concessions and various other operational needs.

The Elmhurst Park District was established on June 5, 1920 to meet the leisure and recreational needs of the community. Soon thereafter, negotiations were opened for the acquisition of the Wilder estate. The estate consisted of an undeveloped cow pasture to the north and the family home, gardens and clay tennis courts on the south. Original development of the gardens had begun much earlier in 1868 by Seth and Elizabeth Wadhams, who built their home, known as White Birch, along with a greenhouse and gardens. They planted numerous trees representing a variety of species to create a true garden spot in Elmhurst.

The Park District acquisition of the Wilder property occurred in 1921, making it the first public park in Elmhurst. A playground, lily pond and walkways were the initial improvements made. The Park District added the conservatory to the greenhouse in 1924, and the Wilder Park Conservatory then opened to the public.



In the late 1920s and early 1930s, three new parks were established at Salt Creek, East End and Butterfield. The new east End Pool opened on June 26, 1937 with the “Grand Splash” of 750 youths who had lined up along the edge of the pool in readiness for its big moment. The pool was an immediate success for the District, with 1,200 people showing up on its second day.



The first recreation programs were offered for children in 1942 and included baton, handicrafts, archery, baseball and ballet. The early 1950s saw additional growth for the District as the Ben Allison Playground and Eldridge Park were opened. The Abbey was also established during this period as a place for teenagers to gather, but did not become a part of the Park District until 1964. During the decade of the 1960s, seven new parks were opened, including the York Commons Pool which was dedicated in 1967.

History

Perhaps the most significant decade in the Park District's history was the 1970s when the District blossomed into a full-service agency. In 1971, voters approved a \$3.9 million bond referendum for land acquisition and development. The majority of EPD's present land was purchased during this time, with many of the new parks developed during this time. Five new special facilities were also opened during this period. The Courts, an indoor tennis, racquetball and handball facility opened in 1972. Sugar Creek Golf Course is the result of collaboration in the early 1970's between the Elmhurst Park District and the Village of Villa Park who shared in the construction costs. The first Elmhurst Community Center opened its doors in 1979 at Eldridge School, leased from the School District. The Abbey Leisure Center opened its doors on St. Charles Road for senior citizen leisure programming in 1975, in recognition of this growing segment of the community's population. The Depot on York Road was acquired from the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad in 1971, and renovated by the Park District as a bicentennial project in 1975.



The 1980s and 1990s constituted a period of redevelopment and continued partnerships with other agencies. The Courts Plus expansion in 1990 provided an important collaboration with Elmhurst Memorial Health Care to provide fitness, rehabilitation, and health programs for the community. In 1992, the Elmhurst Park District won the coveted Gold Medal Award presented by the National Recreation and Park Association to outstanding park and recreation agencies.

On September 6, 2003, the Elmhurst Park District opened its newest facility, the Joanne B. Wagner Community Center. This facility filled a great need for the community by providing a venue for indoor programming that is owned by the District. The redevelopment and opening of Berens Park and The Hub in 2004 came just in time for the District's 85th anniversary. And on March 27, 2007 the Elmhurst Park District received the keys to Wilder Mansion from the City of Elmhurst, making its ownership of the Mansion official. The original 1860 home will be remodeled without compromising the historic architectural features and will provide an additional 14,000 square feet of multi-use space for the Park District and community.

Today, the Elmhurst Park District manages 462 acres of land in 27 parks, offering a variety of amenities and facilities for its residents. The District has also grown from those few children's programs in the 1940s to providing over 300 programs today. And as can be seen, the District continues to change to meet the needs of the community that it serves.



The Elmhurst Park District offers a significant variety of education, recreation, health, fitness and athletic programs to the residents of the District. Every three months a quarterly brochure that describes the program offerings is published and delivered to households within the District. Programs are presented in twenty categories, with a variety of offerings in each category. Program categories can be very general with offerings that appeal to a wide range of participants, or can be specific to an age group or a venue within the District.

SENIOR/ACTIVE ADULT PROGRAMS

Programs at the Abbey Leisure Center include music, dance, cards, driver safety and digital photography amongst other offerings. These programs are geared toward adults age 55 and up, and are presented typically on weekday mornings and afternoons.



GENERAL INTEREST PROGRAMS

A variety of children's programs are offered in areas such as magic and chess, with some programs geared toward upcoming holidays or events. The programs are offered for specific age groups, and most programs are late afternoon and early evening single sessions.

VISUAL ARTS AND CRAFTS PROGRAMS

A variety of painting, ceramics, flower arranging and other arts and crafts programs are offered for both children and adults through a cooperative program agreement with the Elmhurst Art Museum and are held at the Museum. Programs vary from single to multi-session classes depending on the type of medium used and the goals of the class.

Programs

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

The early childhood programs offered through the Elmhurst Park District are quite diverse in scope and age. A Mother and Baby exercise program provides a great opportunity for new mothers to meet other new mothers while getting back into the exercise routine. An American Red Cross program provides a safety course for children ages 8-13 who are often home without parental supervision. Bicycle safety, music, child safety, social skills, first aid, art and cooking programs are some of the additional programs offered.

COURTS PLUS PROGRAMS



Over eighty programs in fifty categories are offered through Courts Plus. The programs are geared toward sports and fitness, and include numerous programs in tennis and racquetball. Children's programs include camps that provide both indoor and outdoor activities, and have the option of pre and post-camp experiences. Nutrition, high energy circuit training, women's fitness, pilates and yoga are included in the offerings.

KALEIDOSCOPE PROGRAMS

The Kaleidoscope programs explore some of the science and mysteries behind our living world. For example, learning how birds fly, why the shape of an egg is able to offer structural support and how to navigate through a treasure hunt are some of the offerings. These programs are offered mainly to children under six years of age, and are multi-session programs.

SWIMMING PROGRAMS

Nine swim programs are offered at each of the EPD pools; Smalley Pool and East End Pool. Programs are offered for individuals ranging in age from nine months to eighteen years old. Intermediate to advanced training is available for those six to sixteen to develop strokes, endurance and perfect flip turns. Typical classes are three weeks in length with an opportunity to advance to the next level of instruction.

MARTIAL ARTS PROGRAMS

Traditional programs in Karate and Taekwondo are offered for children and adults. These programs help the student develop greater self-discipline, concentration, coordination and endurance. Four and eight-week programs are available.

PLANT PROGRAMS



A variety of horticulture offerings are provided that assist homeowners with maintaining and enhancing the landscape, including a House Call program that provides horticultural expertise for homeowners in the District. Groundcover, annual and lawn care, gardening and specialty garden classes are offered as single sessions for an adult audience. Children's programs are also offered, including the Diamond Hunt at the Wilder Park Conservatory.

CAMP PROGRAMS

Over forty camp programs are offered in a variety of interests including music and movement, sports, storytelling, field trips, art, safety and various other themed programs. Many of the camps are six-hour offerings five days a week, and have the option of a two-hour Rec Station pre-camp and post-camp program to allow parents to drop their children off for the day. Programs are geared toward specific limited age groups, with offerings available for children one to fourteen years of age.

SPECIAL NEEDS PROGRAMS

The District provides inclusive recreational opportunities for all interested individuals, including persons with special needs, by offering one-on-one aides, program modifications and special equipment that will provide reasonable accommodation. In addition, EPD is a member of the Gateway Special Recreation Association that provides programs and services for individuals of all ages with special needs. Program offerings include Special Olympic athletics, social clubs, special events, trips, summer camps and art programs.

Programs

TEEN PROGRAMS

The majority of teen programs are single-session events that focus on topics of interest on a seasonal basis. College tours, leadership training and a variety of other programs that focus on fun and responsibility are offered.

REC STATION PROGRAMS

Rec Station programs are before and after-school programs that allow parents to have greater flexibility in their schedules. The program is offered at all eight public elementary schools during the traditional school year and also in conjunction with EPD's day camp program.

LAPIDARY ARTS PROGRAMS

Wirewrapping stone cutting and polishing, opal cutting and silversmithing are some of the programs offered in these ancient arts, which are scheduled as evening multi-session classes for teens and adults at the Crestview Park Recreation Building as a partnership with the West Suburban Lapidary Club.

GYMNASTICS PROGRAMS

Fourteen different gymnastics programs are offered that range from beginner to competitive levels. The Dynamites is a 6-18 year old program that competes in gymnastics events and meets USA Gymnastics and Illinois High School Association Guidelines. Pre-school programs and parent/toddler programs are also offered.

SPORTS PROGRAMS

A wide variety of sports programs are available through the Elmhurst Park District. The District offers children's programs that provide the basics in a variety of sports and adult leagues. Local independent volunteer-run sports organizations team with EPD to provide organized sports programs that have regularly scheduled practices and games during their normal sport season. Soccer, football, baseball, softball and other athletic offerings are available.





TRIPS

The Elmhurst Park District offers a wide variety of trips that appeal to many interests. Trips are often organized around seasonal events, exhibitions and performances. Casino trips are offered periodically to provide a means of enjoying the casinos without needing to worry about transportation. Groups travel into Chicago for performances and to other cities for multi-day excursions. Most tours are offered for adults eighteen years of age and up, while some are for seniors only.

FITNESS PROGRAMS

While many programs that might fall under the category of fitness are offered through Courts Plus, these are programs offered at the Wagner Community Center that provide Basic Fitness and Yoga in a non-fitness venue.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS PROGRAMS

This program area consists of offerings that provide aesthetic benefits to the participants. It includes, but is not limited to, dance, music lessons, lapidary arts and fine arts.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS

Offered through an intergovernmental agreement with the Oakbrook Terrace Park District at the Lakeview Nature Center, these programs appeal to a variety of interests focused on various parts of the natural world. Most of the programs are offered for children under eight years of age, with some scheduled as single events while others are multi-week offerings. A 'Stroller Expeditions' programs allows children and parents to explore the ecology of the lake together.





Collaboration

The Elmhurst Park District has a positive and collaborative relationship with many agencies, organizations and businesses that work for the betterment of the community. The types of collaboration are quite varied, with some involving formal agreements while others are informal or simply collaborative efforts to work toward common goals.

The unique relationship between the various public agencies provides a means to discuss issues common to each of these agencies and to work in a collaborative manner with an understanding of the needs, goals and philosophies that tie these agencies together. As such, the Elmhurst Park District strives to maintain strong and open relationships with the City of Elmhurst, Community Unit School District 205, Elmhurst College, Elmhurst Memorial Health Care, the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County and other governmental units and public/private agencies that serve the residents of the District. As facility, space and land needs continue to be a common need of many agencies, the collaboration between all governmental units and organizations becomes ever more important. The Elmhurst Park District has many added opportunities to partner with other agencies and organizations on events, programs and facility use.

CITY OF ELMHURST

The Elmhurst Park District and the City of Elmhurst enjoy a strong working relationship that exhibits significant respect between the two. This relationship has been important within the past year as decisions regarding the use of the Wilder Mansion were at the forefront of both agencies. The two agencies work together to develop solutions appropriate to the community, and meet often as strategic planning initiatives are developed. The need and value of open space and recreation is well-understood by the City to help market the City to businesses and homeowners alike. Wilder Park and Berens Park were specifically identified as critical to the image and quality of the community. Specific collaboration also occurs between like departments of the City and Park District, with ongoing efforts between the City Manager and EPD Executive Director, and between the City Public Works Department and EPD Facilities and Parks Divisions. The following represents a look at some of collaborative agreements between the Elmhurst Park District and the City of Elmhurst.



Intergovernmental Agreement for Purchase and Operation of Fire Safety House November 2005

The Elmhurst Park District and Elmhurst Fire Department have worked cooperatively to provide fire safety education within the Park District's Safety Town program. EPD and the City purchased a fire safety house that both agencies access for their respective education programs.

Agreement for Increased Park District Role in the Youth Commission February 2004

The City of Elmhurst sponsors a Youth Commission with a total of nine positions appointed by the City's mayor with City Council consent. The Park District coordinates the publication of a newsletter in coordination with the Commission listing various programs, clubs/groups, activities and services.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement Between the City and the Park District for the Entrance Drive to the Elmhurst Art Museum and the Elmhurst Public Library September 2003

The City constructed a new entrance drive to the Library and Art Museum to provide new green space, provide better access and improve traffic safety. Park District property was required to accommodate these improvements.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement Between the City of Elmhurst, the Elmhurst Public Library and the Elmhurst Park District June 2000

The City/Library constructed a new library on property in Wilder Park owned by the Park District and, in exchange, the Park District acquired the old library building, parking lot and adjacent property (approximately 94,000 sq. ft.) to be used for park/recreation purposes.

Park Lease of Salt Creek Property from the City July 1995

The Park District leased certain property from the City to provide the citizens a public park and playground that were constructed and are maintained by the Park District. Amended in June 1996 to add a portion of the Commonwealth Lane right-of-way.

Collaboration

Intergovernmental Agreement for Joint Use of Equipment Repair Services

February 1993

The City of Elmhurst and Park District worked together to provide for maintenance and repair of motor vehicle and other equipment more efficiently and effectively.

York Commons Fire Station Site Lease Agreement

May 1979

Because a fire station was needed in this part of the community, an agreement was made that involved land conveyance and lease, resulting in a new fire station at York Commons.



City of Elmhurst-Park District Park Lease for Kiwanis Park

July 1979

The City entered into a lease with the Park District to maintain certain property (Kiwanis Park) as a public park and playground.

Sleepy Hollow Park Lease Agreement

July 1978

The City entered into a lease agreement with the Park District for property to be used as a public park and playground.

COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 205

Community Unit School District 205 (SD205) has thirteen schools that provide education for nearly 7,600 students. The jurisdictional boundaries of SD205 are similar to those of the City of Elmhurst and the Elmhurst Park District, with small areas of Addison, Bensenville and Oak Brook included. Approximately 93% of students live in the City of Elmhurst. The Park District and SD205 have a long history of working together for the benefit of area residents. Agreements for joint use of facilities and land, maintenance and acquisition have been initiated. The following represents a look at some of the collaborative agreements between the Elmhurst Park District and the SD205.



Intergovernmental Cooperative Agreement

November 2001- June 2021

Shared development and joint use of school/park facilities was developed. The Park District and School District contributes in-kind services and expertise in exchange for utilizing facilities. This was an update from a previous similar agreement between the two agencies.



Cooperative Agreement regarding Facilities Construction & Use

February 2000

The Park District contributed certain grant funds from State of Illinois to reimburse the School District for a portion of costs for the York High School field house; gymnasiums at Conrad Fischer, Hawthorne and Jackson; multi-purpose rooms in elementary schools; etc. In return, the Park District may utilize facilities during non-school hours for programs run by the Park District. Most recently SD 205 provided EPD use of the swimming pool at Elmhurst High School for weekend programs.

Installation of Playground Equipment on School District Property

January 1976

An agreement to combine financial and manpower efforts of the two agencies to enhance recreational opportunities.



DUPAGE COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT & DUPAGE COUNTY

Collaboration with DuPage County and DuPage County Forest Preserve District (DCFPD) has allowed the creation of the Salt Creek Greenway and the Prairie Path projects, conveyance of land to EPD and joint use agreements for various properties. The DCFPD is very open to additional collaboration for development, maintenance and operations of amenities within the Cricket Creek Forest Preserve, as well as additional educational programming relative to natural areas within EPD. The following represents a look at some of the collaborative agreements between the Elmhurst Park District and the DuPage County Forest Preserve District.

Establishment of the Salt Creek Greenway Trail

1998 to present

Several agreements have been made between the Forest Preserve District and the Addison Park District, the Village of Addison, The Elmhurst Park District, the Village of Oak Brook and the Village of Villa Park for the establishment of the 30-mile Salt Creek Greenway Trail and the performance of certain engineering services.



DuPage Parkway Lease

February 1985, March 1991-2041

The Park District leases property upon which the Illinois Prairie Path recreational trail is located to be used solely for public purpose as a recreational and nature corridor.

Lease of Salt Creek Parcels Owned by the DuPage County Forest Preserve District

March 1985

The Park District leases certain property to be used for park and recreational activities.

ELMHURST COLLEGE

Collaboration between the Elmhurst Park District and Elmhurst College has become “increasingly important” to the College as it continues to grow in student population, programs are expanded and athletics become of greater importance to college life. The baseball field at Butterfield Park and the softball field at Salt Creek Park are two collaborative efforts that have allowed EPD to make significant improvements to parks. The College parking lots are available for use by the public attending events in Wilder Park, and their tennis courts are open for public use as well. Elmhurst College would like to see collaborative efforts in developing the ‘Cultural Campus’ and in working with the City to ensure aesthetic neighborhood improvements are initiated. The following represents a look at some of the collaborative agreements between the Elmhurst Park District and Elmhurst College.



Agreement for NCAA Women’s Softball Field at Salt Creek Park June 2005

Elmhurst College constructed and uses the NCAA-caliber, women’s softball field during the team’s season and upon completion of the season, the field is open to the general public or any appropriate uses designated by the Park District.

License for Parking at the Wilder Mansion August 2004

The College uses the parking area adjacent to the Wilder Mansion for offsite College parking from August-September to help alleviate the College’s parking shortage.

Agreement for Improvements to Butterfield Park Ballfield #1 February 1994 and 2002

Elmhurst College and the Park District created and improved a baseball facility for use of the College team in 1994, and were allowed to build a press box/storage facility in 2002 to further enhance the use of the field by the College and community youth baseball programs.



ELMHURST MEMORIAL HEALTH CARE

The Elmhurst Park District and Elmhurst Memorial Health Care (EMHC) have been working together for many years, most significantly for the development and use of facilities at Courts Plus. EMHC was one of the first healthcare providers to partner with a park district in this manner. Their business plan has been a model for other Districts and providers to follow. EMHC realized other healthcare providers were offering fitness and physical therapy on-site at other hospitals. EMHC did not want to compete on that level, so chose to partner with EPD. There are many additional opportunities for collaboration that EMHC is interested in pursuing, including potential EPD use of the existing hospital facility once the new hospital complex is opened. EMHC would also like to explore the idea of EPD conducting educational and recreational classes on the hospital campus exclusively for hospital employees. The following represents a look at some of the collaborative agreements between the Elmhurst Park District and Elmhurst Memorial Health Care.

License for Parking at East End Pool September 2002-April 2006

An agreement to allow Elmhurst Memorial Health Care to use parking lot at East End Pool for offsite parking for employees from September to May when pool is closed for the season.



Letter of Agreement for Medical Services June 1997

Elmhurst Memorial Health Care provides pre-placement physical exams for employee candidates, drug screening, breathe alcohol testing, treatment for employees injured on the job and the Employee Assistance Program.

Health & Fitness Addition to Indoor Tennis Facility and Use Agreement 1988 to present

An addition to Courts Plus funded by issuing general obligation bonds allowed Elmhurst Memorial Health Care to have supervised fitness, rehabilitation, and health programs and facilities available to fulfill community needs.



VILLAGE OF VILLA PARK

The collaborative efforts between the Elmhurst Park district and the Village of Villa Park focus on the land acquisition, development and operation of the Sugar Creek Golf Course. The following represents a history of this collaborative effort.

Intergovernmental Agreement for Financing Improvement to Sugar Creek Golf Course Driving Range

November 2003

An agreement for additional funds to complete renovations to the golf course.

Co-purchase of property at 502 E. VanBuren for use by the Sugar Creek Golf Course

September 2003

The two agencies purchased the East DuPage Special Education District's facility and surrounding property for use by the Sugar Creek Golf Course and issued debt certificates to fund the cost of the purchase and golf course improvements.

Operating Agreement By/Between the Village of Villa Park and the Elmhurst Park District

January 1975

An agreement to construct/operate a nine-hole, executive-layout golf course named the Sugar Creek Golf Course.

Land Acquisition Agreement for the Elmhurst Park District and the Village of Villa Park

August 1972

The agencies agreed to the joint acquisition of property to be used as a public golf course.



ADDITIONAL ORGANIZATION & BUSINESS COLLABORATIONS

The Elmhurst Park District has numerous agreements with other community agencies organizations and businesses for land and facility use as well as other types of collaboration to better meet the needs of the community. The following is a representation of past and present collaborative agreements between the Elmhurst Park District and other organizations.

Ray Graham Association Service Agreement Early 1990s to Present

The Park District agrees to pay RGA for a crew assembled to perform general park maintenance services for the Park District.

Jaycee Tot Lot Playground 1970

The Elmhurst Jaycees developed a tot lot to be known as Jaycee Park on property leased to EPD by the City.



Gateway Special Recreation Association September 1996 to present

To provide recreational programs for persons with special needs, the Park District entered into an agreement to become a member of the Gateway SRA.



Understanding Between VFW and Elmhurst Park District August 1992

The Veterans requested permission to construct and maintain a permanent Memorial in Wilder Park through a permanent Veterans Memorial Commission and Memorial Trust Fund.

Agreement Between Park District, the Elmhurst Art Museum Foundation and Civic Center Foundation and the Elmhurst Artists' Guild to Provide for a Permanent Art Museum March 1990

This agreement allowed for the Park District to purchase certain parcels of land from the Elmhurst Art Museum Foundation, Civic Center Foundation and the Elmhurst Artists' Guild.



Cooperative Programming Agreement with Elmhurst Art Museum

September 1996, renewed in April 2002

The two agencies continue working cooperatively in offering arts programming. The Park District contributes annually to the Museum, hired a program manager for arts programming.

Lizzadro Family Foundation Lapidary Arts Agreement

March 1961

The Park District allocated a site in Wilder Park to provide a Museum of Lapidary Arts, and the Joseph Lizzadro Family Foundation was willing to construct and maintain and absorb all costs of operation for such a facility.

Purchase Sale Agreement with MacCormac College

August 2002

The Elmhurst Park District purchased facility and property adjacent to Berens Park from MacCormac College.



OTHER COLLABORATIONS

Over the years the Elmhurst Park District has entered into numerous agreements with other community agencies, organizations and businesses for a variety of reasons, including concession operations, utility placement, roadway construction, easement acquisition, land lease or purchase and a variety of other efforts that were important to the operations, management and maintenance of the District.

Visioning & Community Process

4



In the planning and visioning for the future, the Elmhurst Park District has a philosophy of including people who represent a variety of interests. EPD has solicited the views and needs of many individuals and groups in developing a vision for the District. This vision will provide the framework for development of the Comprehensive Plan to guide the District over the next five years and beyond. Representatives of key focus groups, stakeholders and members of the public participated in a series of meetings and interviews to gather their observations of the District and information specific to their needs. The staff of EPD and its' Board members were also interviewed to gain an understanding of the District from within, as well as their vision and goals for the future. Each of these visioning meetings and interviews provided meaningful input to the planning process, and were used to help develop a Community Survey that was later used to gain a scientific understanding of the interests and needs of the community.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The general public was given a variety of opportunities to provide input to EPD during the visioning process. Two workshops were held as a means of providing the public with open forums where they could express their views and needs. Over thirty (30) individuals participated in these workshops. At these workshops, and later through the EPD Administration Office, facility desks and the web-site, a 'Comment Form' was available for the public to fill out and send in. Twelve (12) individuals provided feedback on this form, of which half were attendees at one of the two public workshops. Additional comments were solicited during the on-site inventory and analysis of each individual EPD property. These were very informal discussions with individuals or families who were using the parks at the time that the site assessment was in progress. It is estimated that 20-25 impromptu discussions of this nature were held at parks and facilities throughout the District. A Community Survey was conducted, with over 30% of the random survey recipients responding. An analysis of the survey results is included herein.

PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

Two visioning workshops were held to solicit input from the general public. These workshops were held on a Thursday evening (18 participants signed in) and Saturday morning (11 participants signed in) during the same week to provide options for interested residents of the District. These workshops were advertised in local media, on the EPD web-site and at a variety of EPD facilities. Because the sample size is small and the participants are residents who come due to their specific interests in parks and recreation activities in their community, these types of workshops are not considered to be scientific in their results, but rather offer an exploratory way to gauge public opinion.



Public Workshops

At each public visioning session, a presentation was made that focused on describing the planning process being undertaken, reviewing the demographics of the District as taken from the 2000 Census and discussing nationwide and regional trends in parks and recreation. Following this presentation, a modified SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis was conducted, giving the participants an opportunity to express their views and provide their 'wish list' items for the future.

PUBLIC VISIONING FINDINGS

While comments received from the public came about from different means described above, they can still be categorized in the manner in which the public workshops and comment forms were based; with strengths, weaknesses and opportunities/wish list items providing the overview and subcategories for specific points presented.

Strengths of EPD

General

- Board works for the greater good
- Partnership with City of Elmhurst and other organizations
- Quality, proximity and diversity of neighborhood parks
- Quality staff
- Strength of Board & staff when dealing with special interests
- Great image/community
- Board works well together
- Money management
- Veteran respect

Parks & Facilities

- Courts Plus a valuable resource
- Playgrounds
- The Abbey as a senior's venue
- Salt Creek Greenway an important natural amenity
- Berens Park amenities
- Canoe launch a good amenity
- The Wilder Park Conservatory is a regional gem
- East End Pool proposed improvements
- Garden areas
- Availability of racquetball courts



Programming

- Program diversity
- Children's programs
- Senior trips
- Gateway

Weaknesses of EPD

General

- Non-resident use of fields, parks and facilities
- Board collaboration with City and Schools
- Priorities of the Board
- Bending to City requests
- Not living the Mission
- Park Ambassadors enforcement of rules
- Concessions serving unhealthy foods

Parks & Facilities

- Condition of athletic fields
- Courts Plus overcrowding
- Preservation of open space
- Toilet facilities in parks
- Wilder Mansion underused
- Cutting of trees in parks
- Smalley Pool limiting in use and audience
- Locker/Shower facilities at Courts Plus
- Eldridge Park pond condition & cleanliness
- Courts Plus maintenance
- General maintenance in parks
- Bicycle related facilities/activities
- Connectivity of north-south trails
- Poor working conditions for EPD personnel
- Lack of racquetball courts

Programming

- Lottery system
- Gateway

Public Workshops

Opportunities & Wish List

Philosophy

- Wilder Mansion decision
- Preservation of open space
- Enact agreement with York High School for field house use
- Collaboration/continuity between EPD and school programs
- Partnership with York High School for use of indoor pool
- YMCA & church partnerships
- Promote underutilized amenities (like racquetball)
- Staff supervision at amenities (like skate park)
- Plant trees
- Prevention of loitering
- Outsource park & facility maintenance
- Enforce 30-minute rule on equipment at Courts Plus
- Use of alternative materials/ 'greening' of facilities
- Acquisition of Maywood Sportsmen's Club

Parks & Facilities - General

- Athletic field improvements
- Dog park(s)
- Expanded trail system
- Disk (Frisbee) golf
- Skate parks/plazas
- Ice rinks
- Better senior facilities
- Bicycle racks in all parks
- Bridges/tunnels for safe connectivity on trails
- Dog waste receptacles
- Non-metal skate facilities





Parks & Facilities - Specific

- Enlarge Courts Plus
- Wilder Mansion for EPD Uses
- Improve locker rooms at Courts Plus
- Wilder Mansion as a historical campus
- Expansion/restoration of Wilder Park Conservatory
- Wilder Mansion for community use/joint venture with City
- New equipment at Courts Plus
- Replace trees at Berens Park
- Rebuild exercise trail in Wild Meadows Trace
- Rebuild Wilder Park water feature
- Dam Salt Creek for better canoeing
- Lower Eldridge sandbox to child level
- Divide some pool lanes in half for walkers/rehab use

Programming

- Additional evening programming
- Weekend programming
- Additional teen programming
- Additional special programs/activities/events
- Winter sports activities
- Senior gardening opportunities
- Improve level of Courts Plus aerobics
- War reenactments

Maintenance/Enhancements

- Improved landscaping
- Tree replacement program
- Keep canoe launch clear



SURVEY DESCRIPTION

The Elmhurst Park District (EPD) conducted a community Attitude and Interest Survey in May/June of 2006 that consisted of seventeen (17) questions intended to understand the interests and opinions of residents regarding EPD. On May 17th, the survey was mailed to 3,000 District households; approximately 19% of the total households in the District. The 3,000 households were selected at random by a third party not involved in the EPD comprehensive planning process to ensure a completely random selection. After approximately four weeks of survey returns, a second mailing was initiated to those not yet responding to the survey in order to increase the response rate. Of the 3,000 households selected, 906 chose to participate. With a response rate of 30.2%, EPD exceeded its goal of 25% returns. The 30.2% translates to a statistical margin of error of $\pm 3.3\%$ at a confidence level of 95%.

Survey questions were prepared based on a number of influencing factors, including topics developed during previous community participation opportunities, staff information needs, Park Board interests and current trends in park and recreation planning. There were questions that determined the demographic mix of the respondents, questions that ascertained current use of park facilities and programs by respondents and questions that asked the respondents to present and prioritize their interests in future EPD facilities/programs/services. Several questions allowed an 'other' response that presented an opportunity for respondents to provide answers not included in the optional answers given. This, along with a general question asking for 'additional comments', provided a forum for respondents to give open input to EPD.

Many of the questions pertaining to current use and future preferences contained the option of providing a response that was understood to mean that the respondent had no first-hand knowledge to be able to formulate a measured response, or had no opinion regarding the question. In presenting the survey results, those responses that provide a measurable response to a specific question are used to show qualitative and quantitative answers to the questions. Where appropriate, the percentages of non-measurable responses are presented for clarification purposes.

A copy of the survey instrument as distributed to the public, additional comments written into the survey, responses to 'Other' category questions and tabled results can be found in Appendix B.

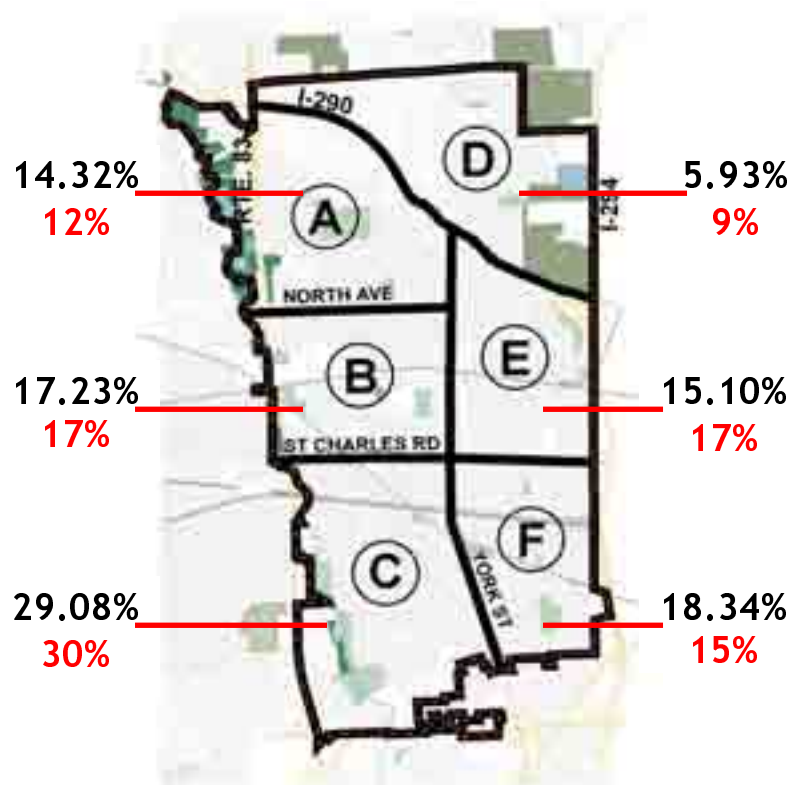
DEMOGRAPHICS

1. Referencing the adjacent Elmhurst Park District map, in which area do you reside?

The location of respondents helps develop an understanding of how the opinions of Park District programs and facilities might differ from one region of the community to another, and how needs might vary by region as well. For the purposes of this question the District was divided into six (6) geographic areas utilizing major roadways as the division lines. In most of the District, North Avenue, St. Charles Road and York Street form the north-south and east-west divisions. But because the I-290 corridor creates such a distinct physical barrier, the area north of I-290 was looked at as a distinct region of the District

When answers to questions are similar from one region to another, this illustrates that the respondents tend to look at the District offerings as a whole rather than through focusing on the area in which they live. With little exception, the survey respondents showed consistent satisfaction and support of the Park District. Only Area D north of I-290 had any level of fluctuation in regard to satisfaction levels (see Question 10 for discussion).

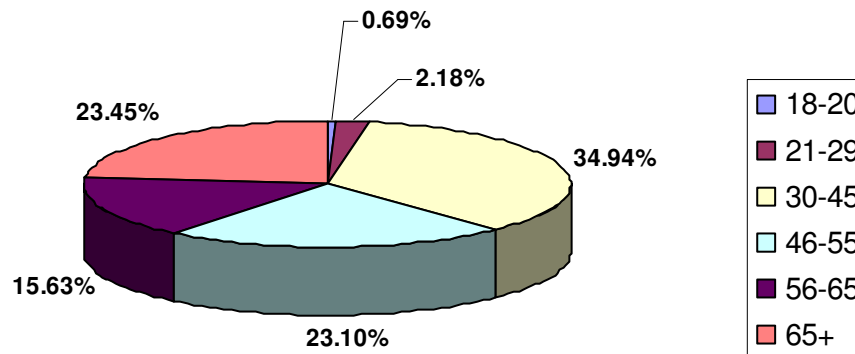
The number shown in black is the percentage of survey respondents from each area of the community. For comparison purposes, the number in red is the actual percentage of the population living in that part of the Elmhurst Park District. Because the survey was sent to random households within the Park District, the percentage of surveys that were sent to residents in any given area is unknown. The response rates for each section represent a good cross-section of the community.



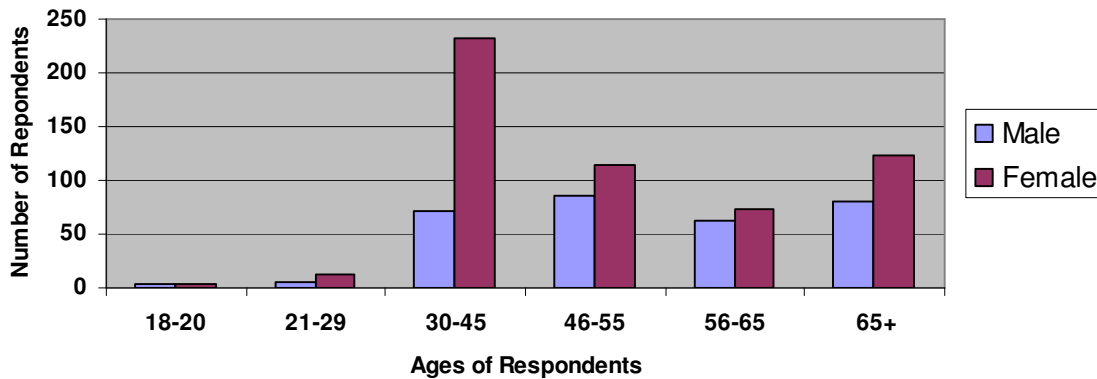
2. What is the age and gender of the person filling out the survey?

The age and gender of respondents is important in understanding the types of user participating in the survey, their current use of EPD facilities and their interests for future facilities and programs. Up to 58% of those surveyed fall into the 30-55 age brackets, which may represent family use of Park District facilities and programs. Similarly, respondents within these age brackets are often more willing to support new funding initiatives while older respondents, many on fixed incomes, and younger adult respondents, many just establishing themselves in the community, may be less able to support additional funding. With over 23% of the respondents age 65 and older, and significant response rates from both the 56-65 and 46-55 brackets, it is clear that facilities and programs addressing active adult and senior needs will continue to be important.

Age of Survey Respondents



Survey Respondent Profile

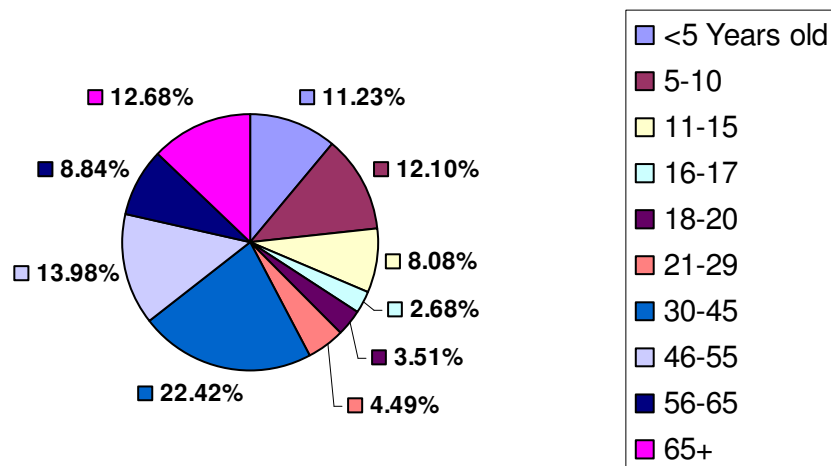


3. Please indicate the number of additional family members residing in your home in each age and gender group.

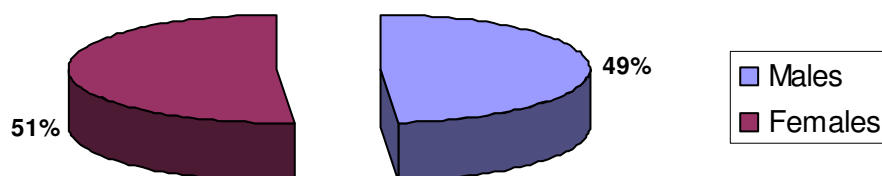
This provides a look at the household demographics being represented by the respondent to the survey, and combined with Question 2, gives a clear look at the typical family unit represented by each respondent. With 34% of the households with children 17 and under, of which 31% are under age 16, it seems clear that EPD has a large number of families whose recreational needs will continue to play a large role in determining EPD programming and facilities.

Cross-referencing this question with Question 2 shows that as many as 65-70% of the respondents represent families with school-age children living in the District. As such, it is assumed that their responses identify needs associated with family uses and activities, or in programming related to individuals within their households.

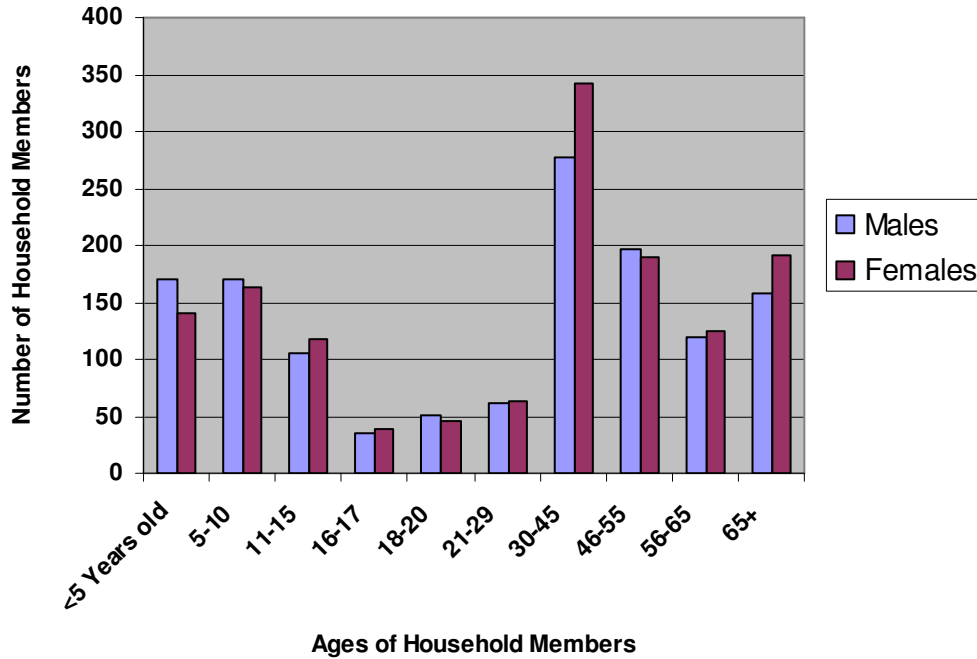
Ages of Household Members



Gender of Household Members



Survey Household Profile



Comparing the survey demographic results with the U.S Census Bureau data for the EPD shows families with school-age children were well represented by the survey. It also shows that, while females and those over 65 years of age may have often times filled the survey out, as a part of the total persons within all households represented, the respondents are comparable to census data.

Survey to Census Comparison

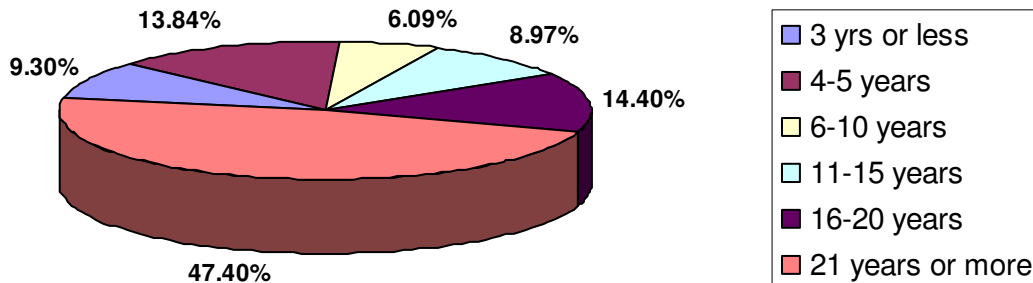
	EPD Household Data	Survey U.S. Census
Age		
<18	34%	26%
>65	13%	16%
Gender		
Male	49%	48%
Female	51%	52%



4. How long have you lived within the Elmhurst Park District boundaries?

The maturity of the community is illustrated in the response to this question. With over 47% of the respondents being residents for over 21 years and another 23% over 11 years, those residents that responded to the survey probably have a high level of awareness and knowledge of their community. This also presents the understanding that long-term residents have a vested interest in their community and in the Park District. But the response rate from residents who have lived here for less than 5 years (23.14%) also shows that they are developing a vested interest in community affairs and in the future of the EPD. These figures illustrate that the future includes both young families and a greater senior population, as is evidenced in Questions 1 and 2 as well.

Residency Duration



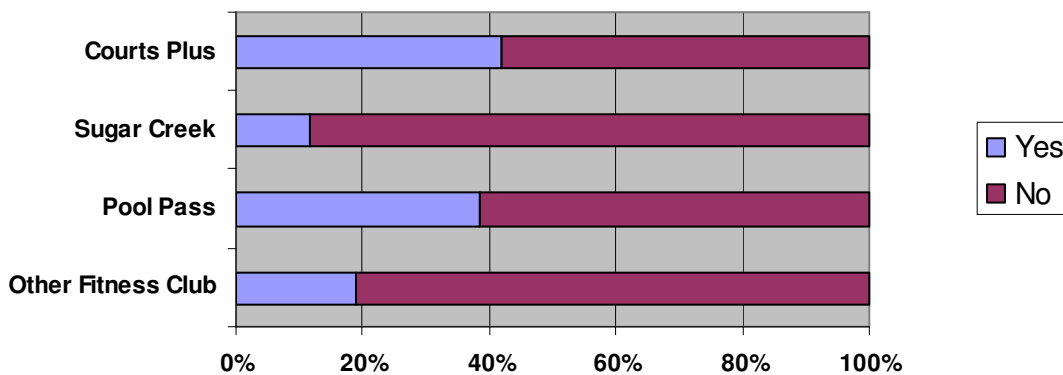


PARK & PROGRAM USE

5. Do you or a member of your household have a membership or pass for any of the following?

A response from individuals and families actively using these EPD facilities provides specific insight from those users into the quality of the facility and average use by members. With 42% of the respondents to this question being members of Courts Plus, other questions relative to Courts Plus should provide an accurate understanding of the issues and opportunities associated with the facility. Pool pass holders also account for a fairly high percentage of respondents, at nearly 40%. And with 12% of the respondents holding a Resident Card for Sugar Creek Golf Course, a number that reflects the region’s golfing population, good feedback is also available. The number of Courts Plus members responding to the survey is over 2 ½ times the number of members of other fitness clubs, a survey result that shows the importance of Courts Plus in providing fitness facilities and programming to District residents.

Member / Pass Holder

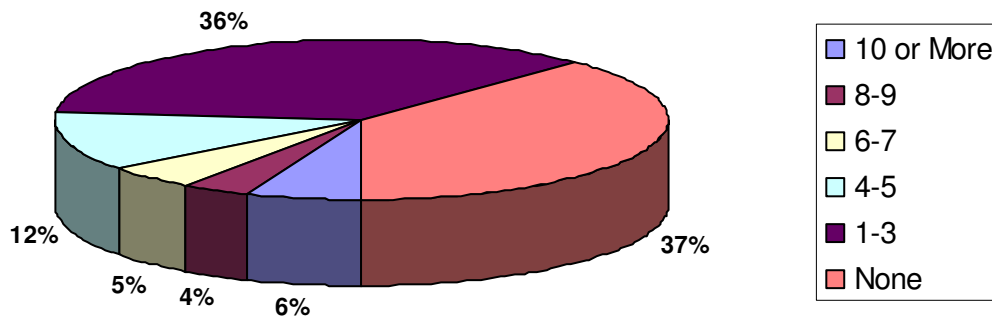




6. How many Park District programs, including those at Courts Plus, do you and members of your family typically register for in a year?

Nearly 2/3 of all respondents and their families participate in some type of EPD programming in any given year, with 27% participating in 4 or more programs per year. These numbers illustrate the importance of EPD programming to the community, and show that many residents have developed high levels of active participation with EPD. Of those not participating in EPD programming, a substantial number simply do not have enough free time to allow participation (see Question 9). It should be noted, however, that a number of respondents 65 years of age and older also do not participate; with age, transportation/access and ADA accessibility cited as reasons for non-participation.

Annual Program Participation

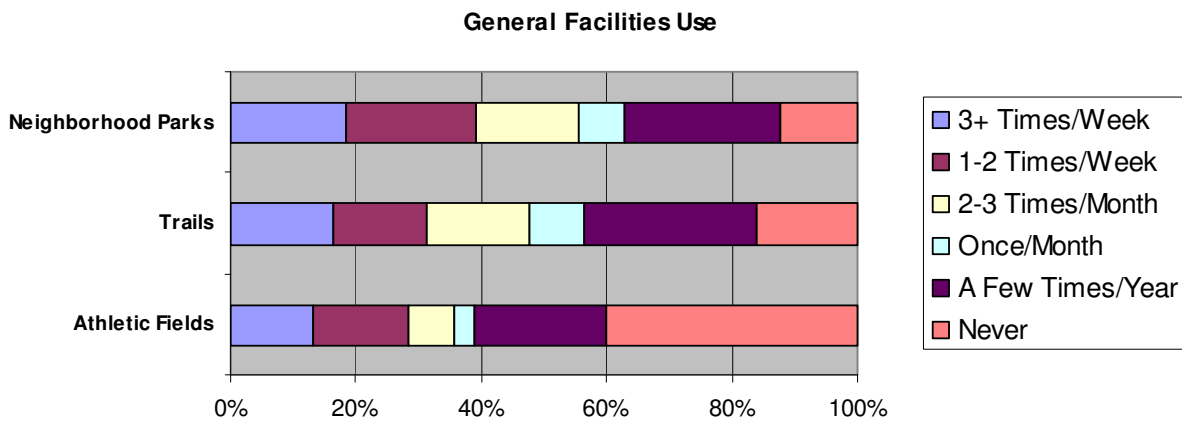




7. On average, how often have you and members of your household visited Park District facilities or parks in the past year or participated in Park District programs during a typical use season?

General Facilities Use

Neighborhood parks are visited at least a few times each year by an astounding 88% of the respondents, and more than twice per month by over 55%. Trail use of more than twice each month also approaches the 50% mark, with overall use of the trails over 83% on an annual basis. Even the athletic field use is significant given the number of fields and sports teams utilizing the fields each year. 28% of the respondents or family members use the sports fields on a weekly basis, while 60% use them sometime each year. These numbers clearly illustrate the significant use of the parks, trails and athletic fields, and show the importance of ongoing maintenance and enhancement of these facilities.



Looking at the age of the neighborhood park users responding to this question, adults 30-45 were most likely to use the park on a weekly basis, with 2/3 responding as such. The 65 and over population responding to the survey use the parks the least, with over 60% responding that their use is only a few times per year, or never.

Comparing the geographic location of respondents with their use of neighborhood parks shows that the use of parks is fairly consistent throughout the District, with an average of 37% using the parks on a weekly basis. The highest percentage of respondents saying that they never use the neighborhood parks are those north of I-290, where 17% responded in this manner.

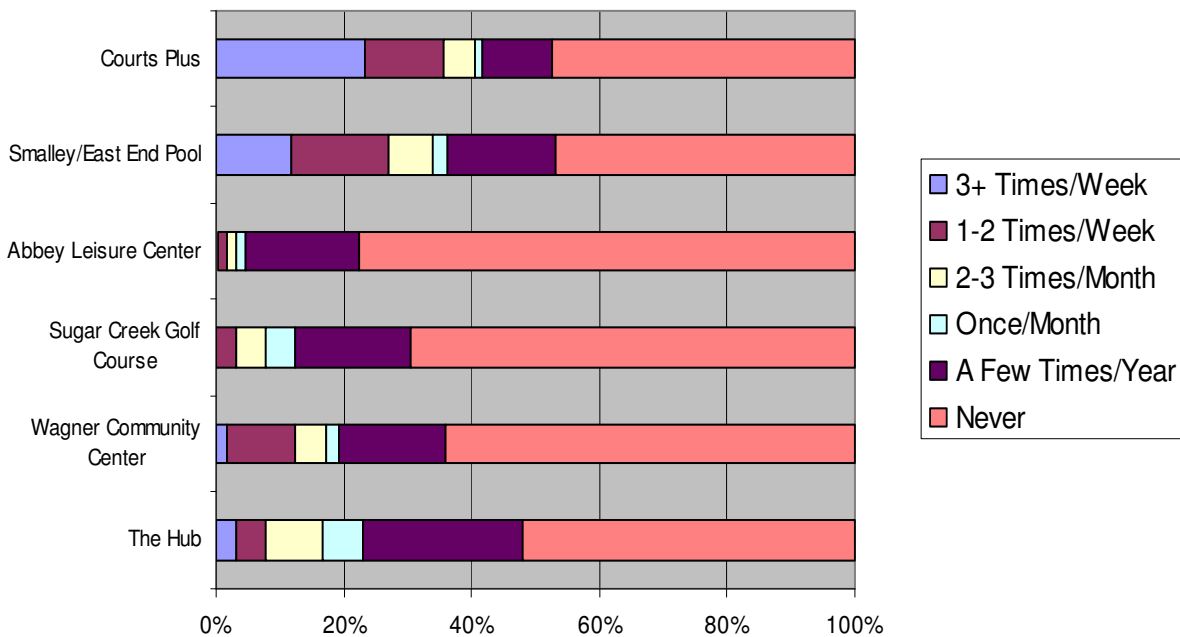


An interesting anomaly regarding neighborhood park use is the finding that, in general, park visitation/use decline with the length of time that respondents have lived in the District. The newest residents use the parks the most, with over 50% visiting the parks on a weekly basis, while over 50% of the 21+ year residents responded that they visit the parks only a few times a year, or never.

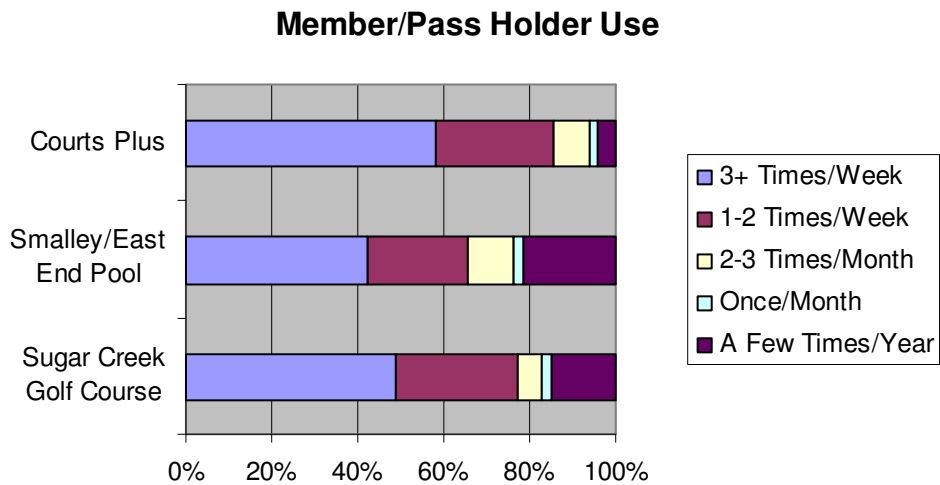
Special Use Facilities

The intent of the special use facilities dictates that they would receive less use than many of the general facilities within EPD. Yet the survey results clearly show that these facilities are very important to the constituents that they serve. Over 50% of the respondents or their family members utilize Courts Plus and the two pool complexes on an annual basis, with nearly 36% of Courts Plus users taking advantage of the facility on a weekly basis. The Hub has also proven to be an appealing attraction for EPD, with 48% of the respondents visiting in its first years of operation. The Wagner Center, Sugar Creek and The Abbey each have their own user base that use those facilities regularly.

Special Facilities Use



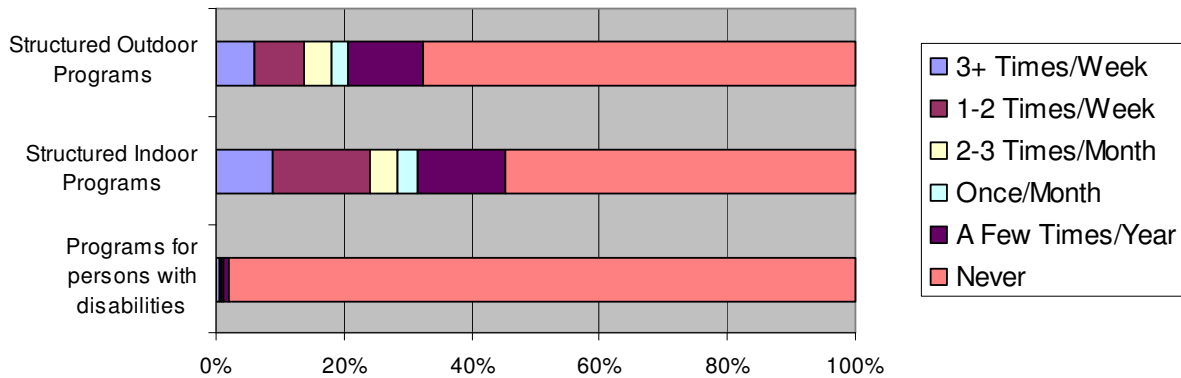
Looking specifically at those who have memberships or are pass holders to any special use facilities yields the following use patterns:



Programs

Indoor programs clearly attract the greatest numbers of participants, with nearly twice as many respondents or family members participating on a weekly basis as compared to outdoor programs. With 45% participating on an annual basis and 24% on a weekly basis, it is understood why indoor programming space is at a premium. The structured outdoor programs also have significant participation, but are more seasonal in nature, which may have resulted in somewhat lower results. Only seventeen (17) respondents identified active participation in programs for persons with disabilities, with the results distributed between weekly users and those participating only a few times per year.

Program Participation



Program participation by age reflects an active adult population in the 21-45 age brackets. In particular, just under 70% of the 30-45 bracket participates in some level of structured indoor programming, with approximately 55% participating in structured outdoor programming. In both types of programming, adults 56 and older constitute the fewest participants, with 67% never participating in structured indoor programming and over 80% not participating in structured outdoor programming.

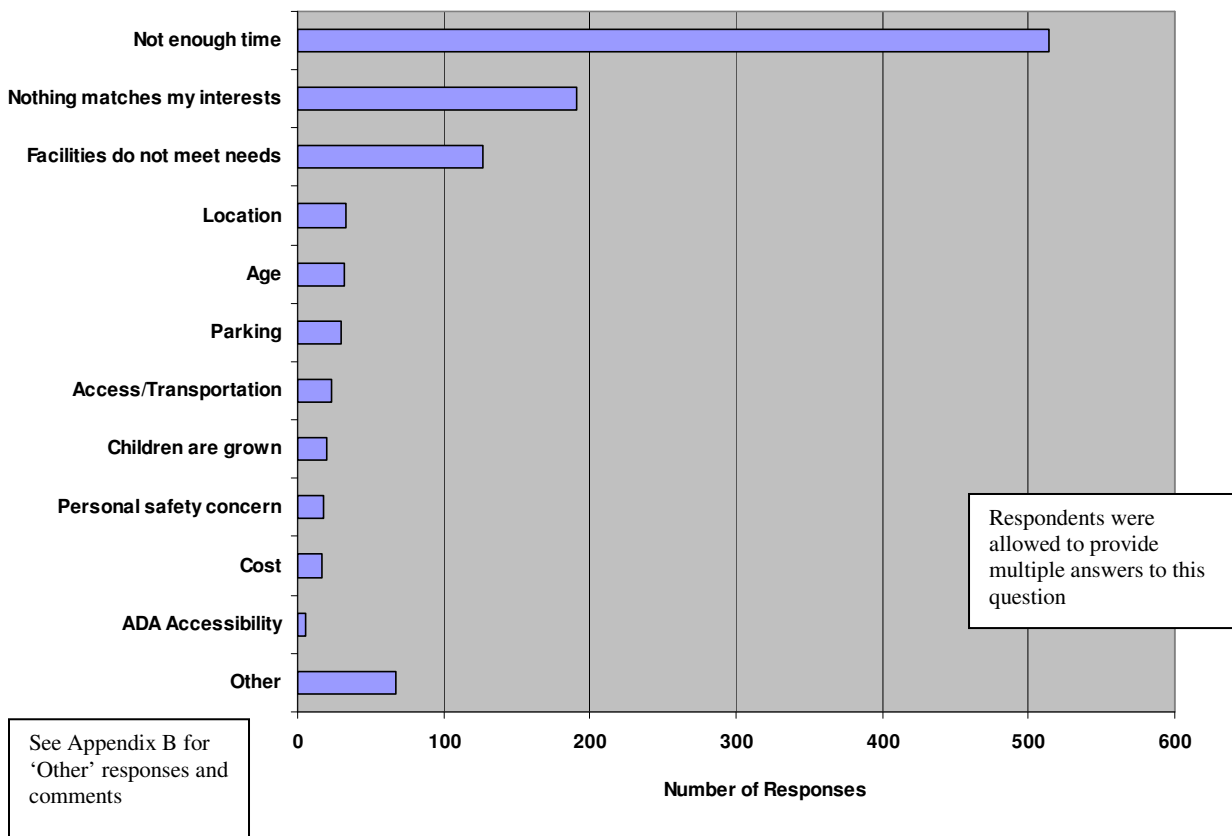
Comparing the geographic location of survey respondents with program participation, there is, again, a general consistency throughout the District. The single anomaly is the higher non-participation by those living north of I-290 in both structured indoor programming (66%) and structured outdoor programming (75%).

Program participation referenced by years lived in the District does not yield any specific patterns that are discernable except that those living in the community more than 21 years participate the least in either structured outdoor programs (78%) or structured indoor programs (66%).

8. What are the reasons that you do not use your parks more often?

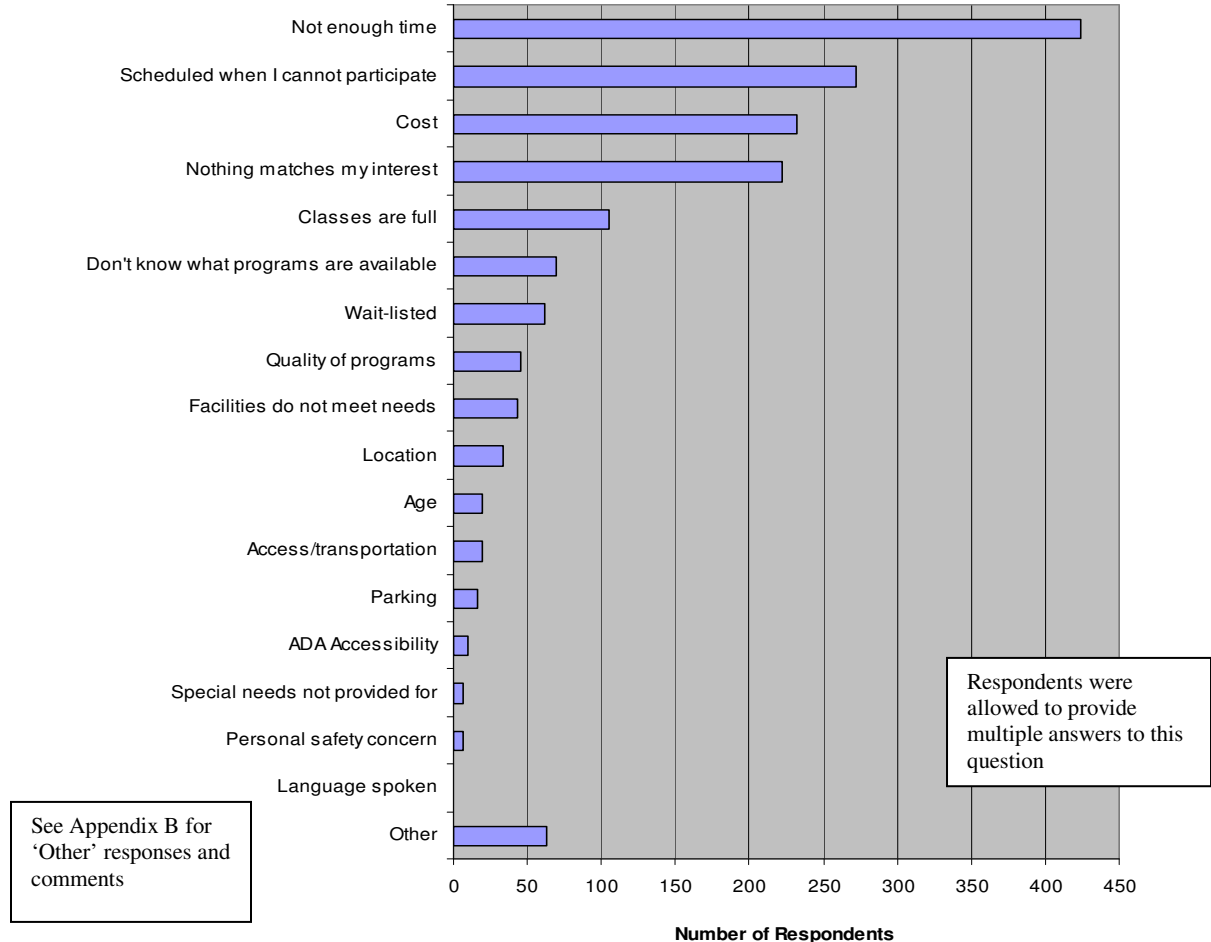
The overwhelming response to this question was a simple lack of time to enjoy the parks. Interests and facilities needs not being met were the next two categories. One interesting result shows that the ‘nothing matches my interests’ response increased with length of residency within the District, another sign that new and diverse offerings are needed. Responses to this question were relatively similar regardless of whether respondents were frequent users of parks or rarely/never use the parks.

Two specific categories listed in the chart were not included in the original question, but had enough write-in responses (in the ‘other’ category) to warrant their inclusion in the findings. Age-related reasons for lack of park use was the fifth highest reason given, while cost-related responses accounted for numerous other responses. This second response regarding costs may be simply a misinterpretation of the question, however, as the parks themselves have no fees associated with their use. Respondents likely considered pool fees, fees for specific amenities within The Hub and other such amenities in their answer.



9. What are the reasons that you do not participate in Park District activities and programming more often?

Lack of time was once again the most-given response, with the related response ‘scheduled when I can not participate’ running second. Costs of programs and programs not matching interests also received high response rates. Amongst those who stated that they participate in structured indoor and outdoor programs only a few times a year or never, the top four answers were the same. Not matching interests scored somewhat higher than costs as a reason given amongst that group as well. These figures reflect the need for new and more diverse programming. The age factor again made its way onto this list as an ‘other’ response. Two other responses are worth noting. First, no respondents listed language as a barrier to participation; a factor that could have been a concern given that the U.S. Census Bureau identifies 13% of EPD residents as using English as a second language. The second notable response is that 69 respondents answered that they ‘don’t know what programs are available’, a seemingly high number given that every household is mailed a quarterly catalogue.



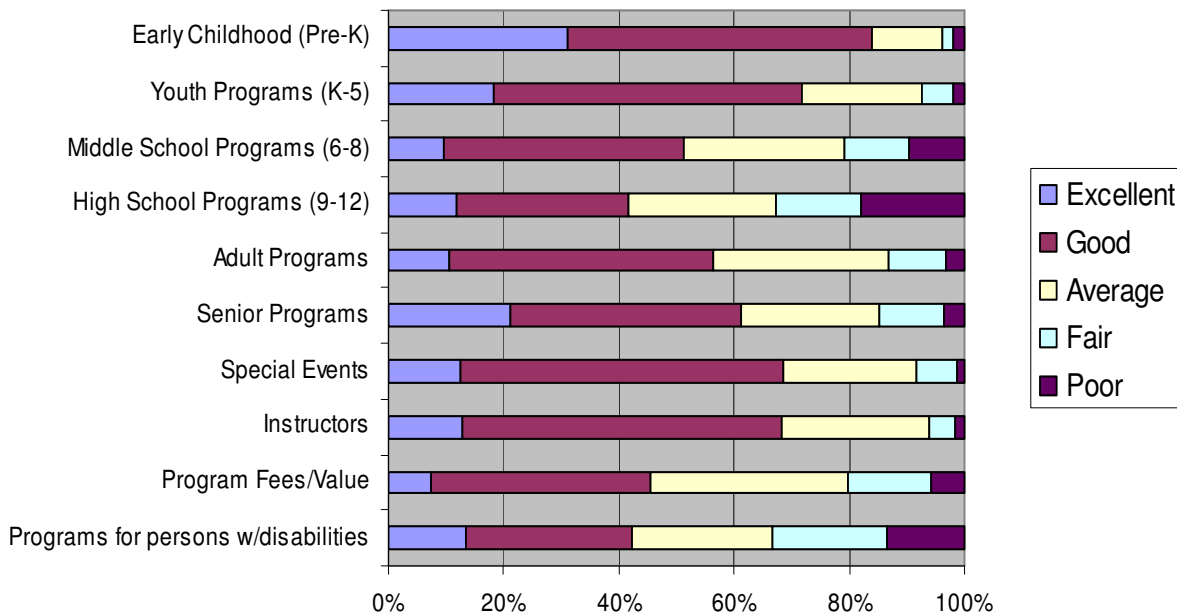


10. For the areas in which you are familiar, please indicate your level of satisfaction with the Elmhurst Park District.

Programming

The Early Childhood Programs received both the highest level of ‘excellent’ responses and the highest level of excellent and good positive responses combined, with 84% of the respondents giving it excellent and good marks. Senior Programs received the second highest ‘excellent’ rating, with Youth Programs scoring second in the combined excellent and good positive response categories with over 71%. Special Events and the Quality of Instructors both had positive response rates as well, with over 68% excellent and good responses.

Satisfaction with Programming

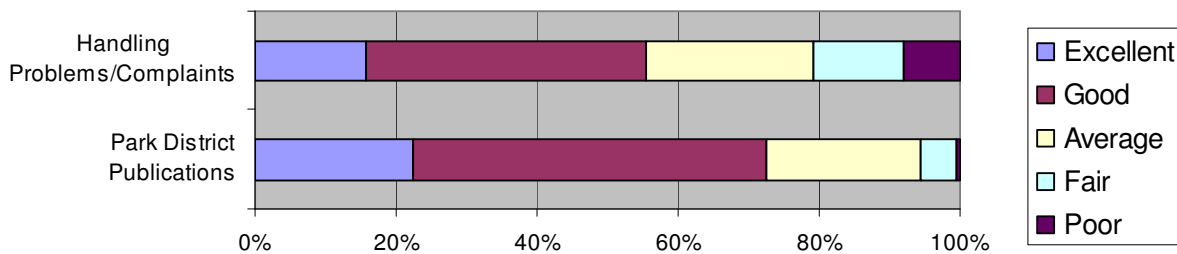


Three categories garnered responses of average and below. High School Programs and Programs for Persons with Disabilities had very similar responses, each receiving approximately 60% ratings of average or below. The High School Programming category had the highest ‘Poor’ rating, with 18% feeling that these programs are inadequate.



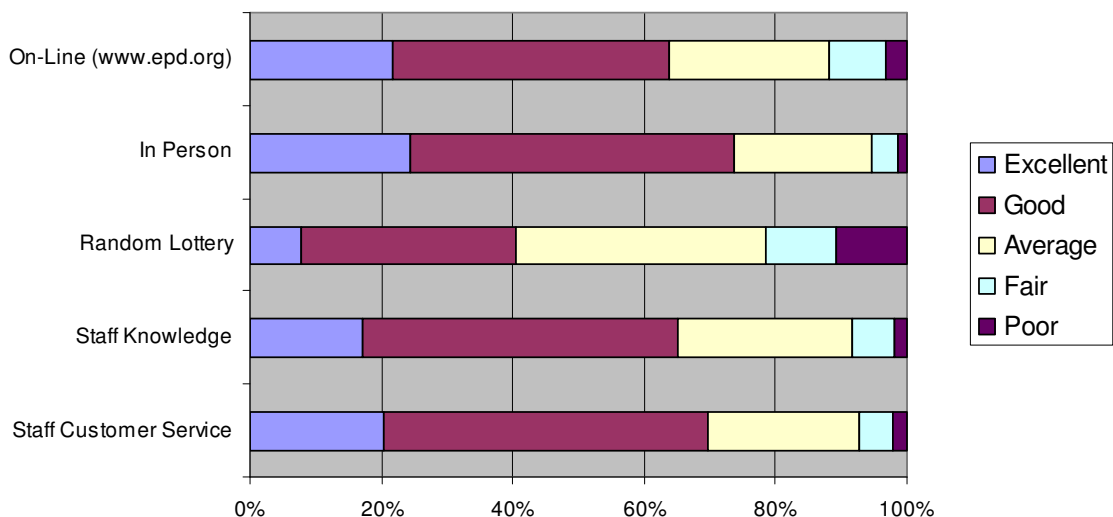
Communications

Elmhurst Park District publications receive very high marks from respondents, with over 72% providing good and excellent feedback. The District’s ability to handle problems and complaints was only answered by about a third of the respondents; those with first-hand experience. With 55% giving good and excellent responses, and only 8% giving a poor rating, the District seems to be addressing problems and complaints in a reasonable manner.



Program Registration

Registration in person received the best responses in both the ‘Excellent’ (24.4%) and ‘Good’ (49.4%) categories. Similarly, that in-person contact reflects well for the knowledge of the staff and staff customer service, which received a combined 65% positive response of ‘Excellent’ and ‘Good’. Those using the internet for registration also gave high marks, with nearly 64% ‘Excellent’ and ‘Good’. The Random Lottery system received only 40% positive response, with nearly 11% rating this system as ‘Poor’.

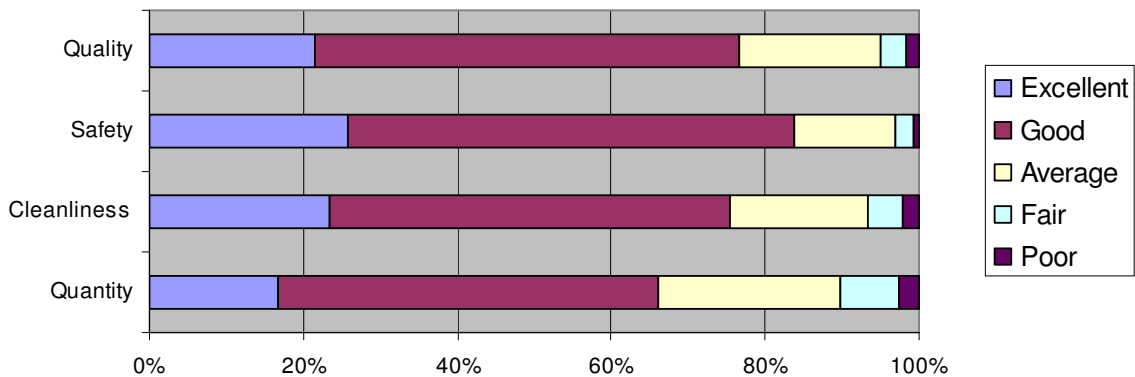




Community Survey

Indoor Facilities

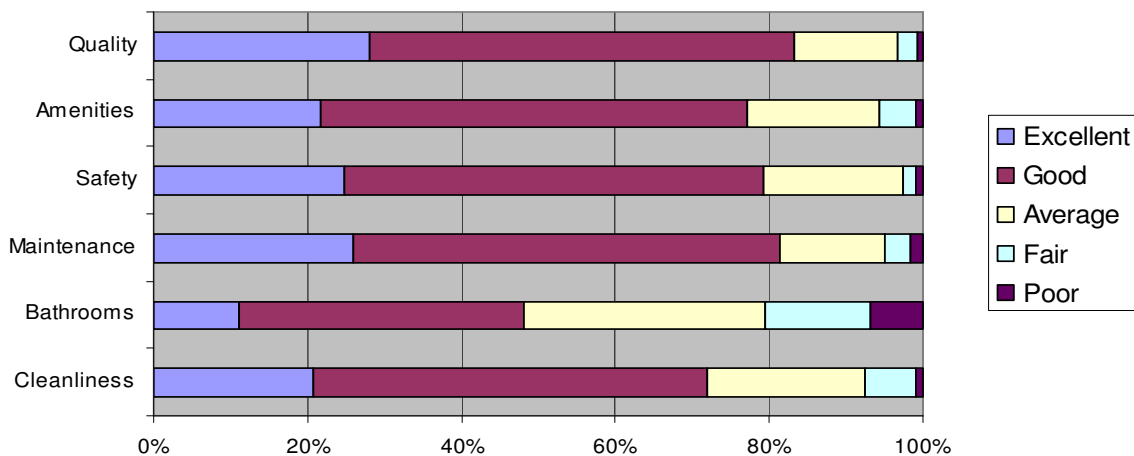
Respondents' satisfaction with indoor facilities is very high, with over two thirds giving 'Excellent' and 'Good' responses in each category. Safety received the best results, with over 82% providing 'Excellent' and 'Good' responses. Only the 'Quantity' category received less than a 75% combined 'Excellent' and 'Good' response rate, with 66% providing this level of positive response.



Parks

Survey respondents expressed a high level of satisfaction with the Parks, with most categories for rating receiving over 70% positive response. The quality of parks received the highest 'Excellent' rating and 'Excellent'/'Good' combined, with 28% and 83% respectively. Bathrooms, with a 48% positive response, garnered relatively high marks considering many park sites have no facilities.

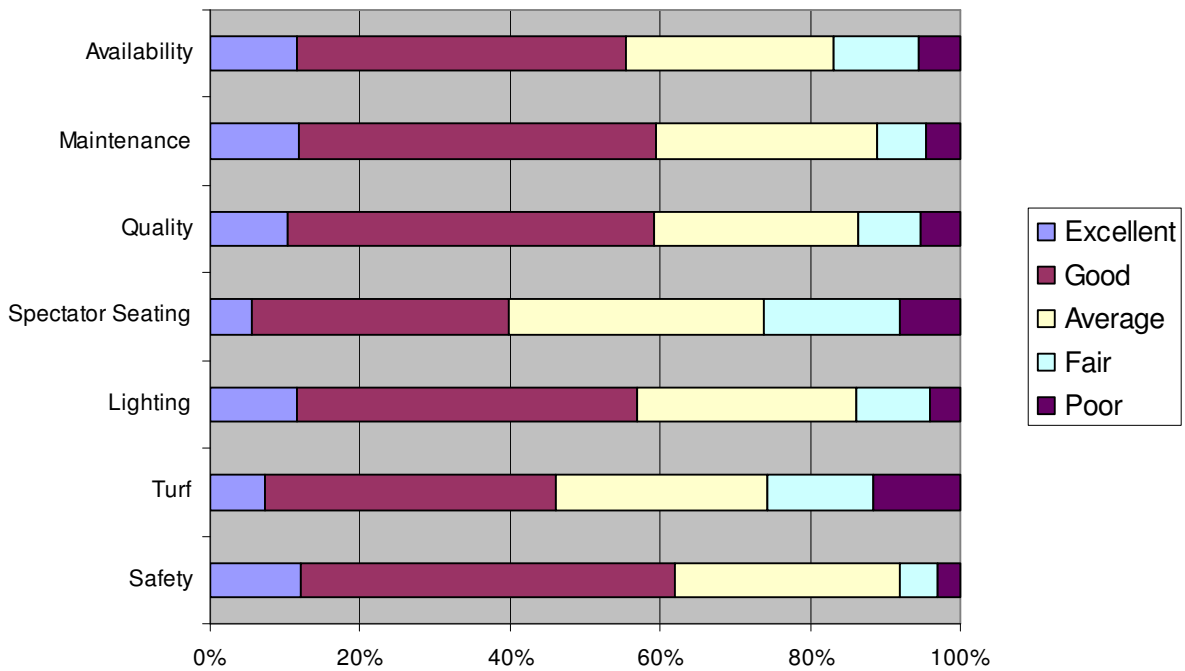
Comparing geographic location of respondents with park satisfaction, there is consistent satisfaction level throughout the District with quality and with bathrooms. In the remaining categories - amenities, safety, maintenance and cleanliness - respondents living north of I-290 gave somewhat lower ratings than in other regions of the District.





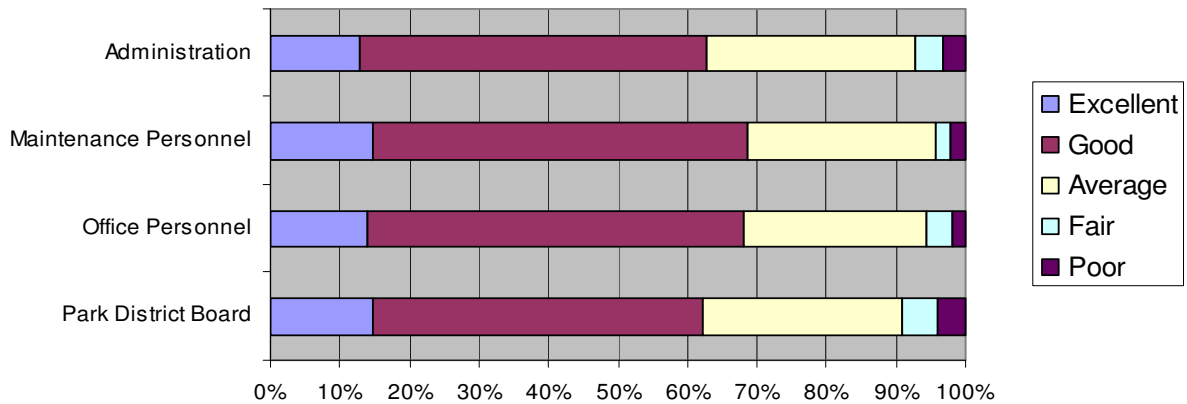
Athletic Fields

The overall satisfaction level with the athletic fields is generally positive, with the highest number of respondents in each category giving a 'Good' rating. Safety received 63% 'Excellent' and 'Good' responses, while Quality and Maintenance were just under 60%. The known and well-stated concerns regarding turf quality and spectator seating were again restated in this survey, with 54% and 60% responding that these elements are 'Average' or lower. Similarly, the need for additional fields and the need for lighted fields were reinforced by the respondents.



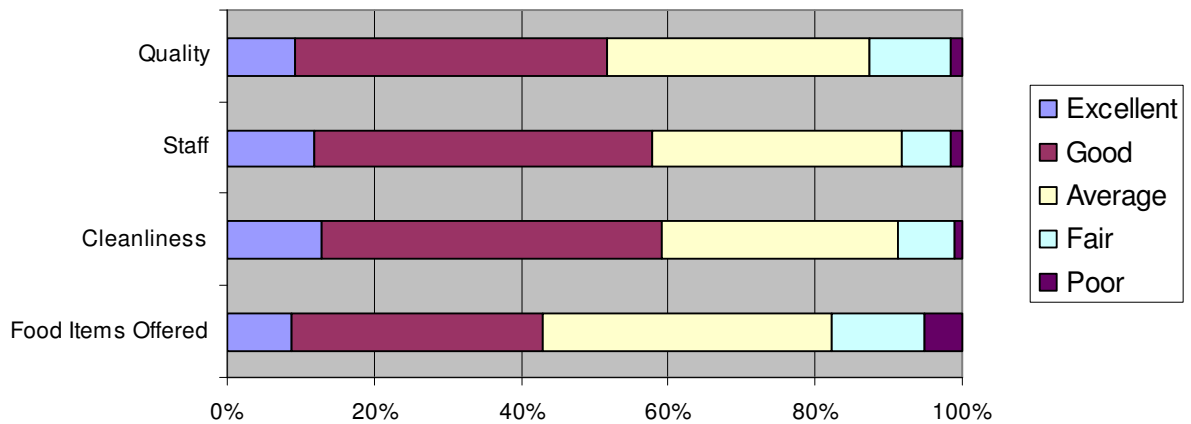
Governance/Operations

Survey respondents expressed satisfaction with all facets of the EPD Governance and Operations, with over 60% positive responses in all categories.



Concessions

Survey respondents would like to see higher quality concession items as well as more variety/types of concessions. Staff and cleanliness categories fared somewhat better, with just below 60% of the responses providing positive feedback.

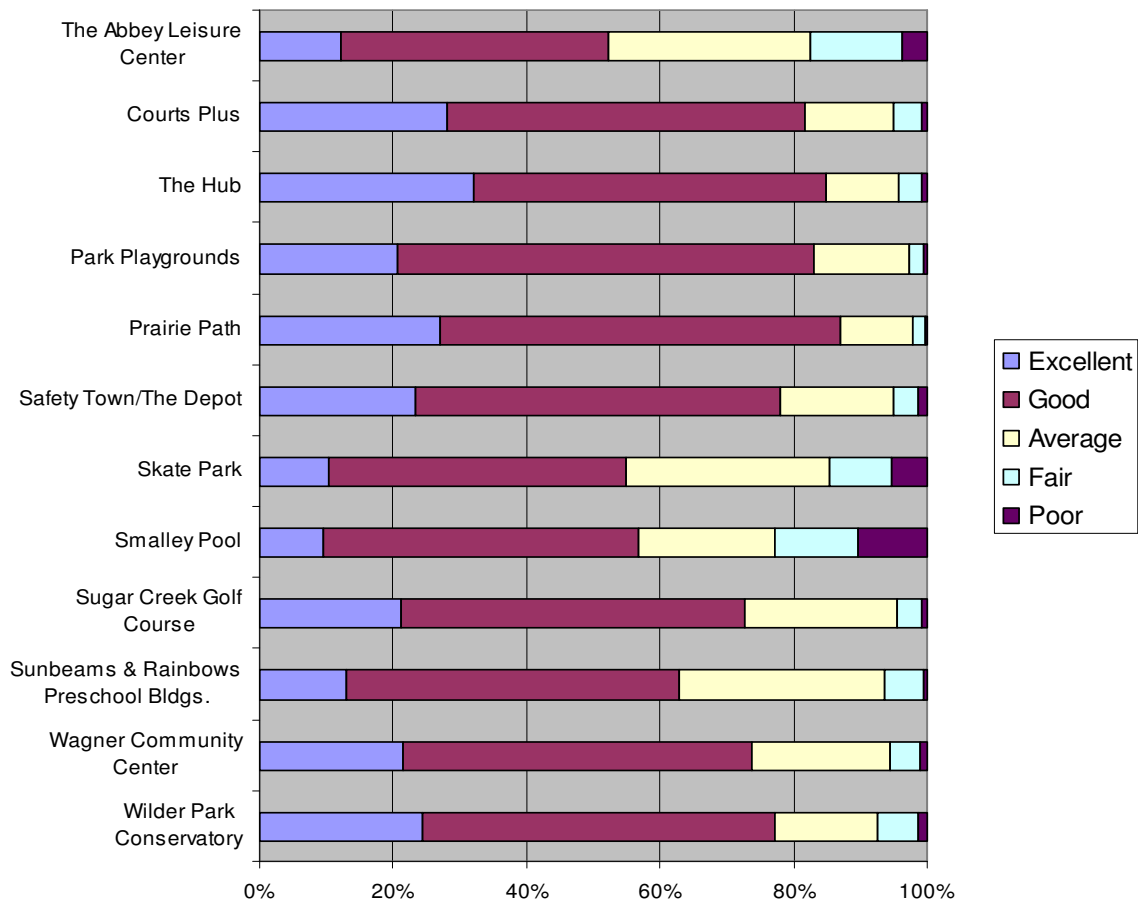




11. How would you rate the quality of the following Park District facilities?

Overall, survey respondents appear to be very satisfied with the quality of Park District facilities. Each of the EPD facilities rated received excellent and good ratings by at least half of the respondents. The Hub is the clear favorite as far as quality, with nearly one third providing an ‘Excellent’ rating. The Prairie Path, Courts Plus, Playgrounds and The Hub all had positive ratings of ‘Excellent’ and ‘Good’ combined over 80%. The Abbey, Skate Park and Smalley Pool each came in with positive response rates in the 52-57% range.

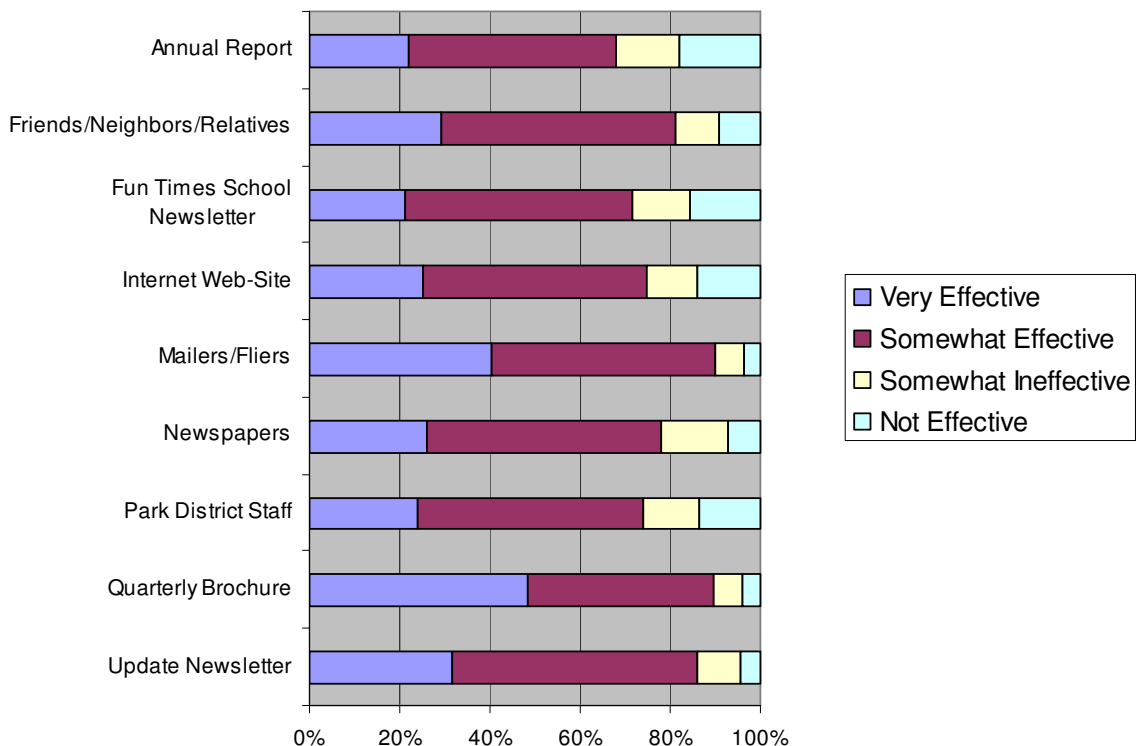
In looking at how members or pass holders rated specific facilities, the responses are somewhat similar to the total survey results, with some deviation shown. 30% of Courts Plus members rated the facility ‘Excellent’, with 82% providing a positive rating of ‘Excellent’ and ‘Good’ combined, mirroring the overall results. Results for Sugar Creek Golf Course were higher among Resident Card holders, with 34% giving an ‘Excellent’ rating and 80% providing an overall positive response. This shows that Sugar Creek has a great user base from which to build. Only 48% of pool pass holders provided a positive response to Smalley Pool; less than the overall survey.





12. How effective are the following resources in providing you with information regarding the Elmhurst Park District and its programs/services?

All EPD information resources received high marks from the survey respondents. The effectiveness of the Quarterly Brochure as an information resource was clearly expressed, with 48% giving it an ‘Excellent’ rating and 90% giving it positive ‘Excellent’ and ‘Good’ combined ratings overall. This was followed closely by Mailers and Fliers, which received 41% ‘Excellent’ marks and 90% positive marks overall. The 78% positive rating of ‘Excellent’ and ‘Good’ combined response rate to Newspapers as an information resource for the Park District shows the EPD does a good job of staying visible through advertising, press releases and staying in the news. Even the Friends/Neighbors/Relatives category received 80% positive responses, illustrating how important word-of-mouth is in spreading news about EPD. An interesting survey result is that, while EPD Internet Web-Site received high marks, only 42% of the overall survey respondents rated the web-site. For comparison purposes, 71% rated the Quarterly Brochure and 78% rated Mailers/Fliers. This shows that printed material is still important for getting information to its constituency than the web-site, and that the public may not be fully aware of the availability and offerings available on the web-site.





FUTURE PLANNING

13. When planning for the future, how should the Elmhurst Park District prioritize each of the following areas?

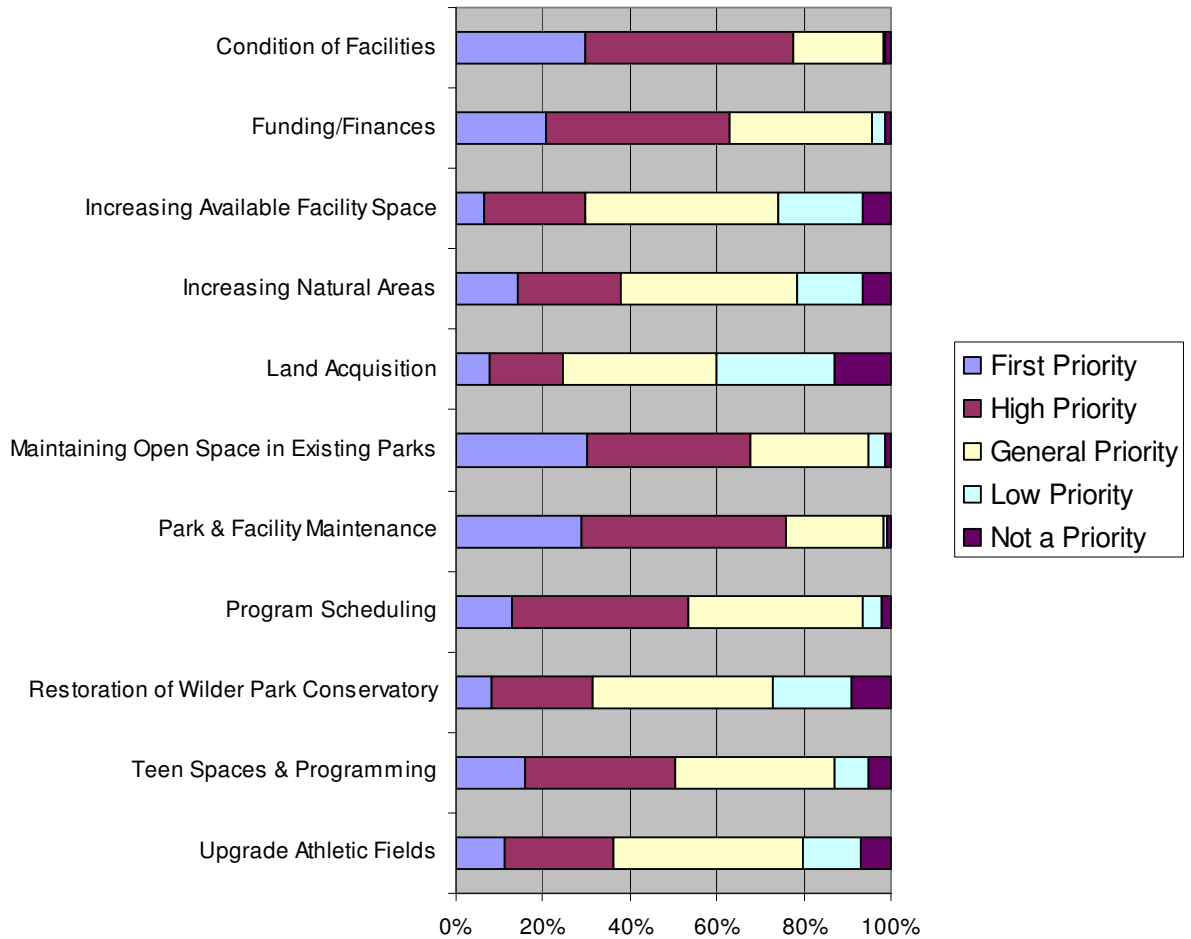
Survey respondents are clearly most interested in preserving and maintaining the current facilities and amenities. Condition of Facilities and Maintaining Open Space in Existing Parks each received 30% of the responses as a 'First Priority', followed closely by Park and Facility Maintenance with 29%. Overall these three received the highest responses for 'First' and 'High' priority combined, with Condition of Facilities and Park and Facility Maintenance each garnering over 75% response rates. Funding and Finances was the next most important priority, with Program Scheduling and Teen Spaces and Programming each receiving over 50% response as a 'First' or 'High' priority. The low response for Increasing Available Facility Space seems to project a perception that EPD has adequate facilities. The response for Land Acquisition reflects the knowledge that the community is largely built out, with few properties available to add to EPD.

Looking at the response by age categorization, there were no distinctive deviations from the overall response, with some minor deviations that might be expected. The 65+ age group responses to the question were the most diverse as far as prioritization, but with Upgrading Athletic Fields a very low priority. The Condition of Facilities response was the most consistent across all age groups.

Geographic responses were also very consistent, with no measurable deviation to responses from one region to another. The one deviation that is evident, but not significant, is regarding the Restoration of the Wilder Park Conservatory, where respondents from that region gave higher priority to this than other regions.



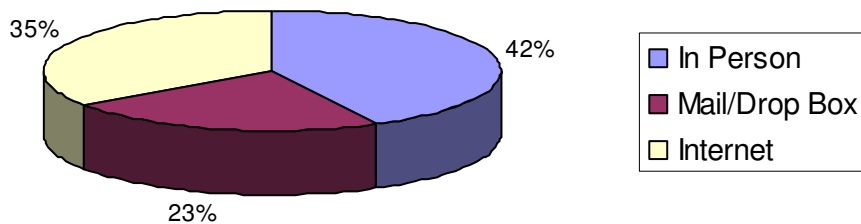
Prioritizing the Future



14. How do you prefer to register for Park District programs?

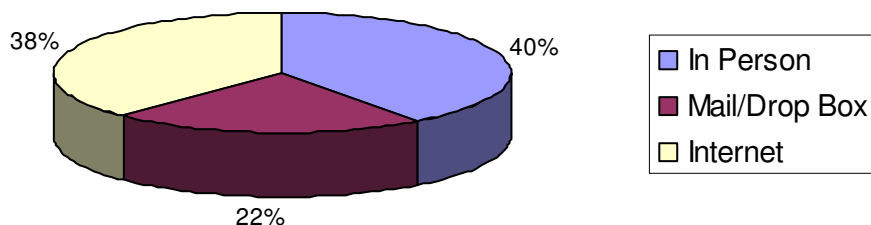
Elmhurst Park District residents clearly like the human contact aspect of program registration. It does provide an opportunity to ask EPD staff questions about the programs and about other aspects of EPD. But the other methods of registration are also very important to the respondents.

Program Registration Preference



Amongst respondents who participate in Park District programming the most, the same order of preference was recorded, but with In-Person and Internet registration preferences much closer.

**Program Registration Preference
Frequent Users**





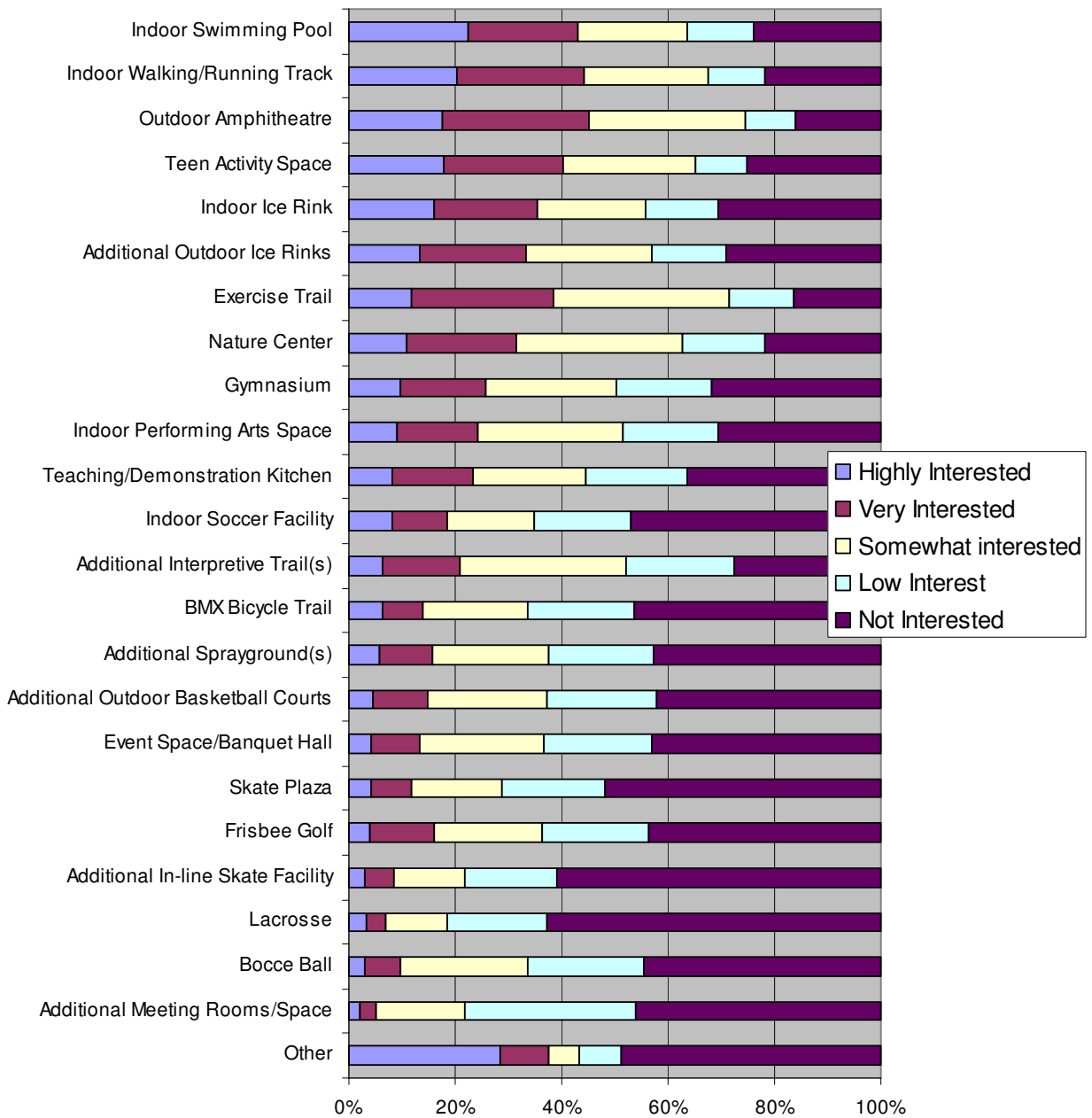
15. What is your level of interest in the Park District adding the following?

The opinions expressed by the survey respondents show that there is interest in some new facilities/amenities, but none of the options received overwhelming support. Only three items, an Outdoor Amphitheatre, Indoor Walking/Running Track and Indoor Swimming Pool, garnered more than 40% interest at the 'Highly' or 'Very' interested levels. The overall response to this question could be interpreted to present support to the Question 13 response, where maintaining existing EPD facilities and amenities was deemed most important, and maintaining open space in lieu of developing open space was given high priority.

In determining whether there are any specific interests in these facilities or amenities based on age group, several findings suggest some level of additional support for certain facilities based on age, while other findings illustrate support from all ages. In some cases, it was the interest of families with school-aged children that caused some higher levels of interest to be placed on amenities like Additional Outdoor Ice Rinks, an Indoor Ice Rink and a Teen Activity Space. The Teen Activity Space received the highest level of interest among these respondents, with 45-53% of respondents with children 5-17 being 'Highly' or 'Very' Interested. The Indoor Ice Rink followed closely in these age brackets, but also found support in households with adults aged 30-45.

The three facilities/amenities that received the most support - the Outdoor Amphitheatre, Indoor Walking/Running Track and Indoor Swimming Pool - received support from all age categories. Other facilities/amenities also showed some support from all ages include an Exercise Trail and a Nature Center. Each of these items had over 60% express at least some level of interest.

New Facility/Amenity Interest



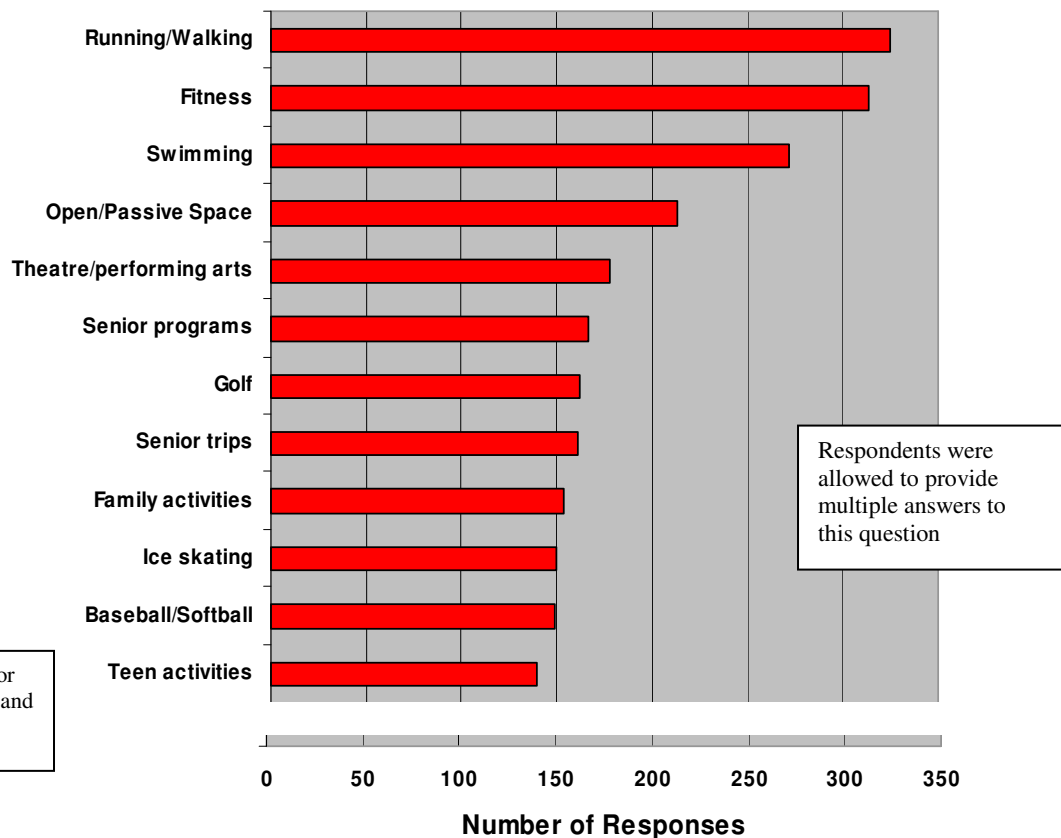


16. When considering the programming and facility needs of your family over the next five years or more, what do you think will be your family’s highest priorities?

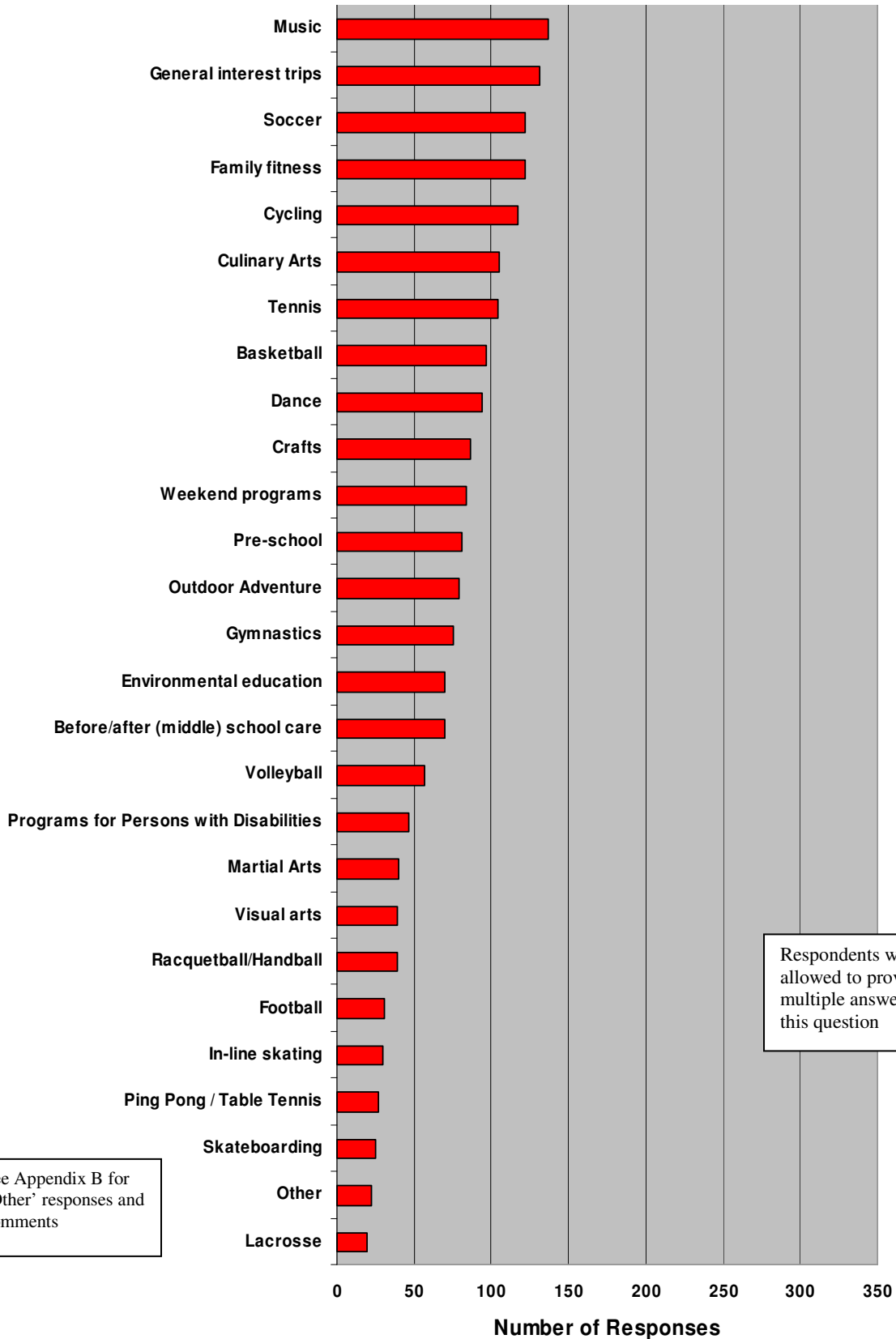
The Elmhurst Park District’s future plans must recognize increasing number of families with children as well as a growing senior population. These demographics are represented well in the responses to this question, as are concerns about maintaining current facilities and making sure that there is open space for residents to enjoy.

Running/Walking, Fitness and Swimming garnered the most responses to this question. The next most important response, Open/Passive Space, again reflects previous answers that represent the respondent’s interests in maintaining/preserving open space within the parks. Performing Arts, Family Activities and Family Fitness all represent current trends that can be seen both regionally and nationally. Senior Programs, Senior Trips and a few other category responses reflect the knowledge that there is a significant demographic within the District that is aging and will want programs and activities that meet their needs.

Future Family Priorities



See Appendix B for 'Other' responses and comments



See Appendix B for 'Other' responses and comments

Respondents were allowed to provide multiple answers to this question

Community Survey

17. If you have any additional comments, please use the space below to convey this information. If your comments are in regard to a specific question within this survey, please make reference to the question number.

Nearly 260 additional comments were presented by survey respondents. These vary from general accolades or concerns to comments about very specific elements. The comments received are presented in Appendix B.



FOCUS GROUP PROCESS

A series of three focus group meetings were organized to gain insight into the relationships between EPD and a variety of organizations who are users of EPD facilities, partners in programming and special events, or other groups representing interests in the community. During the meetings participants were asked about the relationship of their organization with EPD programs and facilities, questions regarding the general quality of EPD and opinions as to the strengths and weaknesses of EPD relative to their individual organizations. Organization Information forms were distributed to allow attendees to provide additional knowledge about their organizations. One of the focus groups was geared strictly toward athletics, while the other two had representation from several interest groups. For purposes of presentation and discussion, the athletics group is presented in one section and the two generalized groups in another.

ATHLETICS GROUP

Ten (10) individuals in leadership positions represented athletics organizations that utilize EPD fields and facilities. The representative of one of the athletic groups attended one of the general focus group meetings, but comments are included in this group. The organizations represented included:

- Elmhurst College
- York High School
- Team Elmhurst Soccer
- Elmhurst Baseball League
- Elmhurst Legion
- Cougar Baseball/Softball
- Elmhurst Youth Baseball
- AYSO Youth Soccer
- Eagles Football & Cheer





Elmhurst College has a “strong, positive relationship” with EPD in the athletics arena. York High School also enjoys a great relationship, though the unrealized EPD use of the high school’s field house was brought up by the other athletic group representatives as something still to be resolved. Elmhurst College has provided financial resources to EPD in order to build athletic fields that meet their needs on EPD property.

The other athletics organizations each have their own specific needs that EPD strives to meet. All of the organizations are experiencing some level of growth similar to that experienced by area schools. On average, 98% of the athletes participating in these groups are residents of the District. Field sizes are generally adequate for the teams utilizing them. The organizations provide all athletic programming independent of EPD.

The organizations utilize the fields from late afternoon until 8 or 9PM during the week, with many using the fields on weekends from 10AM until 9PM. With these time frames, lighting needs are evident as was expressed by the representatives.

The condition of the fields was the biggest concern expressed by the representatives, with turf quality and stone/rock issues discussed. There was a general feeling that newer fields, such as those at Berens Park, were not constructed properly as cost-cutting and the accepted low bidding process did not provide for the quality needed. Irrigation needs were considered a potential part of a solution to the problems, but existing clay soils issues will not be resolved by this. The athletics representatives are encouraged by EPD’s decision to install artificial turf on two soccer fields, but hopes that they are built to full size in order to accommodate the largest diversity of user groups.

Maintenance concerns ranged from mowing still being done during heavy rains in order to meet EPD mowing schedules to money from user fees not going back into the fields, causing a lack of needed maintenance.

Wish list items expressed by the athletic group representatives included additional artificial turf fields, better quality natural turf, additional and better spectator seating, lighting on a maximum number of fields and improved maintenance.





GENERAL FOCUS GROUPS

Two meetings were attended by forty-nine (49) individuals representing 31 different organizations or groups, including:

- Elmhurst Afternoon Women's Club
- People for Elmhurst Parks Foundation
- City Zoning & Planning Commission
- Prairie Management Advisory Committee
- Elmhurst Symphony
- EMH Guild
- Elmhurst Senior Citizens
- Elmhurst Academy
- Elmhurst Garden Club
- League of Women Voters
- Elmhurst Senior Citizens Commission
- Lexington Square
- Elmhurst Historical Museum Foundation
- School Board
- Elmhurst Great Western Prairie
- Crestview Garden Club
- Lincoln Elementary School
- Sierra Club
- City Alderman
- Special Education Resource Group
- Elmhurst City Center
- Timothy Christian School
- City of Elmhurst Youth Commission
- Elmhurst Women's Club
- Library Board
- Green Mountain Theatre Troupe
- Thomas Nelson Prairie
- Elmhurst Chamber of Commerce
- Character Counts
- Elmhurst Walk-In Ministry
- Sugar Creek Golf Course Users
- People for Elmhurst Park Foundation
- Courts Plus Users
- Wilder Park Neighborhood Residents

The diversity of the groups represented at these meetings resulted in some interesting discussions as ideas were expressed and considered on a broad scale. The meetings were held in an open forum type format that encouraged this interaction and discussion of EPD issues from a variety of perspectives.

By and large the various organizations represented expressed having a very good relationship with EPD. Some organizations utilize EPD facilities but also provide volunteers for various events, thus creating a symbiotic relationship that benefits all. EPD's pro-active approach to collaboration with community groups was lauded. Other organizations expressed the hope for greater future collaboration with EPD, and hope to open communications with EPD as a result of the planning process, including the Elmhurst Zoning & Planning Commission and the Special Education Resource Group.

Focus Groups

Wish list items that were presented by the representatives included:

- Expand after-school programs to include Institute days, early release, etc.
- Creating opportunities for teens
- Teen activities after school, weekend and summers
- Expanded Safety Town accessibility
- Expanded children's programming during school vacation weeks
- Community meeting rooms for use by partnering organizations
- Senior programs and classes held at Lexington Square
- Strengthening the 'Cultural Campus' relationship to the downtown
- Performing arts space
- Offer/expand Kindercare programs both AM & PM
- Youth participation in environmental activities
- Child outreach programs on health, environment, etc.
- Senior transportation service to EPD facilities/programs
- Mentally stimulating activities and programming for seniors
- Sliding fee scale for programs
- Preservation of open space
- Garden club gardening plots
- Garden club access to greenhouse
- EPD Board or staff representation on Senior Citizen Committee
- Greater safety and security in parks
- Youth basketball programs
- Youth volleyball programs
- Outdoor walking track at Courts Plus/Plunkett





STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

A series of meetings with key partners of EPD were held to develop an understanding of the collaborative nature of their relationship with EPD and how those relationships can be strengthened in the future. The stakeholders represent other governmental agencies that overlap EPD as well as key organizational partners with whom collaborative agreements are enacted. Organizations and agencies considered as stakeholders include:

- City of Elmhurst
- Public School District #205
- Elmhurst College
- Elmhurst Memorial Healthcare
- Forest Preserve District of DuPage County (FPDDPC)
- Elmhurst YMCA
- Elmhurst Art Museum
- DuPage County Department of Transportation

Each of these agencies/organizations values the relationship that they have with EPD, and considers EPD to be an important asset in the community. They consider their relationship professional, and believe that partnering for the greater good of the community is a part of their organizational philosophy. As one agency representative stated, “Partnerships bring better facilities.” But the types of collaboration between EPD and these agencies/organizations varies widely, from land deals to programming and from political support of initiatives to use of facilities.

A variety of possible new or expanded efforts were discussed including:

- Historical Museum needs additional space
- Cultural Campus initiatives involving the City, Elmhurst College and EPD
- Collaborative efforts to convince utility companies to bury lines
- Greater tourism/parks marketing efforts
- Collaborative ‘debit card’ initiative for intergovernmental agency use
- Youth Commission efforts to address teen activities and facilities
- Environmental programs/outreach with FPDDPC
- Land/maintenance agreement for establishment of a dog park and adventure courses with FPDDPC
- Performing arts venue with Elmhurst College
- Pool programs/facility use with YMCA and Schools
- Expanded adult programming at schools
- Field House track and activity areas
- Salt Creek Greenway completion
- Better and integrated scheduling of meeting rooms/spaces in all partner venues



COMMISSIONER VISIONING INTERVIEWS

The seven (7) Commissioners were interviewed individually to discuss their background, goals, concerns and opportunities for the future. On average, Commissioners have lived in the District for about twenty-five (25) years and have been involved with the Board an average of nearly seven (7) years. Two Commissioners have been on the Board for more than ten (10) years. Each of the Commissioners uses the parks and facilities fairly regularly, whether for personal fitness and recreational activities or for family activities and athletics. All expressed that their time on the Board is a fulfilling and rewarding experience and that the feedback they receive from the public is generally very positive.

The relationship between the Board and administration is characterized as open, respectful and effective. The staff members are characterized by the Commissioners as professional, pro-active and progressive. There is a general understanding that the staff is challenged to be creative and use their own initiative to get their work completed. There is also an understanding that many of the staff live in Elmhurst and have an 'ownership interest' in EPD and the community.

Relationships with the City of Elmhurst, Elmhurst College and School District 205 are characterized as very good, with many partnership agreements in place and new opportunities for the future. Relationships with private schools, churches and other organizations were also considered positive, but partnerships have been lacking.

Several challenges being faced by the Board were brought up and discussed. Among them, maintaining non-programmed open space, the condition of athletic fields and providing pool facilities that meet community expectations were discussed most often. There is a keen awareness by Commissioners that public perception of the funding mechanisms of EPD and fee structuring are not understood by many of their constituents, and that public education is an ongoing need. The need for land is also a major challenge, especially in light of the landlocked and developed nature of the community.

The Commissioners were asked to define their goals for the future as well as present their wish-list items for facilities and programming. Land acquisition strategies were also discussed. The goals ranged from practical to cutting edge. Similarly, the wish-list items include both simple needs of the District as well as large-scale initiatives. The following express some of the goals and wish-list items expressed by the Commissioners:



Park Board of Commissioners

- Maintaining / preserving open space
- Follow the Mission of EPD, not other government agencies
- Community center on the south side
- New facility/programs for teens
- Teen-designed programs
- Cutting edge programs and technologies
- Athletic field improvements
- Showcasing quality programs
- Maintaining open attitudes toward new programs and facilities
- Maintaining fiscal responsibility
- Keeping track of new initiatives in the region
- Performing arts venue and programs
- Board educational opportunities
- Protect resources and assets
- More PEP interaction
- Elimination of wait lists
- Address childhood obesity issues
- More flexible programming scheduling
- Non-programmed/multi-use spaces and gymnasium
- Staff empowered and challenged daily
- Present a safe environment for the community, staff and Board
- Expanded gymnastics programming
- A third pool complex in northwest area
- Ongoing opportunities for public comment/suggestions
- Take the Board to the people (meetings in other locations)
- Options to field-based athletics
- Administrative office enhancements
- Land acquisition site by site
- A 'Team' Board that utilizes individual strengths
- Consistent self-evaluation and re-evaluation at all levels
- Reinvent EPD as needed
- Operations and staffing assessment study

Many other very specific items were presented and discussed in the Board interviews that are important to the operations of EPD and the work of the Board. These items will be further explored as recommendations and strategies are developed.



STAFF VISIONING

Engaging the staff in the planning process is one of the more important exercises that can take place in the development of any comprehensive plan for two very important reasons. First, the staff has a better understanding of the parks and facilities, daily operations, issues, finances and potential solutions than anyone else possibly could. They understand the community that they serve and take pride in their work; wanting the best.

The second reason is even more important. Those who will ultimately be using the plan on a daily basis to guide their work need to know that they had a part in the formulation of that plan. Providing them with 'ownership' of the plan will allow them to better utilize the plan and, again, give them pride in their work. The EPD staff was engaged in a variety of ways to gain insight and better understand the operations of the District.

ALL-STAFF MEETING

A modified SWOT analysis workshop was held with full-time staff to involve as many people and gain perspective from as many points of view as possible. Approximately fifty-five (55) staff participated in this workshop. A series of staff demographic questions was first asked to understand their general background.

At this workshop, the Executive Director was not present in order to provide as much an open forum as possible, one in which people could say what they wanted. Comment forms were also provided for those who wanted to write their comments rather than express them verbally. In order to encourage participation, some parts of the SWOT specifically required each individual person to respond. This was most effective in asking people to state their number one wish-list item. Additional questions were used to gain an understanding of the staffs' relationship to the community.

ALL-STAFF COMMENT FINDINGS

The length of time that people have been with EPD shows that there is some turnover, but many have a solid history with the District. Twelve of the staff participants have joined EDP within the past year, with similar number in the 1-3 year and 3-7 year brackets. Twenty (20) participants have been with EPD for over 7 years, including six (6) who have been with the District for twelve or more years.



A surprising number of the staff participants reside within the boundaries of the District. These twenty (20) staffers show how integral EPD is to the community. An additional eight (8) live in communities directly adjacent.

Thirteen (13) of the staff participants have college degrees in parks and recreation or athletics related fields. This number shows a high level of staff expertise and interest in parks and recreation. Their level of interest also came across in other ways during the course of the meeting. EPD staff members have a high level of pride in their work and in the agency that they represent.

The staff participants were asked how they thought EPD is perceived by the community:

- Great programs
- Park District is part of the City government
- Horticulture
- Good parks
- Most (or all) revenue is generated by taxes
- Programs are too expensive
- Tax dollars paying for enterprise services
- Neighboring park districts' athletic fields are in better condition
- Good preschool programs
- Flawed registration process
- Can't get into programs

It is most interesting to compare what these staff said with what the public comments and survey results stated several months later. Clearly staff members know and understand the community that they serve. This knowledge also translates to their self-evaluation of the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities of EPD as are shown on the following pages. This is a very important key to providing the quality services and facilities that residents of the District expect.

Like the public meeting comments, staff comments can still be categorized in the manner in which the workshop and comment forms were based; with strengths, weaknesses and opportunities/wish list items providing an overview of the items presented and discussed. There was general consensus amongst the participating staff members on these items; thus, the listings are not in any order of preference.



Strengths of EPD

General

- Staff
- Residents of Elmhurst
- Volunteers
- Resources
- Website
- Enterprise Services
- Community image
- Future planning
- User friendly technology
- Pro-active management
- Recognition of individual & group efforts
- Fiscal responsibility
- Financial status
- Commitment to safety
- Continuing education
- High percentage of tax revenue
- Management
- Ray Graham Association
- Employee benefits
- Inter-governmental agreements/partnering

Parks & Facilities

- Property quality, locations & diversity
- The Hub
- Courts Plus
- Flower gardens
- Golf course

Programming

- Preschool programs
- Summer recreational programs
- Programming quality & diversity



Weaknesses of EPD

General

- Available land
- Storage
- Office space
- Lack of expansion space
- Old buildings
- Tractors/equipment
- Lack of data facilities
- Performance monitoring
- Turnover due to part-time status

Parks & Facilities

- Soccer/football field quantity and quality
- Indoor gym space
- North side maintenance facility
- Golf course maintenance facility
- Athletic field irrigation
- Conservatory and greenhouse - condition and age
- Poor air/heat in building
- Senior center
- Overcrowding at Courts Plus

Programming

- On-line registration
- After school programs for middle school age kids
- Teen programs
- Transportation to/from programs

Opportunities & Wish List

General / Administrative / Philosophy

- Centralized administration
- Continual feedback from the community
- Additional funding for capital improvement projects
- Expand the tax base
- Use air rights
- Greater public communication/education about EPD
- Better understanding of fiscal impacts per participant
- Additional funding for publications
- District wide phone system

Elmhurst Park District Staff

- PDA playground inspection
- Additional funding for maintenance and operations
- Expand volunteer/Adopt-a-Park programs
- Hire from within philosophy

Staff Needs / Efficiency

- Additional storage/office space
- Assistant park planner
- Additional trained horticulture staff
- Additional full-time staff at Courts Plus
- Additional full-time maintenance and custodial staff
- Childcare for staff
- Better maintenance shops with showers, etc.
- GIS system
- Trade resources/staff
- Universal timecard system
- IS workbench
- Additional registration/program manager
- New/updated maintenance equipment
- GPS mapping capabilities
- Trailers for equipment transport
- Training across the board
- Public interaction training
- Equity in management responsibilities

Parks & Facilities

- Synthetic turf fields
- Indoor water park
- Three court gymnasium
- Gymnasium center
- Indoor tennis courts
- Exercise studio
- Daytime gymnasium space
- South side recreation center
- Artificial turf soccer fields
- North side maintenance facility
- Dog parks
- Teen center
- New heating/cooling system for buildings
- Greenhouse space
- Conservatory
- Irrigation



Elmhurst Park District Staff

- Golf course expansion
- Wilder administration building
- Preschool space
- Courts Plus expansion
- Courts Plus shop
- Ice skating rink
- Dome for driving range
- More adventurous playgrounds
- Children's garden
- Lights for fields
- Food service upgrades
- Multi-purpose/party rooms/game room

Programming

- Open gym programs
- Adventure/outdoor programs
- Dog park training programs
- Transportation to/from programs
- On-line/touch-tone program registration
- Exercise studio classes
- Middle school programs/afterschool

An impressive effort was given by the staff in providing feedback both in the workshop and in written comments. The selflessness of the staff comes through in their listing of opportunities and wish-list items, where virtually all responses were for the greater good of the District and the community that it serves.

STAFF INTERVIEWS

Seventeen (17) senior staff members were interviewed individually to discuss their background, departments, goals, concerns and opportunities for the future. By and large the senior staff members are well-educated, with degrees or significant experience in their chosen professions, including eight (8) individuals with degrees in parks & recreation/fitness/administration. Almost all of these staff members have been with EPD for many years, with an average of over 7 years. There is a real dedication and commitment here; one that is unique to this agency. The energy level and enthusiasm shown during the interview process translate to a management team that not only enjoys what they are doing, but is excited by what they are doing, and constantly striving for even greater things.



Elmhurst Park District Staff

A trend that was identified in the all-staff workshop and was expanded upon in these interviews is the working philosophy that allows staff to go to the limits and use their skills and interests to try new approaches, propose new ideas and be creative. This philosophy empowers the staff to be their best, and keeps their jobs fresh and fun.

The interviews varied from person to person depending on their position and oversight. As such, some individuals were asked questions on a wide range of subjects while others were questioned in only a few areas. Some of the more important discussion points and findings from these interviews include:

- Public communications getting more sophisticated
- It is important to start children early to gain life-long park & rec users
- Marketing efforts relative to Parks Foundation and sponsorship activities is increasing
- It's ok to make mistakes
- Every new staff person is an upgrade to the quality of EPD
- Taxes make up only about ½ of the annual expenses of the District
- Enterprise Services facilities are important funding sources for the District
- Relationship of space to number of participants an important facilities and programming consideration
- Program fees charged to the public don't always break even with costs to produce programs
- Need to change from a 'grass' to a 'tree' philosophy in order to maintain real open space
- Environmental programming and facilities is a trend that needs more attention
- Wilder Park Conservatory a unique regional facility with marketing potential
- Residents utilizing ongoing EPD programs and those participating in single/special events are very distinct groups
- Programming wait lists need to be accommodated to maintain high level of community satisfaction
- Need to look for little ways to expand both programmed space and open space
- Neighborhood vs. centralized preschool philosophy needs to be explored
- Marketing of EPD is an important function of every member of the staff
- Proactive approach to maintenance and environment getting more important
- Facility/space/equipment needs to administer EPD are not a high community priority as they are not visible to the public



Visioning Conclusions

The Board of Commissioners and EPD staff members have an acute awareness of the community that they serve and the opportunities available for further enhancement of their facilities and programs. The District is administered in a manner that encourages creativity and communications, two factors that provide a working environment that attracts and maintains quality staff.

The general public, focus groups and stakeholders all shared a common interest in park and recreation excellence. The format of the workshops and meetings allowed people to provide quality feedback regarding EPD, feedback that helped in the preparation of the Community Survey that was completed a few months later. Public feedback into EPD is an important aspect of the comprehensive planning process, and one that should continue as demographics and recreation trends continue to change.



PUBLIC COMMENT MEETINGS

Two public meetings were held to solicit comments from the general public on the process and the recommendations developed for the Elmhurst Park District. The workshops were advertised in local media, on the EPD web-site and at a variety of EPD facilities. These meetings were held on a Saturday morning (20 participants signed in, including two EPD Commissioners) and the following Tuesday evening (21 participants signed in) to provide options for interested residents of the District to comment on the direction of the findings. Both meetings were held at the Wagner Community Center. Several of the participants had taken part in the visioning workshops at the beginning of the planning process and a few had received and responded to the Community Survey. Their participation in this follow-up phase shows a real commitment and interest in the Park District and its future.



At these meetings, and later through the EPD Administration Office, a 'Comment Form' was available for the public to fill out and send in. Six (6) individuals provided feedback on this form, all of whom attended one of the two public meetings.

At each public meeting a presentation was made that described the planning process being undertaken, reviewed the demographics of the District, described the findings of the visioning process and illustrated the responses received to the Community Survey. The park and facility assessments were described, along with capital recommendations that resulted from that assessment. The main focus of the presentation was on the Recommendations that provide direction in administration, operations and process for the Park District. Following the presentation, a public comment period was utilized to gain feedback on the recommendations and other components of the planning process.



PUBLIC COMMENT FINDINGS

The participants in the meetings engaged in good discussions about the presentation and issues regarding the Elmhurst Park District. Many of the comments, both at the meetings and those presented in writing, were similar to those received during the visioning phase of the project. Some of the issues discussed included senior program and use fees being too high, the need for teen activities and venues, athletic field conditions and scarcity of open space. Several of the specific points discussed are addressed in the Recommendations or in the Capital Improvement recommendations found in the park and facility assessments.

Public Comments

- Recommendations seem like a wish list
- Need more no-fee services for seniors
- Seniors built this District
- Costs of programs too high for seniors
- Courts Plus track use fee is too high
- Open space is becoming scarce
- We can't be all things to all people
- Focus on landscape/aesthetics
- Be realistic about projects & events
- Balance plans with budget
- Watch for properties that are on the market
- Consider EPD use of High School open space (detention area)
- EPD should be using High School facilities per agreement
- More public comment should be solicited on all things
- Pleased with idea of a dog park
- Shared senior/teen spaces will work
- Maximize ability to utilize Salt Creek for nature, fishing & canoeing
- Leave Wild Meadows Trace as it is
- Consider a maze in Wild Meadows Trace
- Teens need a place to go
- Abbey parking lot exit is a safety issue
- Possible utilization of former Elmhurst Memorial Health Care facility
- Disc golf in Maple Trail Woods
- Add track around outside edge of gym at Wagner Community Center
- Utilize old track in high school basement
- Athletic field conditions are a major problem
- Athletics fees not being put into field maintenance
- Expanded trail systems
- Land acquisition at First and Highland

PUBLIC COMMENT CONCLUSIONS

The comments made by the public attending the meetings and in written form provided additional insight into areas that were not addressed to the satisfaction of the public, and presented additional opportunities to be researched and considered. Modifications and additions to the Recommendations and to capital improvement recommendations were prepared for further discussion with the EPD staff and Board of Commissioners. Where such changes were deemed in the best interest of the District and the residents, the plan was altered.



Classification of Parks

5



Classification of Parks

The Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines developed by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) provide definitions for the various park classifications, but also recognize that, because each community is unique in terms of geographical, cultural and socioeconomic make-up, that each community should develop its own standards for recreation, parks and open space. This is especially important where communities are built out and do not have opportunities for significant expansion of amenities, facilities or open space.

As a means of organizing the public open space facilities found in the Elmhurst Park District, the park areas are classified according to a hierarchy that provides for a comprehensive system of interrelated parks. Active and passive recreation areas, natural areas, trails and facilities that draw visitors from beyond the District boundaries all can be placed into specific park categories. The park and open space classifications that are appropriate for the Elmhurst Park District do not necessarily meet the NRPA guidelines in a strict sense; as many parks are smaller than, yet include amenities not always typical of, NRPA guidelines. The EPD classifications are as follows:

- Mini Parks
- Neighborhood Parks
- School Parks
- Community Parks
- Linear Parks
- Special Use Parks

Definitions for the classification of parks and facilities are generally based upon the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) guidelines, but are refined to address the specific needs of the Elmhurst Park District and its residents. The criteria used to define each of the open space and park categories is described on the following pages.

Mini-Parks

MINI PARKS DEFINED

Mini-Parks are specialized facilities that serve a concentrated or limited population, or that serve a specific function or specific age group. Examples of amenities found in mini-parks include playground equipment such as swings, slides and climbing apparatus, benches/picnic tables, ornamental landscaping, etc.



SERVICE AREA

¼ mile or less

PARK SIZE

Between 2500 sq. ft. and 1.0 acre is typical

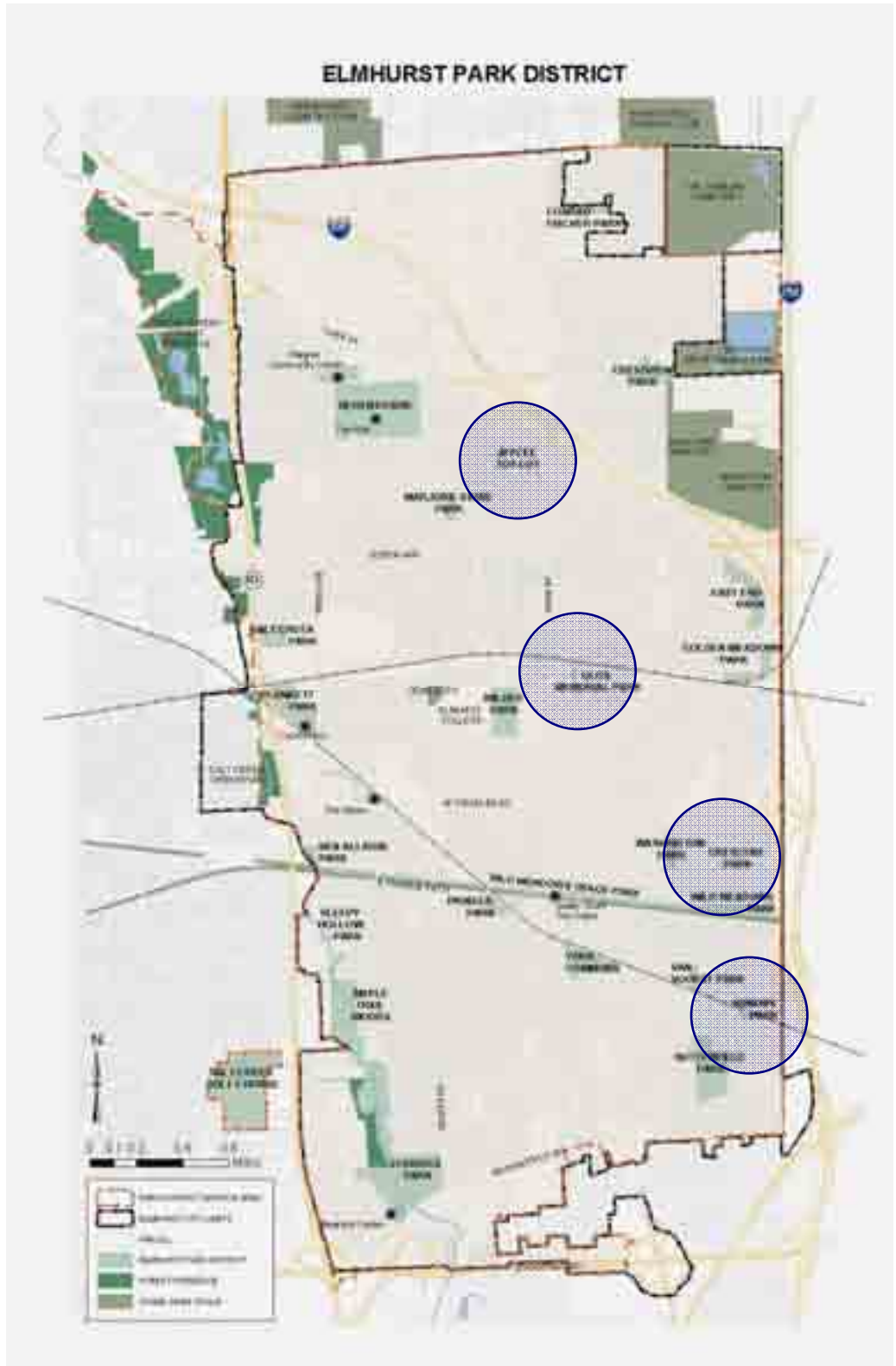
ELMHURST PARK DISTRICT MINI PARKS

Four parks in the EPD system are classified as Mini-Parks. These parks typically include a playground, picnicking, open space or some other amenity. EPD mini-parks range in size from as small as the .61-acre Crescent Park to the 1.26-acre Kiwanis Park.

Crescent Park	.61 acres
Glos Memorial Park	.94 acres
Jaycee Tot Lot	.58 acres
Kiwanis Park	1.26 acres



The location and service area of the mini-parks are shown on the adjacent map.



Neighborhood Parks

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS DEFINED

The Neighborhood Park remains the basic unit of the park system and serves as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood. Generally designed with a focus on informal active and passive recreation that serves neighborhood recreation needs, area is provided for recreational activities such as field games, court games, picnicking and playground areas. Many neighborhood parks may also contain athletic fields that are used by community athletic organizations, thus serving the community as a whole.



SERVICE AREA

Neighborhood Parks serves an area within a ¼ to ½ mile radius uninterrupted by major roads or other barriers.

PARK SIZE

5 to 10 acres is considered optimal, though several of the EPD parks that are classified as neighborhood parks are smaller. One to two acres are standard for every 1000 residents served.



ELMHURST PARK DISTRICT NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

Six parks in the EPD system are classified as Neighborhood Parks. These parks typically include a playground, picnicking, athletic fields or courts, open space or other amenities. EPD neighborhood parks range in size from as small as the 2.75-acre Ben Allison Park to the 10-acre Salt Creek Park.



Ben Allison Park	2.75 acres
Golden Meadows	6.04 acres
Marjorie Davis Park	3.25 acres
Pioneer Park	4.67 acres
Salt Creek Park	10.00 acres
Washington Park	3.20 acre



The location and service area of the neighborhood parks are shown on the adjacent map.

School Parks

SCHOOL PARKS DEFINED

The School Park sites serve a dual purpose of being a neighborhood park and an athletic and recreation venue associated with a specific school. This collaborative use of land allows an efficient and cost-effective pooling of resources and provides open space in neighborhoods where other park lands are not available; sometimes expanding the open space system within a neighborhood. School Parks are often larger than other neighborhood parks, provide a greater variety of amenities and have off-street parking available. Athletic fields and courts, playgrounds and other amenities are standard.



SERVICE AREA

Like the Neighborhood Parks, School Parks serves an area within a $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile radius uninterrupted by major roads or other barriers.

PARK SIZE

Vary by type of school, location and amenities provided, with 8 to 22 acres fairly standard. One to two acres are standard for every 1000 residents served.

ELMHURST PARK DISTRICT SCHOOL PARKS

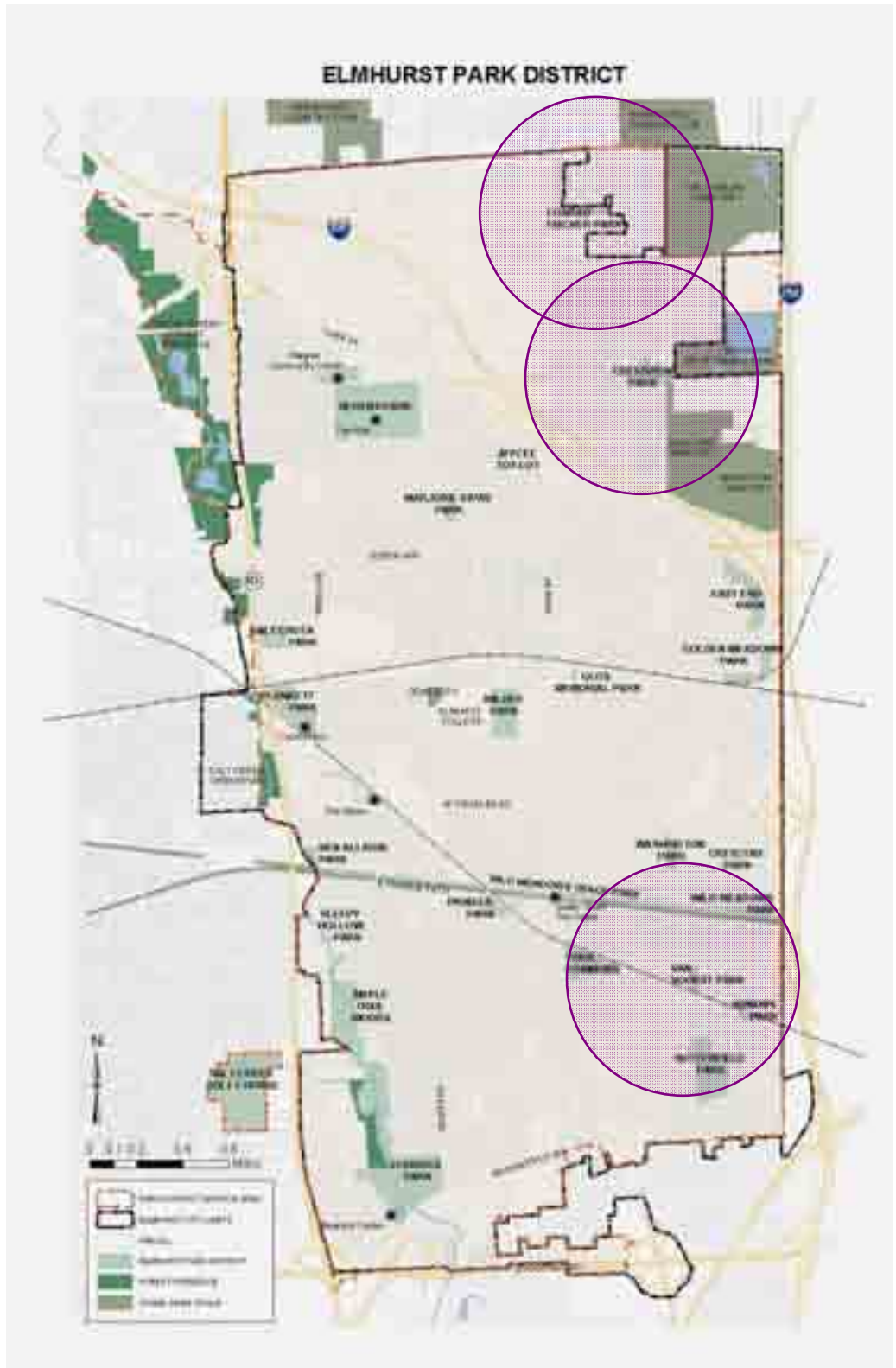
Three parks in the EPD system are classified as School Parks. These parks typically include a playground, picnicking, athletic fields or courts, open space or other amenities. The average park size is approximately 6.3 acres.

Conrad Fisher Park	13.21 acres
Crestview Park	11.14 acres
Van Voorst	2.92 acres

The location and service area of the school parks are shown on the adjacent map.



School Park Service Area





Community Parks

COMMUNITY PARKS DEFINED

Community Parks are diverse in nature, serving a broader purpose than the neighborhood or school parks. While some may include neighborhood amenities, the focus of a community park is on meeting community-based recreation, athletics and open space needs, and may contain significant athletic complexes, aquatic amenities, walking paths, picnicking areas and various other active and passive amenities depending upon community needs and site suitability. In some cases, a park with only a single athletic field that provides a venue for community athletic organizations may fall into this category regardless of its small size. The Community Park may also be the venue of an activity or amenity that has broad community appeal but does not fit the Special Use designation.

SERVICE AREA

Community Parks usually serve two or more neighborhoods, and with special amenities may serve the residents of the entire Park District. With neighborhood park amenities, the Community Park typically is designated to serve an area within a ½ mile to over 3 mile radius.

PARK SIZE

25.0 acres or more are preferred, but special amenities of community interest or athletic fields that provide for the community as a whole may be on much smaller sites. The traditional Community Park contains five to eight acres for every 1000 residents served.



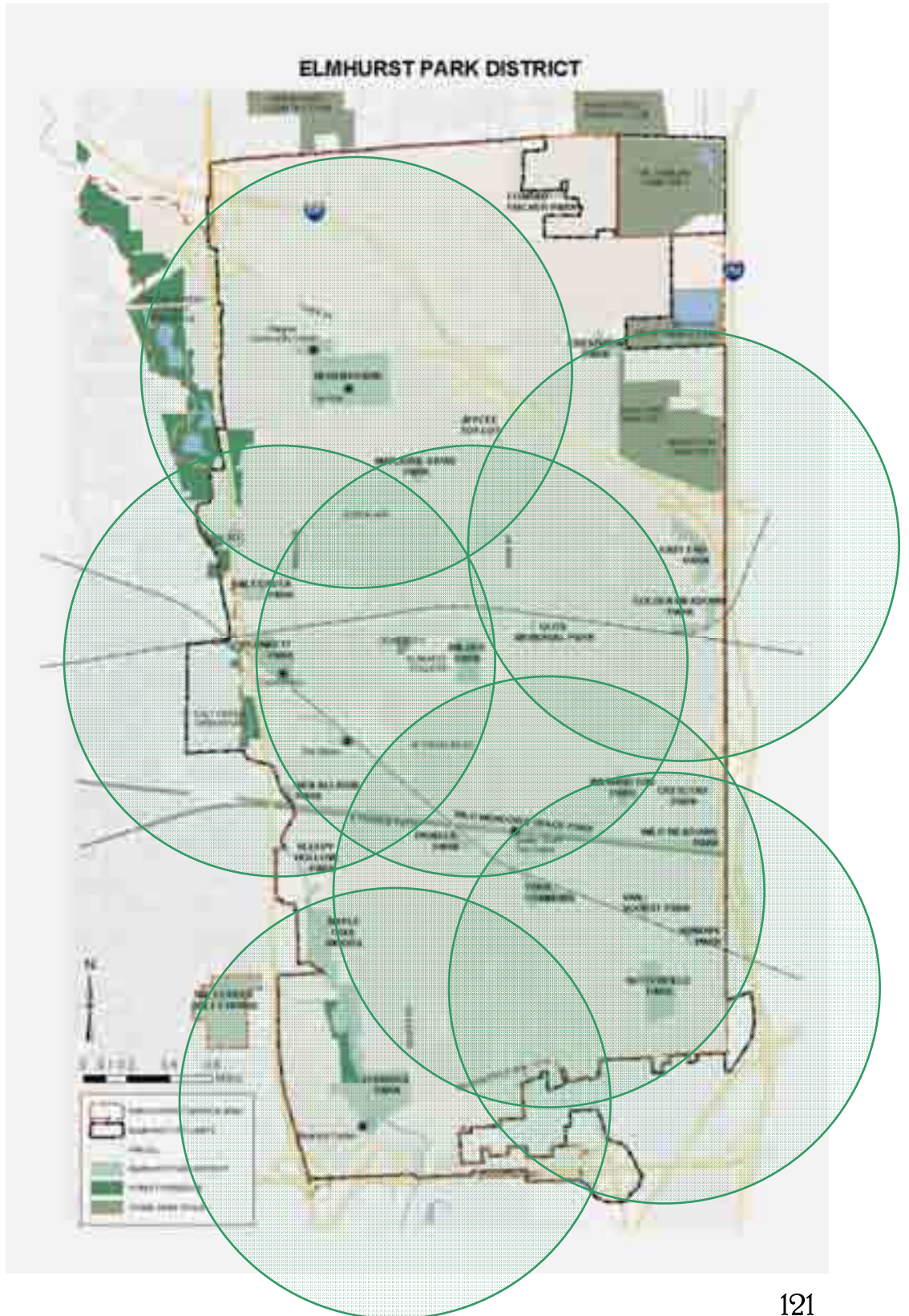
ELMHURST PARK DISTRICT COMMUNITY PARKS

Ten parks in the EPD system are classified as Community Parks. These parks include multiple athletic field and courts, and include such things as a skate park, spray pad and other unique amenities. EPD Community Parks range in size from the 11.6-acre York Commons to the 65.2-acre Berens Park.

Berens Park	65.20 acres	Plunkett Park	16.03 acres
Butterfield Park	24.56 acres	Wilder Park	17.30 acres
East End Park	13.17 acres	York Commons	11.62 acres
Eldridge Park	43.26 acres		

The location and service area of the community parks are shown on the adjacent map.

Community Park Service Area



Linear Parks

LINEAR PARKS DEFINED



Linear Parks include greenways, trails and other parks that protect natural resources corridors like streams and rivers, offer passive and educational recreation opportunities and connect other parks, resources and land use areas. Linear parks can provide trails that act as a passive use amenity or serve to provide commuter linkages.

SERVICE AREA



Linear Parks do not have a defined service area due to the nature of their shape and purpose.

PARK SIZE



The size of a linear park does not have traditional park size standards, but widths are recommended to be a minimum of 50' across.

ELMHURST PARK DISTRICT LINEAR PARKS



Three parks in the EPD system are classified as Linear Parks. Wild Meadows runs parallel to the Illinois Prairie Path to provide a greenway that has little development and includes a large section of restored prairie. Maple Trail Woods is a greenway that runs along Salt Creek. The Salt Creek Greenway trail will be developed within this corridor soon. Sleepy Hollow Park is a small extension of Maple Trail Woods.

Maple Trail Woods	93.61 acres
Sleepy Hollow Park	2.00 acres
Wild Meadows	57.37 acres



Special Use Parks & Facilities

SPECIAL USE PARKS/FACILITIES DEFINED

Special Use Parks cover a broad range of specialized park and recreation facilities, often with a single major use. Golf courses, historical sites, community center sites, theme parks, water parks and other special use facilities fall into this category. These parks may also include neighborhood or community park elements, but with amenities that have a regional appeal to visitors from outside the boundaries of the Park District.

SERVICE AREA

Special Use Parks/Facilities serve the entire Park District, and often provide amenities that draw visitors from well beyond the boundaries of the District.

PARK SIZE

The size of the park or facility site can vary significantly based on the needs of the amenity/facility.

ELMHURST PARK DISTRICT SPECIAL USE PARKS

Seven EPD parks and facilities are classified as Special Use Parks/Facilities. Each of these facilities offers amenities that appeal to the District residents and often to a greater regional population.

The Abbey
Courts Plus
Sugar Creek Golf Course
The Hub

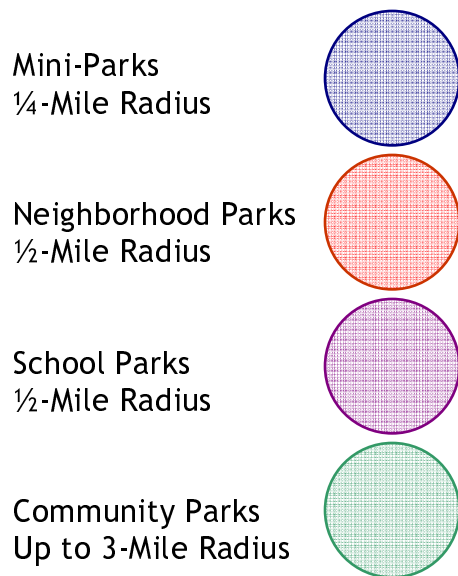
Wagner Community Center
East End Pool
Smalley Pool



Park System Service Areas

SERVICE AREA PLAN

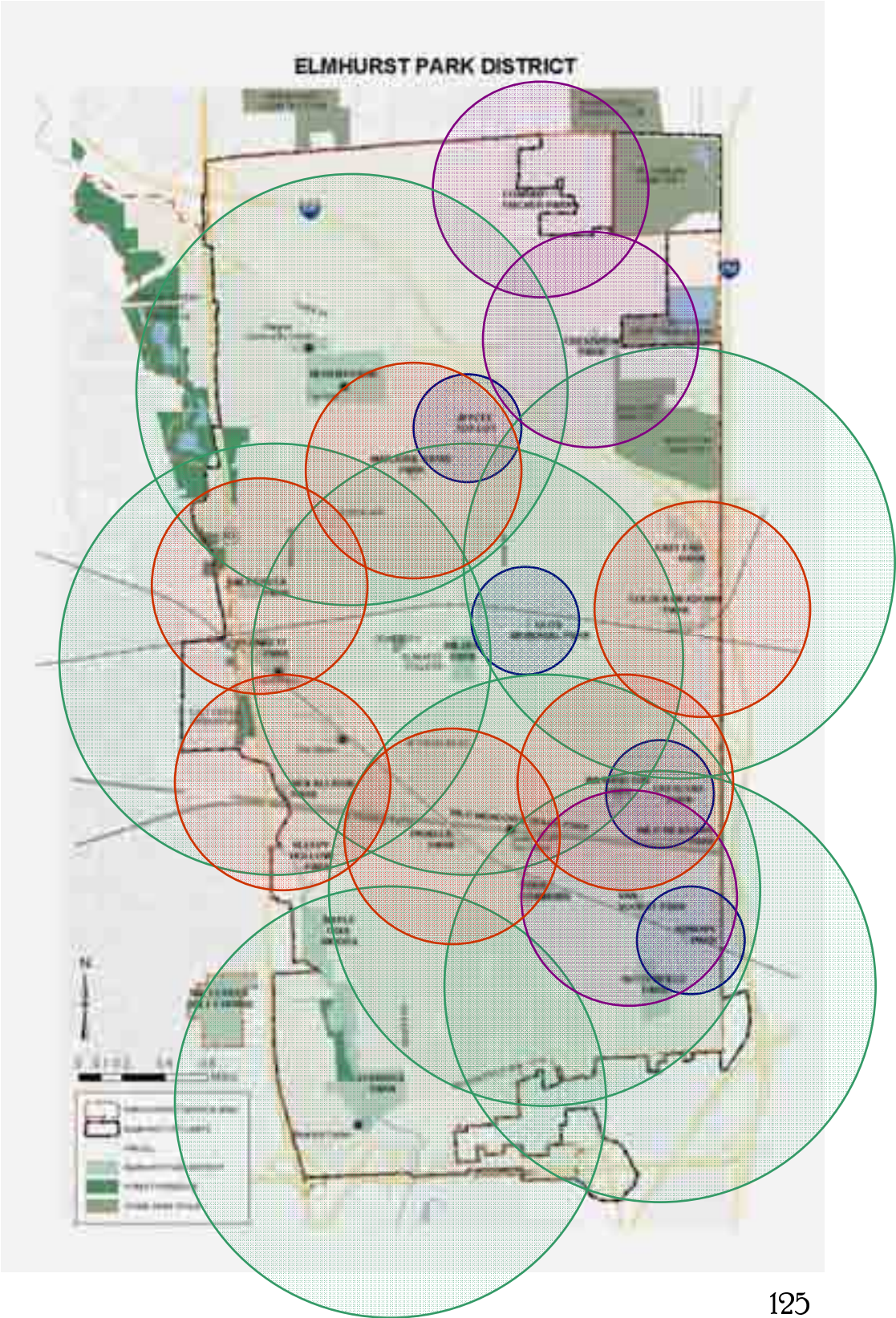
The adjacent map illustrates the service areas for Mini, Neighborhood, School and Community parks found within the Elmhurst Park District. Service areas are consistent with the guidelines established by the National Recreation and Park Association. Linear Parks and Special Use Parks & Facilities do not have defined service areas as they are considered to offer amenities and services that appeal to the entire resident population of the agency. In some cases, the actual service area of any park may be larger if the park includes amenities of regional appeal. Smaller service areas are also possible where major roadways act as barriers to park access. For illustration purposes, these roadway barriers are not shown. The service areas identified are as follows:



With the service area radii for each park type superimposed, it is evident that Elmhurst Park District provides excellent park and recreation access to its residents.



Park System Service Areas



Comparative Analysis

6



In order to understand how well the Elmhurst Park District provides park and recreation amenities and facilities for its residents, a comparison with other park districts was developed. The rationale behind this comparison is that a localized comparison offers a more accurate analysis of needs and potential District deficiencies. This approach is consistent with National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Statewide Outdoor Recreation Partnership Plan (SORPP) recommendations.

Because EPD is at or near its population capacity, this type of comparison could be considered less important than it is in districts/communities that are still developing and growing, as making any significant additions to amenity offerings is difficult where land acquisition potential is limited. The comparison does, however, provide a good understanding of EPD's current offerings to their residents.

The comparison includes park districts that are adjacent or in regional proximity to EPD, comparable in population and/or demographics to the EPD or districts that are in mature communities. Park Districts that are still in high growth areas were not used for comparison as their level of service offerings are subject to ongoing changes in population or amenities. Nearby districts in older communities that exhibit extremely low acreages as compared to population were also not used as these are not typical of most regional park and recreation agencies. While some of the adjacent or nearby districts are relatively small when compared to EPD, their inclusion is still valid when comparing amenity offerings based on population ratios. The nineteen districts used for comparison include:

Addison Park District	Lombard Park District
Bensenville Park District	Mount Prospect Park District
Buffalo Grove Park District	Northbrook Park District
Des Plaines Park District	Oak Brook Park District
Downers Grove Park District	Rolling Meadows Park District
Elk Grove Park District	Schaumburg Park District
Glen Ellyn Park District	Streamwood Park District
Glenview Park District	Wheaton Park District
Itasca Park District	Wood Dale Park District
Lisle Park District	

The comparison includes the quantification of amenities that are traditionally found in park districts and common to most of those districts included in the analysis. It also includes specialty amenities that some residents of EPD have identified as wants or needs. The population of each district and the number of total acres of park lands are key to providing a viable analysis that is based on truly comparable elements.



Comprehensive Master Plan 2007
Comparative Analysis

Amenity	Park District																	Average Park Districts per 1000 Population	Average Park District per 1000 Population	Elmhurst Park District	Elmhurst Park District per 1000 Population			
	Addison	Bensenville	Buffalo Grove	Des Plaines	Downers Grove	Eik Grove	Glen Elyn	Glenview	Itasca	Lisle	Lombard	Mount Prospect	Northbrook	Oak Brook	Rolling Meadows	Schaumburg	Streamwood					Wheaton	Wood Dale	Totals
Population (in 1000s)	45	25	44	59	50	35	35	53	9	33	42	58	35	9	20	72	37	55	14	730	38.4			44
Total Acres	340	330	419	381	603	474	326	739	115	392	441	507	506	150	164	1,183	354	851	156	8,431	443.7	11,556	10,621	462
Ball Fields	25	17	36	18	17	29	31	55	12	41	22	41	25	6	10	49	14	30	12	490	25.8	0.672	0.736	32
Soccer/Football	6	4	30	5	14	29	17	37	9	10	14	33	13	5	8	17	8	25	5	289	15.2	0.396	0.782	34
Tennis Courts	22	5	26	20	17	19	8	51	4	24	11	19	22	22	15	43	7	17	4	356	18.7	0.488	0.759	33
Basketball Courts	12	9	40	18	12	25	5	36	10	14	5	14	5	9	5	29	13	13	5	279	14.7	0.382	0.372	14
Playgrounds	2	10	51	27	24	33	21	39	9	28	15	21	16	7	9	57	53	24	11	457	24.1	0.626	0.414	18
Pools/Aquatics	2	1	2	3	2	4	2	3	1	0	1	3	2	2	2	4	3	1	1	39	2.1	0.053	0.069	3
Skate Parks	0	0	1	1	0	1	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	11	0.6	0.015	0.023	1
Indoor Ice Rink	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	6	0.3	0.008	0.000	0
Outdoor Ice Skating	5	2	6	5	4	3	3	2	0	1	2	3	3	0	0	14	1	6	0	60	3.2	0.082	0.000	0
Golf Courses	0.5	2	0	1.5	0.5	1	0	1.5	0	0.5	0.5	1	2	0	0	2	0	1.5	1	16	0.8	0.021	0.011	0.5

Amenity

COMPARISON OVERVIEW

When preparing an assessment comparing the offerings of park districts, it is important to recognize that side by side comparisons of the quantity of any amenity is not a comparison that is viable or even appropriate unless the population numbers of the districts are almost identical. Clearly a community of 10,000 people is likely to have less soccer fields than a community of 50,000; a difference that translates to any amenity. Therefore, it is important to compare the Elmhurst Park District to others districts based on the ratio of an amenity to the population. As such, the two columns in the Comparative Analysis Chart that are of key importance are the 'Average per 1000 Population' and the 'Elmhurst Park District per 1000 Population', where the ratio of amenities to population are definitive.

For this analysis, the population, acreage and amenities are totaled for the districts and then divided by nineteen to get an average for each comparison element. The acreage and amenities are then divided by the average population (in thousands) to provide the ratio of each amenity that is compared with EPD.

The comparison analysis does assume some minor measure of inconsistency given that park districts often have a variety of types of a single amenity that are simply identified on district web-sites and promotional materials, as an amenity without differentiating the type. For example, the reporting of a basketball facility could include a full court or be a simple three-way basket often found at elementary school parks. In all cases, unless specific alternative documentation was readily available, the Illinois Association of Park Districts listing of amenities, as provided by the individual districts, are used for comparison purposes.

A chart that compares the offerings of the Elmhurst Park District and the nineteen other districts follows.





Comparative Analysis

POPULATION

The nineteen park districts included in this comparison range in population from 9,000 to 77,000, with an average of approximately 38,400; approximately 6,000 less than the Elmhurst Park District. This range of population is within a reasonable range for comparison given that the comparison is based on a population ratio. Three of the park districts - Addison, Buffalo Grove and Lombard - have similar populations to EPD.

ACRES OF PARK LAND

The total acres of land are used for this comparison, including land that is owned, leased or managed by the park districts. The park districts being compared have a range from 115 acres in the Itasca Park District to 1,183 acres in the Schaumburg Park District.

NRPA has long utilized 10 acres per 1000 population as a standard recommendation for the amount of land that a park and recreation agency should provide. Of course this standard is one that, again, varies based on local needs and assessment. In the Chicagoland area, there are park districts that provide less than five acres per 1000 because of their history of land development and open space acquisition. Others significantly exceed this standard as planning and development combined to allow greater open space for parks and recreation to be provided.

While the Elmhurst Park District has approximately 20 acres more than the average of the nineteen comparison districts, the true comparison is in the number of acres per 1000 population. The average of the nineteen comparative districts exceeds the NRPA standard with 11.56 acres per 1000. EPD is one of those districts that have exceeded the NRPA standards, with 10.62 acres per 1000 population. This very positive comparison can be attributed in large part to the fact that the Elmhurst Park District has been in existence since 1920, allowing open space to be considered concurrent to the majority of the development of the community.

Of the nineteen comparative districts, eleven provide a greater land ratio of acres per 1000 population. Of those districts with a similar total population to EPD, EPD exceeds their ratio by 0.10 to 3.06 acres per 1000 population.

BALL FIELDS

The number of baseball and softball fields varies significantly from district to district. Seven of the comparison districts provide more ball fields per 1000 than EPD, with Glenview, Itasca and Lisle providing greater than one ball field for every 1000 population. EPD provides 1.1 times the average of the nineteen districts in the comparison, with one ball field for every 1360 residents of the District.



SOCCER/FOOTBALL FIELDS



The Elmhurst Park District provides a significant number of soccer and football facilities to serve its residents. With 34 fields, only the Itasca Park District provides a higher ratio of soccer/football fields than EPD, with one per 1000 population. Compared to the average of the nineteen districts, EPD provides 2.1 times the average, with one soccer/football field for every 1208 residents of the District.

TENNIS COURTS

The importance of tennis is evidenced from one park district to another by the extreme differences in ratio of courts to population. The Wheeling Park District, not included in this comparison, provides only one tennis court for every 17,500 residents while Oak Brook, where tennis is of great importance to its residents, provides one court for every 409 residents. Compared with the average of those districts of a similar population, Elmhurst Park District provides 1.5 to 3 times the number of tennis courts. Compared with the average of all nineteen districts in the comparison EPD provides more than 1.5 times the average, providing one tennis court for every 1,318 residents of the District.



Comparative Analysis

BASKETBALL COURTS

Basketball continues to be a staple amenity in most park districts as it can be utilized by individuals as well as groups; as a pick-up game as well as organized team competition. Ten of the nineteen comparison districts provide a greater ratio of basketball courts than does the Elmhurst Park District. Two districts, Itasca and Oak Brook, provide more than one court for every 1000 residents. The quantity of EPD basketball offerings are below the average of the nineteen districts in the comparison, offering one basketball court for every 3,107 residents of the District, while the average is one court for every 2,615 residents.



PLAYGROUNDS



Playgrounds are a very important part of any park district, providing many residents with their first park district experiences as children. The Elmhurst Park District provides one playground for every 2,417 residents of the District. Fifteen of the comparison districts offer a ratio greater, with an average of one playground for every 1,596 residents in the combined nineteen districts. Comparing EPD with the average of the nineteen park districts, EPD provides only 66% the number of playgrounds for its residents.

POOLS/AQUATICS

With the Smalley Pool newly renovated, the East End Pool renovation in progress, and facilities at Courts Plus and The Hub, the Elmhurst Park District have a variety of aquatic facilities that provide well for the community. Comparing aquatic features with other districts is difficult when considering the variety of facilities that are offered by the districts. Some districts, like the Elk Grove Park District, offer a water park that is a regional attraction. Others provide simple lap pools for their residents. Compared with the average of the nineteen park districts included in this analysis, EPD provides 1.3 times the number of aquatic facilities, with this ratio only considering the two major pool facilities at East End Park and York Commons plus the pool located in Courts Plus.

SKATE PARKS

In the Chicagoland area, skate parks continue to be an optional amenity rather than a required one. Of the nineteen park districts in the study, eleven do not have a skate park, and two have only recently built their parks. The Glen Ellyn Park District and Glenview Park District each have two skate parks, bringing the average of the nineteen park districts to one skate park for every 66,364 residents. This translates to EPD providing 1.5 times the average of the nineteen. The Buffalo Grove Park District is the only comparably sized districts offering a skate park facility.



INDOOR ICE RINKS

Only three of the nineteen comparative park districts have indoor ice skating facilities. Glenview, Northbrook and Rolling Meadows Park Districts each have facilities with two indoor rinks. Of these three, Rolling Meadows and Northbrook are smaller districts while Glenview is significantly larger. The construction and operating costs of indoor ice facilities continues to be a deterrent for most park districts.

OUTDOOR ICE SKATING

Outdoor ice skating facilities come in many forms, including ponds, flooded tennis courts, flooded lawn depressions and, occasionally, an actual ice rink. This diversity makes it very difficult to provide a meaningful comparison as some districts even have facilities that include two or three of these types. The Elmhurst Park District does not promote ice skating facilities, but does open the Eldridge Park lagoon for ice skating when weather conditions provide for safe use of the lagoon. Itasca, Oak Brook, Rolling Meadows and Wood Dale also do not provide outdoor skating, though Rolling Meadows does have a double indoor facility.

Comparative Analysis

GOLF COURSES

Golf course offerings are unique in that the quality of the course determines whether it will draw users from outside the district in addition to the district residents who might have annual memberships and participate in golf programs. A quality course in a small district can successfully compete with any other course and make development and operations a viable amenity for a park district. With one 9-hole course, the Elmhurst Park District provides a service offering ratio that is approximately half the average of the other 19 districts in the comparison. Addison, Downers Grove, Lisle and Lombard also offer 9-hole courses. Schaumburg, Northbrook and Bensenville each offer 36 holes of golf, thus providing a higher ratio.



CONCLUSIONS

The Elmhurst Park District is shown to provide an amenity to population service ratio that is higher than the average of the nineteen park districts in the comparative analysis in the categories of ball fields, soccer/football, tennis, pools/aquatics and skate parks. These results are based on meeting community needs that have been expressed throughout the years as parks have been developed and redeveloped. When these results are combined with the overall quality of these same facilities, it is evident that the Elmhurst Park District offers its residents facilities and amenities that exceed most park districts.

While other facilities and amenities are provided in some park districts that the Elmhurst Park District does not have, there is not a perceived deficiency or public expression of need for many of these facilities or amenities. Public opinion, in fact, expressed a desire to maintain the unbuilt open space now offered and to focus on maintaining and enhancing existing facilities and amenities first. As described earlier, making any significant additions to amenity offerings is difficult where land acquisition potential is limited. As such, the ability of the Elmhurst Park District to provide above-average amenity to population ratios in the categories important to its residents is an important accomplishment.

Inventory & Assessment

7



The on-site evaluation of all EPD parks and facilities took place over a three month period in late 2005. This evaluation provides the basis for formulating recommendations for improvements to each park and facility. As such, the documentation of conditions and amenities is a very important step in the comprehensive planning process.

INVENTORY & ASSESSMENT

Prior to initiation of the on-site evaluation, the background information of each property was researched on the EPD web-site and other EPD documentation, a map or plan of the property was printed and an inventory sheet prepared that was unique to each individual site. The inventory sheets listed facility name, address and acreage. A 'character' section was included to describe first impressions of each site. Signage was evaluated for the condition, visibility and location of the facility sign and whether any off-site wayfinding signage is seen in the neighborhood areas nearby. Landscaping and furnishings are listed, along with the specific recreation amenities found on each individual site. Checklist items for each amenity, landscape element and furnishing are listed under each heading.

An average of over two hours of time was spent on each property preparing a general inventory of amenities, assessing their condition and noting potential improvements for each site. Existing conditions of site furnishings, recreation amenities, court surfaces and equipment, athletic fields, fencing, lawns, etc. were documented. The evaluation also included measuring athletic fields to make sure they meet the needs of the organizations that use them. Photographs were taken of each site, including general park views, specific amenity views and detail photos of furnishings and problem areas.

Maintenance of parks and facilities was also considered in the evaluation as maintenance can often be the cause of issues that require improvements. Maintenance recommendations will also be included as a part of the comprehensive plan where appropriate.

PARK AND FACILITY EVALUATIONS

A rating system is applied to each major component of a park or facility in order to gauge the overall quality of each property. As an example, if a property has a picnic area, soccer field, baseball field, playground and a variety of site furnishings and landscape elements, each of those items are evaluated separately. Overall property ratings are based on an average of the subcategory ratings. A fact sheet is included for each property that contains a property description, property rating, recommendations and photographs.

Standardization

DISTRICT-WIDE RECOMMENDATIONS

During the on-site inventory and analysis of EPD properties, a number of common opportunities for improving the properties were found that could be applied to parks and facilities throughout the District. There were also specific parks and facilities that should undergo a master planning process to make major modifications to the facilities and amenities on those properties.

STANDARDIZATION OF SITE FURNISHINGS & AMENITIES

While each EPD property can have its own character or theme, there are many reasons for developing a standardized palette of certain furnishings and amenities. Standardization can provide a common look throughout the EPD system that presents an image that can be identified as a part of the Elmhurst Park District. Also, buying multiple units of a single item can often provide long-term cost saving to EPD.

There are existing EPD parks and facilities that have multiple types and materials of furnishings in close proximity to one another, creating a chaotic feeling and a definitive lack of aesthetic. The following elements should be standardized for use on properties throughout the District, and should all work together (style, materials and installation) to present a distinct image for the District that says quality.

- Benches
- Picnic Tables
- Trash Receptacles
- Bicycle Racks
- Playground Edging
- Parking Lot Lighting
- Pedestrian Lighting
- Drinking Fountains



It is certainly appropriate for individual parks to project their own image and character rather than looking like every other park. But it is still important that the character of individual parks have some type of consistency. Within any given park, the design philosophy of using like materials and styles of elements to create an image for that park is important.

QUALITY MATERIALS

Quality is a philosophy. EPD provides quality programming and has many quality parks and facilities. EPD also strives to be environmentally conscious by utilizing recycled materials for many site furnishings and playground surfaces. While there may be high quality recycled site furnishings available to meet the environmental philosophy of the District in this regard, the recycled plastic benches and picnic tables currently being used do not exhibit a quality aesthetic, and they have a history of significant bowing within relatively short periods of time; thus requiring earlier than normal replacement. EPD should undergo a systematic replacement of the recycled plastic furnishings found on its properties.



Playground surfaces also present a component of quality in the parks. Poured/sprayed surfaces present the highest quality image, while recycled rubberized products can also present a quality image. At the same time that the quality of the playground surfaces is being considered, ADA accessibility should also factor into the decision of which surfaces to use. The use of recycled shredded rubber surfaces creates an interesting conflict in meeting ADA and CPSP standards. While these mulches do meet ADA criteria, their accessibility rating is significantly higher when the material has been compacted. At the same

time, this compaction reduces the ability to cushion falls. Only the poured/sprayed surfaces and the tiled surfaces fully meet both ADA and CPSP criteria.

EPD utilizes 55 gallon drums as trash cans at most of its parks and facilities. These barrels often detract from an otherwise very aesthetically pleasing setting, and promote an image that does not spell quality. EPD should undergo a systematic replacement of all barrels using a standardized receptacle throughout the system.



Quality



Fencing is an element found in many parks for many different purposes. And it is an element that can significantly affect the character and quality of a park. EPD has a variety of fencing types and materials in use within its parks, including pvc fencing, split rail and chain link in different colors and forms. Those playgrounds where wooden split rail fencing has been used project a character and quality that exceeds other playground containment

methods. Galvanized chain link is a long-traditional standard for use on ball field backstops and fencing. Vinyl-coated chain link provides aesthetic and some safety attributes that make it preferable for use, with black and brown coated fencing the least obtrusive aesthetically, while also providing a backdrop that allows better visibility of baseballs and softballs. Replacement of existing galvanized fencing with vinyl-coated should be carried out as replacements come due.



Quality can also extend to plant materials. Quality trees and shrubs not only produce a better aesthetic, but may also be healthier and have greater longevity. And the appropriate use of plant materials provides character to a park and can make improvements to the environment. With park and recreation agencies taking on a greater role as stewards of our natural resources, EPD should use plantings to enhance the environmental quality of the parks as well as enhancing the aesthetics of the parks.



SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

Safety in EPD parks and facilities should always be a high priority, and the safety of its patrons is something that is evident in the everyday operations of the District. Safety concerns can be quite diverse and need addressing from a variety of perspectives. The few items that have been identified for improvement are diverse as well.

Although the parks open and close with the phases of the sun, site lighting is still an important safety component in the parks. Where appropriate, safety lighting should be in place. The type and location of lighting is also an important safety consideration, as flood lighting angled outward rather than toward the ground can create unsafe conditions. EPD should review its site lighting annually and make sure that lighting is placed where it is needed.



Site utilities often have access panels, manholes or other maintenance devices that were installed flush with the ground elevation but that have, over time, either raised above or sunk into the ground. These create trip hazards in lawns and paved areas that can be dangerous, and be a liability. Ongoing maintenance should be completed to raise ground levels around these hazards or add risers to those locations that are below grade in order to eliminate these hazards.

The Chicago-style backstop was developed to try to keep foul balls from leaving the playing area, making spectators and parked cars less prone to the effects of an errant baseball, and are effective in this regard. They are also aesthetically elegant when compared to the more traditional styles of backstop. But many agencies that put these into their facilities years ago are going back to the traditional styles due to the possibility of injury to the batter, catcher and umpire directly beneath the arched support. Foul balls hit straight up onto this support have been known to bounce straight down with a velocity that is difficult to avoid. For that reason, EPD should consider replacing the Chicago backstop with the traditional style as replacement becomes needed.



Enhancements

PARK & FACILITY ENHANCEMENTS

The following recommendations are based on common opportunities for improvements on a District-wide basis. It is recommended that these improvements be implemented over a three to ten year period to bring all EPD properties to the same standard in a relatively short period of time. It is important to first take the time to develop quality standardization of furnishings and materials before embarking on these improvements. Upgrades to parks and amenities made prior to developing these standards, including those recently made, may need to be repeated in 5 years to meet those new quality standards. While many of these elements are listed in the recommendations on the individual park profiles, they should be considered system-wide.



Park Amenities

- Replace all picnic tables
- Add more picnic tables in parks with limited amenities
- Add ADA picnic tables at all picnic locations
 - On paved surfaces w/walkway access
- Bicycle racks all parks and facilities
 - With paved surfaces and access on both sides
- Trash receptacle replacements
- Add picnic pavilions in appropriate locations

Landscape improvements at all parks

- Shade trees in and around parking lots to shade large expanses of pavement
- Landscape areas for seasonal interest/aesthetics
- Signage landscaping
- Landscape areas within playgrounds
- Shade trees in/around playgrounds

ADA accessibility improvements



Signage & Wayfinding

- Directional street signage for more parks/facilities
 - Work with City
- Finish replacing old signage at all parks



Toilet facilities

- Toilet buildings at athletic use sites
- Portable toilets within shaded enclosures

Athletic Fields/Courts

- Re-cut baseball/softball infields
- Lighting
- Irrigation
- Black vinyl coated fencing/backstops
- Soils amendments/Seeding (systematic improvements)
- Concrete pads under all team bench areas
- Concrete pads under all spectator seating areas
 - ADA walkways to seating areas
- Move basketball hoops out of parking areas



Site Master Plans

NEW FACILITIES / REDEVELOPMENT SITE MASTER PLANS

New facilities have been identified for possible addition to the Park District, though specific sites have not yet been determined. Several parks are identified as needing more than simple playground replacement or walkway resurfacing. These parks should have new master plan designs that balance the needs for open space with programmed activity areas. Some possible pairings of park sites and amenities are listed below.

- The Abbey - Redevelopment
- Wilder Mansion/Administration/Conservatory - Redevelopment
- Plunkett Park/Courts Plus - Expansion Study
- Eldridge Park (West Side) - Nature Center*/Dog Park**
- Crescent Park - Landscape Redevelopment
- Wild Meadows Trace - Fitness Course/Disk Golf
- Kiwanis Park - Redevelopment
- York Commons - Redevelop Playground/Skate Park/Volleyball area
- Berens/The Hub - Initiate remaining components of Master Plan



New or redeveloped facilities that focus on greater senior and teen activities and programs are also recommended. A teen activity hub should include indoor and outdoor amenities such as an urban skate plaza, a multi-use/basketball court, a music center, a computer center and a performance/multi-use space. A senior activity center should include such amenities as a computer center, a music center, indoor and outdoor walking areas, exercise/multi-purpose space and a library/game club.

* The existing Administration building has also been identified as a potential location for a Nature Center due to its direct relationship to the Conservatory; contingent upon proposed uses for the Wilder Mansion.

**The Forest Preserve District of DuPage County is willing to discuss use of their property for a dog park as a joint venture with EPD.

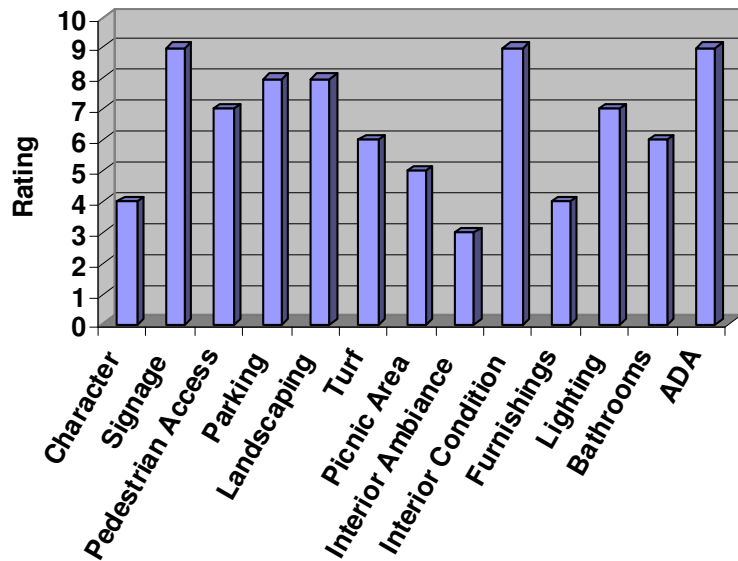
The Abbey Leisure Center

407 West Charles Road
2.9 Acres

The Abbey houses the program registration area for the Elmhurst Park District and is the center for senior adult activities. The St. Charles Road location can have heavy traffic at times, making egress somewhat difficult. There is parking on both the east and west sides of the building. Sidewalks along St. Charles provide pedestrian access to the facility. There is very nice landscaping through most of the site, with many large shade and ornamental trees. The building entry is non-descript and is not very inviting. The interior spaces include the registration desk and offices, restrooms and multi-purpose space(s). The interior is well-maintained, but lacks any interest or character. Proximity to the school campus may dictate that alternative uses be explored.



The Abbey Leisure Center Rating - 6.5



Recommendations

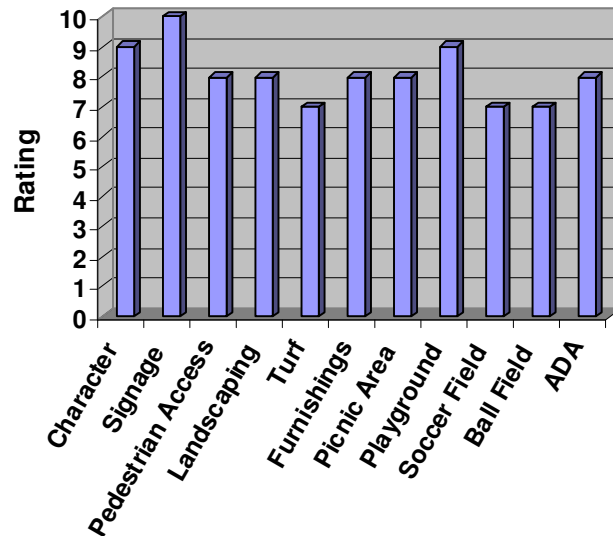
- Develop a new master plan for the building and site
- Redesign the building entry and interior to be more of an attraction.
- Maintain existing vegetation/landscaping as much as practical

Ben Allison Park

West Street & Surf Street
2.75 Acres

Ben Allison Park is a high-quality neighborhood park on the far west side of the community that is directly adjacent to Wild Meadows Trace and the Prairie Path. The park has a new playground with a poured-in-place soft surface. The playground includes a sand play area that does spill over onto the soft surface and the adjacent lawn areas. Site furnishings include a circular tree bench, bicycle rack, decorative trash receptacle and single picnic table, none of which match in style or materials. Trash barrels are scattered throughout the park. There is a t-ball field and overlaying small soccer field that are in good condition, with minor barren areas of lawn. There are two points of pedestrian access into the park, with good ADA access except for the picnic table. The landscaping in this park is generally very good, and includes buffering to Route 83 and nice shade trees throughout.

Ben Allison Park Rating - 8.1



Recommendations

- Maintain the park as neighborhood open space with open lawn for recreational activities
- Add an additional picnic table that is ADA accessible
- Construct an 18” seat wall surrounding the sand play area to contain the sand
- Standardize trash receptacles, benches, etc.
- Add dog bag dispenser

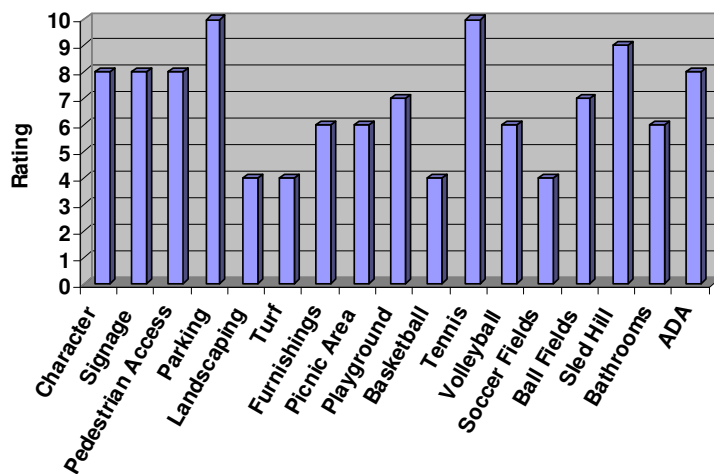


493 Oaklawn Avenue
65.2 Acres



Berens Park is an important community park in the northwest part of the District that offers significant athletic facilities and is the home of The Hub. A major park reconstruction has recently been completed, with only a few areas/amenities not a part of the project. The tennis facilities off Oaklawn are excellent, with six lighted courts that are utilized for the high school tennis program. The new ball fields are well-done, though the use of the Chicago-style backstop may want to be reconsidered in the future. Lawn areas throughout the park vary in quality, though all are in need of improvement. The soccer fields, especially, are in poor condition; though the introduction of synthetic turf fields will alleviate many of the issues. Though space is available, none of the soccer fields are marked as full-sized fields. Significant parking is provided on-site and in a variety of locations. Many existing trees were cleared for the reconstruction. The southwest playground provides a nice shaded amenity for the local neighborhood.

Berens Park Rating - 6.8



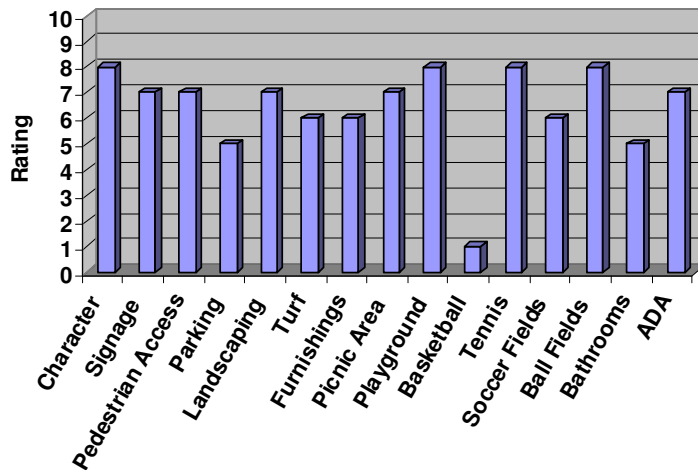
Recommendations

- Complete master plan development
- Develop off-site directional signage
- Build shade structure or add shade trees to ball field quad spectator area
- Create landscape islands in the parking to reduce the urban heat island effect
- Continue to improve turf and to construct synthetic turf soccer fields
- Add lighting to soccer/football complex
- Re-edge sand volleyball courts and replace posts
- Re-pave street parking
- Add ADA-accessible picnic tables
- Replace and standardize trash receptacles, benches, etc.
- Complete pedestrian pathways

Butterfield Park

385 East Van Buren
24.56 Acres

Butterfield Park Rating - 6.9



Butterfield Park is a community park that provides athletic facilities, passive open space and neighborhood amenities in the southeast corner of the District. Though there are two parking lots, a main lot off Van Buren and a smaller lot just north off Linden, parking and traffic are sometimes neighborhood problems when the park is in full use. Pedestrian access is provided from all surrounding neighborhoods.

There is a large picnic pavilion and picnic tables in numbered clusters throughout the southern part of the park. Many of the shade trees are stressed, partially due to over-mulching. The large playground has a fibar mulch base, with a sand play area that spills into the fibar. Entry and playground landscaping are generally good, with some additional planting needed. Ball field lawns are in good to excellent condition, with soccer and park turf are patchy and uneven. The basketball hoop provided is on the edge of the parking lot where use is very limited. The lighted tennis courts are an excellent neighborhood amenity.



Recommendations

- Develop additional off-site directional signage
- Build shade structures or add shade trees to ball field spectator areas
- Continue to improve turf quality
- Add ADA-accessible picnic tables
- Add charcoal grills
- Construct an 18" seat wall surrounding the sand play area to contain the sand
- Repair drainage issues from behind building to the Elmhurst College ball field
- Add dog bag dispenser
- Replace and standardize trash receptacles, benches, etc.
- Move bicycle racks and basketball hoop to more appropriate location
- Add landscaping to screen playground from parking and cover unfinished wall at parking entry

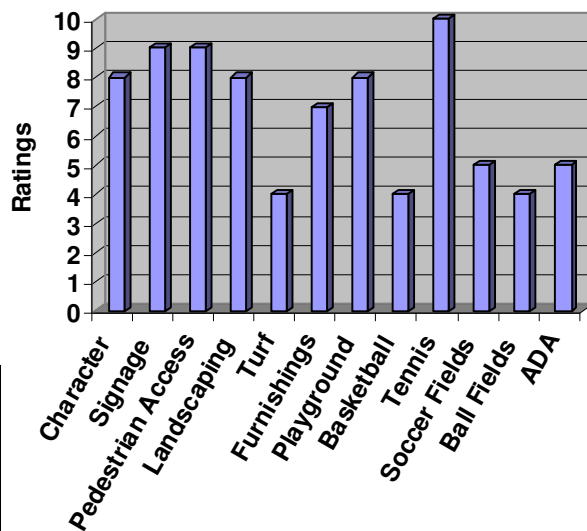
Conrad Fischer Park

Diversey at Crown
13.21 Acres

Conrad Fischer Park is a neighborhood park that is geared toward meeting the athletic and recreational needs of the adjacent schools as well as the local residents. A path links the neighborhoods on either side of the schools, with a new entry feature off Diversey that is well-designed with prairie landscaping surrounding a circular seating area. The playground is fairly new and provides good diversity, though the sand play area spillover into the fibar mulch creates an ongoing maintenance problem. A small picnic shelter is adjacent to the playground and is ADA accessible. A variety of athletic fields are provided, including a soccer field, three ball fields and a small open practice field adjacent to Conrad Fischer School. The lawn areas are in fair to good condition, but the infields of the ball fields are in poor condition. The tennis courts were resurfaced in 2006.



Conrad Fischer Park Rating - 6.8



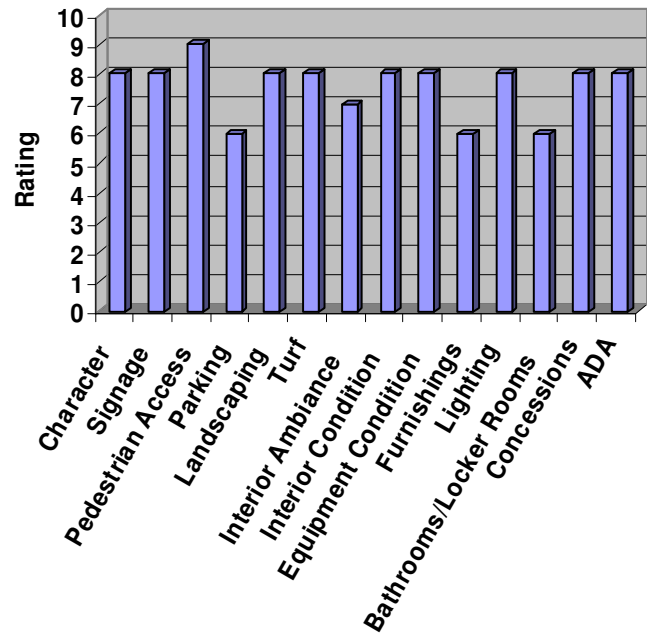
Recommendations

- Re-cut ball field infields
- Pave bench/bleacher areas and provide walkways for ADA accessibility
- Continue to improve turf quality
- Construct an 18" seat wall surrounding the sand play area to contain the sand
- Replace and standardize trash receptacles, benches, etc.
- Pave bicycle rack area on both sides
- Repair pavement cracks at playground

Courts Plus

Plunkett Park

Courts Plus Rating - 7.6



Courts Plus is one of the most-used facilities in the Elmhurst Park District. With fitness, aquatic, group exercise and racquet facilities, Courts Plus members enjoy a variety of amenities and programs. Overcrowding is a perceived issue, and the use of virtually every square foot of space is evidence of a facility that clearly has space deficiencies. The building design, unfortunately, does not work well with the Plunkett Park site, creating costly solutions to limited expansion options. Parking wraps the building, though the south parking has limited use by patrons. Landscaping is well-done and creates a nice character.

A 2005 study presented recommendations for enhancement to the facility, including locker room renovations and improvements to numerous other areas. HVAC equipment, pool equipment and roofing projects have also been identified as current or future needs. As important an asset to the District as it is, renovation and expansion efforts are a must.

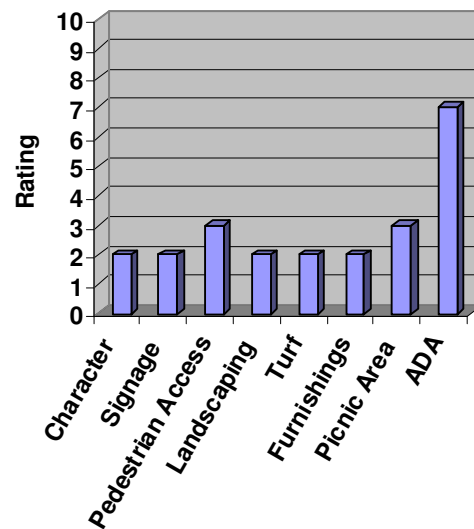
Recommendations

- Explore options for facility expansion that will continue to meet grant requirements
- Complete recommendations from 2005 study and other necessary improvements, with emphasis on locker facilities and HVAC equipment
- Continue to meet the changing needs of members through space modifications that meet programming needs.



Crescent Park is a mini-park located in the Crescent Park neighborhood south of St. Charles Road and east of Poplar Avenue. The triangular property provides open space with no programmed areas except for a single picnic table in one corner. The picnic table is ADA accessible, though the picnic table is not of ADA accessible design. The existing larger shade trees are in poor condition due to inadequate maintenance and over-mulching at the trunks. New trees recently planted are of poor quality both in form and health. The lawn areas are weed-infested and have significant barren areas. The park sign is old and in need of replacement. These conditions create a park site that is not an asset to the neighborhood and is little used by the area residents. Crescent Park is in need of a significant makeover as well as greater on-going maintenance in order to bring this up to EPD standards.

Crescent Park Rating - 2.9



Recommendations

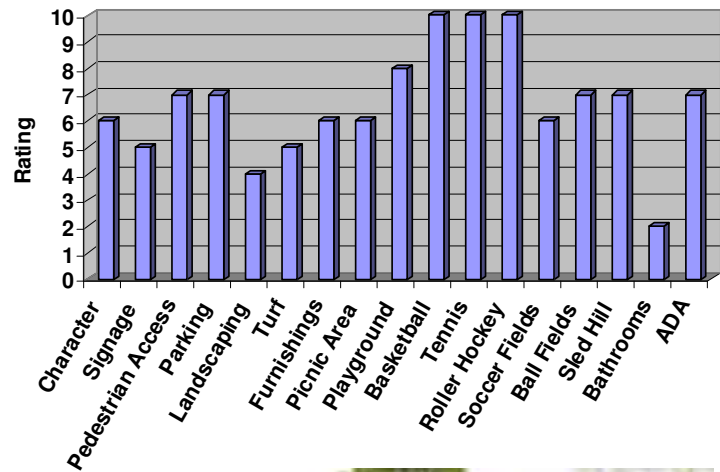
- Develop a new park master plan
- Maintain the park as neighborhood open space with open lawn for recreational activities
- Plant diverse species of shrubs, perennials and grasses that will provide seasonal color
- Plant diverse species of quality trees, including 3-4 trees of significant size (6-10 " caliper) so as to make an immediate difference to the character and quality of the park
- Replace park sign
- Add benches, an additional picnic table, a bicycle rack and decorative trash receptacles
- Add dog bag dispenser

Crestview Park

245 East Crestview
11.14 Acres

Crestview Park is a neighborhood park located in the northeast park of the District. Recent upgrades to the playground, tennis, basketball and roller hockey have made a great improvement to the overall quality of the park, though other improvements are still needed to improve the park character. Pedestrian access is provided through the park to neighborhoods on all sides, and many residents walk through the park as a result. The access from Emroy Street, with a dilapidated chainlink fence and overgrown scrub vegetation, is in need of improvement on adjoining church property. The sled hill is fenced in a manner that creates a poor aesthetic and should be redesigned. The playground area includes a sand play area that spills into the fibar mulch. Picnic areas are located adjacent to the playground and in the tree grove north of the sled hill. The recreation building is an important neighborhood asset.

Crestview Park Rating - 6.6



Recommendations

- Work with the church to remove or replace the dilapidated fence
- Maintain the remaining open space with no additional programmed uses
- Construct an 18" seat wall surrounding the sand play area to contain the sand
- Remove the chain link fence along the bottom of the sled hill, replace it with split rail fencing to match the playground fence, and plant the hillside with prairie materials.
- Build sidewalks to the bleacher areas at ball fields to provide ADA accessibility.
- Re-grade and seed the multipurpose lawn area between the playground and parking lot
- Replace and standardize trash receptacles, benches, etc.



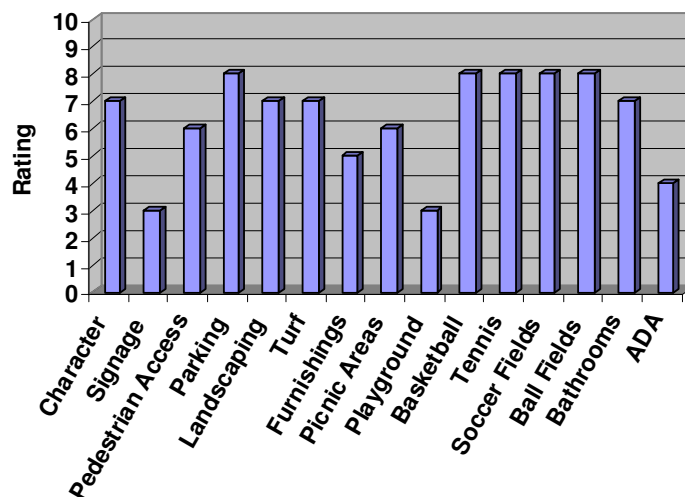
East End Park is a community park located on the eastern edge of the community just south of North Avenue. The park includes numerous athletic facilities and neighborhood amenities, including the East End Pool which is currently undergoing complete reconstruction. Park signage is old and in need of replacement. On-site parking is very limited, with most parking accommodated in the network of neighborhood streets surrounding the park. There are few site furnishings in the park, with many bicycle racks to serve the pool. Picnicking is scattered with most tables by the playground and near the athletic fields. The playground equipment is in need of replacement along with all related amenities. Access to the playground is very poor, with only a narrow asphalt path from the street. The lighted tennis courts are in very good condition, as is the basketball court. The three ball fields are in need of upgrading, though the lawns are in generally good condition here and on the overlaying soccer fields. The athletics restroom building is in generally good condition. There are many mature trees throughout the park providing shade and adding to the character of the park.



Recommendations

- Develop additional off-site directional signage
- Re-cut ball field infields
- Pave bench/bleacher areas and provide walkways for ADA accessibility
- Continue to improve turf quality
- Add ADA-accessible picnic tables
- Replace and standardize trash receptacles, benches, etc.
- Replace playground and provide ADA-accessibility

East End Park Rating - 6.3



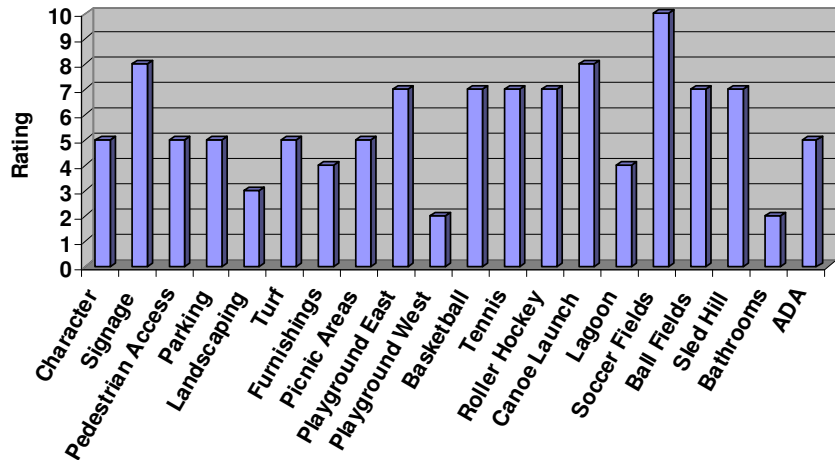
Eldridge Park

363 Commonwealth Lane
43.26 Acres

Eldridge Park is a community park located in the southwest corner of the District. Because the park has such different character on each side of Salt Creek, it feels like two distinctively different parks. Parking is limited given the size of the park and the number of athletic amenities located

here. Pedestrian access to the park is adequate, though direct access on the west side could be improved. The playground on the east side was recently renovated and is ADA accessible. The tennis courts, roller hockey and basketball court are all undergoing some settling and will require resurfacing in the near future. The soccer fields were recently 'rested', allowing the turf time to improve greatly in quality. The bridge connecting the two sides of the park is a unique amenity, as is the canoe ramp on the river's edge. The west playground is in dire need of replacement. The lagoon is an amenity that needs attention as well, including establishing a natural edge and possibly creating specific fishing areas. The ball field is in fair condition that can be easily improved upon, including ADA accessibility.

Eldridge Park Rating - 5.7



Recommendations

- Develop a new park master plan for the west side
- Develop a nature center directly on the lagoon that utilizes this feature as well as close proximity to Salt Creek for related amenities and programming
- Plant prairie style materials that will enhance the nature center as a learning center.
- Replace west side playground
- Create a natural edge on the lagoon to deter geese, and develop fishing platforms or overlooks for direct water access.
- Work with City to build sidewalks creating better connections to the park
- Develop off-site directional signage
- Replace and standardize trash receptacles, benches, etc.
- Repave court amenities

Glos Memorial Park

Park & Kenilworth
0.94 Acres

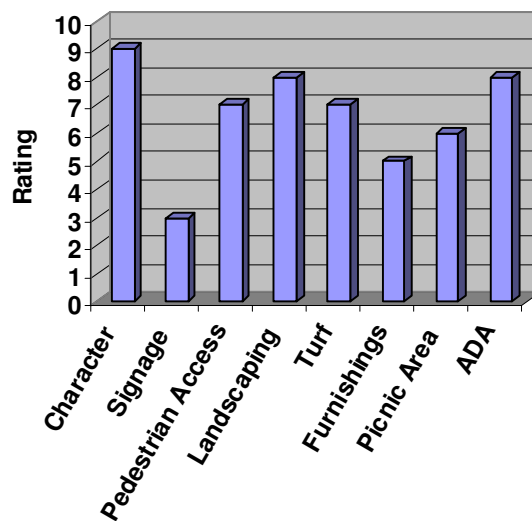
Glos Memorial Park projects the character of a traditional urban park with urban style gardens and historic light fixtures. The Glos mausoleum provides a classic piece of architecture in a park that is tucked into a space between offices and city arterials, offering a unique hidden greenspace next to the city center. Parking is available on-street along Park Avenue, though most visitors to this park walk from the surrounding commercial and residential neighborhoods.



Pedestrian access is available from both Park and Kenilworth, and a variety of seating areas are provided within the park. The signage is old and needs to be replaced. The landscaping and gardens are very nice and well-maintained, though some of the landscaping should be updated. Some of the site furnishings are also older and ready for replacement. A design issue within the park is the prominent location of the blue drinking fountain.



Glos Memorial Park Rating - 6.6



Golden Meadows

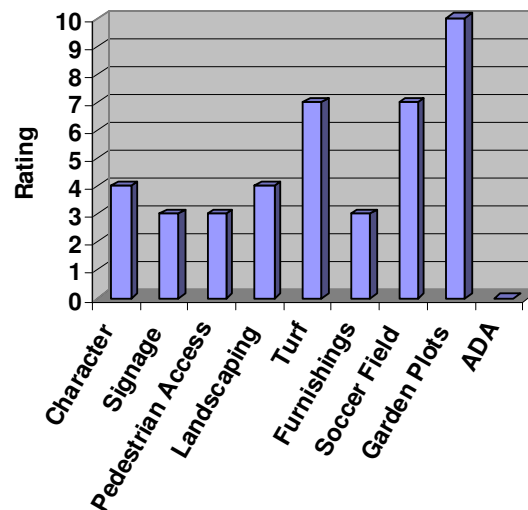
Caroline & Hampshire
6.04 Acres

Golden Meadows is a neighborhood park located along the eastern boundary of the District just south of East End Park. Hampshire Avenue and Caroline Avenue terminate into the park, with turnaround areas that are utilized for neighborhood parking. The entries into the site are characterized by old signage, metal guardrails and barrel trash receptacles that collectively produce an uninviting appearance to the park. Bordering on railroad tracks and an interstate highway noise wall, the back of the park site has a decidedly industrial feel. The garden plots are great for District residents, with a water supply available within the garden area. The soccer field is well-worn, though the lawns are in fair condition overall. Other lawn areas are in good condition. Little landscaping is evident within the park. When walking through the park and ignoring the highway, railroad and entry elements, the park has nice open space.

Recommendations

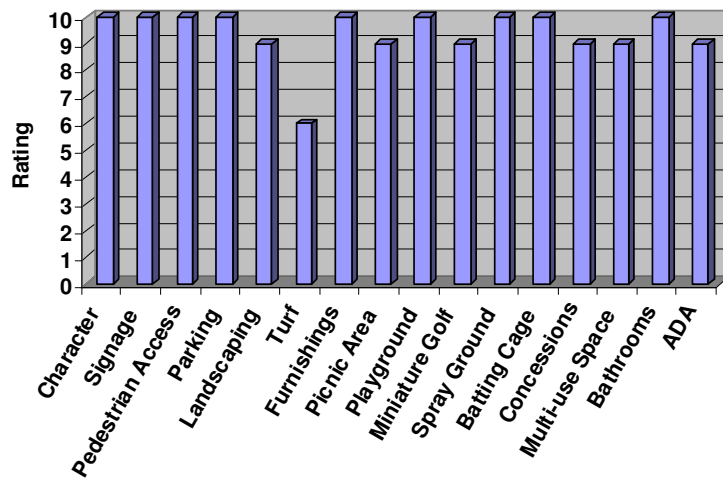
- Replace park signage
- Remove guardrail and create an inviting landscaped park entry at both street entries
- Replace and standardize trash receptacles
- Plant trees, shrubs and grasses that will create a meadow landscape between the soccer field and railroad tracks
- Link the two site entries with an ADA sidewalk through the park
- Expand garden plot area as demand dictates

Golden Meadows Park Rating - 4.6



The Hub is one of the Districts most used amenities. Located within Berens Park, The Hub provides two playgrounds, picnicking, miniature golf and numerous other activities. The playgrounds are excellent, and feature a shade structure and a small climbing wall that are set off from the surrounding amenities with a split rail fence and nice landscaping. A spray ground offers a great waterplay component that includes chaise chairs for the parents to relax. The miniature golf provides a well-landscaped course that is moderate in difficulty to meet the average play level. A batting cage completes the active portion of The Hub. A new park building includes activity space, restrooms and concessions, along with an outdoor patio with picnic facilities.

The Hub Rating - 9.4



The landscaping is well done, though the lawn areas need greater attention. A few components of the original plan have not been completed. The entire facility is ADA accessible and includes good connections to other amenities in the park and the surrounding neighborhoods.



Recommendations

- Complete construction of the amphitheatre and other components of the master plan
- Re-condition lawn areas

Jaycee Tot Lot

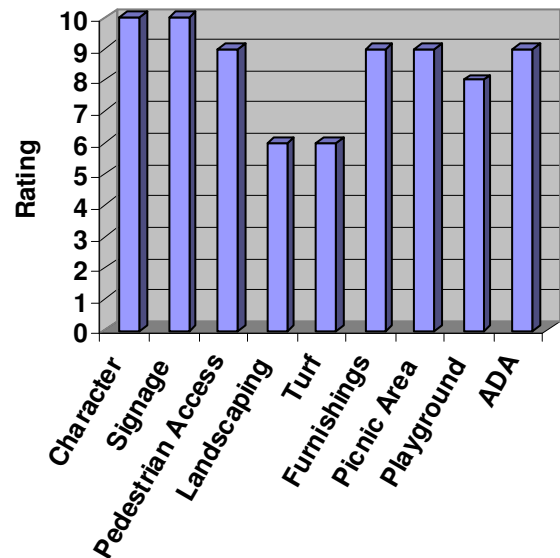
445 North Larch
0.58 Acres



Jaycee Tot Lot is a mini-park that provides a playground for the surrounding north-side neighborhood. The park has great access and is completely ADA accessible. The playground is new and bright, with a soft poured-in-place surface. A sand play area spills over onto the playground surface. The picnic area is integral to the playground and includes a shade canopy. The ornamental trees near the entry and new landscaping near the playground add to the site character. Weeds and crabgrass mar the lawn areas



Jaycee Tot Lot Rating - 8.4



Recommendations

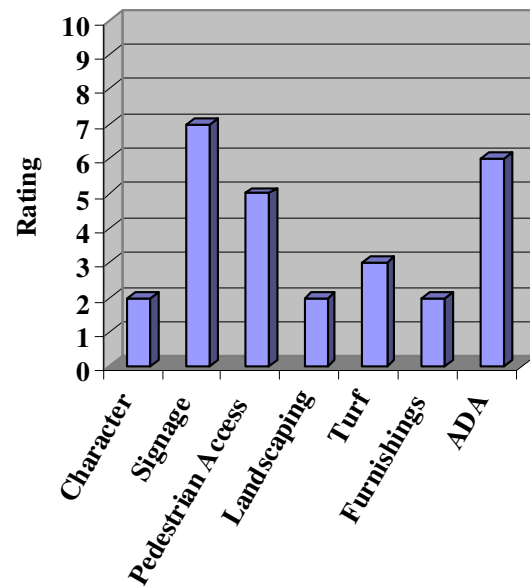
- Add plantings at entry sign
- Re-condition lawn areas to eliminate extraneous vegetation
- Construct an 18" seat wall surrounding the sand play area to contain the sand

Madison & Stratford
1.26 Acres

Kiwanis Park is a neighborhood park that backs up to railroad tracks in the southeastern corner of the District. The park is in very poor condition and is in need of complete redevelopment. The landscaping on the site is overgrown, over-maintained and generally lacks aesthetic quality. The sidewalks are cracked and buckled, and make ADA accessibility fair at best. Site furnishings are old and uninviting. Lawn areas are burned and barren in many areas. An ADA ramp across the street from the park is not reciprocated to provide access into the park. The site has great potential as an open space site with landscaping and seating areas.



Kiwanis Park Rating - 3.9



Recommendations

- Develop a new park master plan that maintains the park as largely non-programmed open space
- Create simple walkways through the site with limited seating areas that offer seclusion and quiet
- Plant diverse species of quality trees and shrubs that provide seasonal interest and color
- Work with City to build an ADA ramp at the park entry and crosswalk across Madison Avenue
- Replace and standardize trash receptacles, benches, etc.

Maple Trail Woods

McKinley & Sunnyside
93.61 Acres

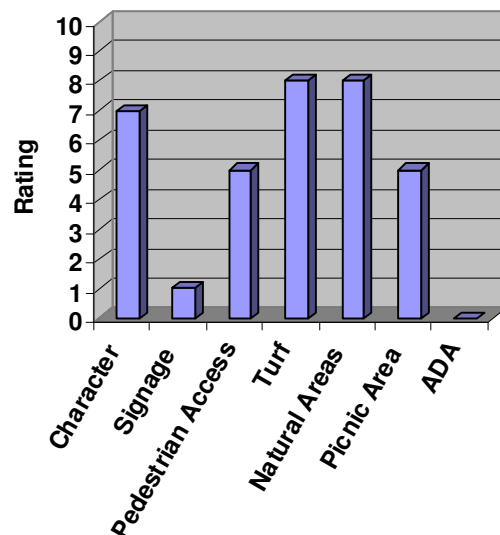
Maple Trail Woods is a linear greenway park along Salt Creek that provides a north-south trail as a part of the Salt Creek Greenway. The park consists of District owned land as well as leased property from the City of Elmhurst and the DuPage County Forest Preserve District. The park is mostly an undeveloped natural woodland system along the creek. Picnic areas are located in areas where the property has additional space away from the creek. Signage is old and in need of replacement. The interim park access locations are blocked with guard rail, barrels or post and chain; an uninviting scenario. Signage is provided in only one of these secondary access points. Residents bordering the park seem unclear as to where the limit of their property is located. Some have created lawn right to the edge of the existing wood-chip path. Others have maintained the natural edge. Paving of the trail south of Madison Street is underway which will improve accessibility.



Recommendations

- Replace park signage
- Remove guardrail and post/chain barriers to create an inviting landscaped park entry at secondary street entries
- Provide ADA accessible walkways connecting the to the main trail from the secondary entries
- Replace and standardize trash receptacles and picnic tables
- Add benches in appropriate locations along the trail
- Enforce property edges through homeowner education and natural restoration
- Add interpretive signage along the trail to tie in with nature center amenities and programming at Eldridge Park

Maple Trail Woods Rating - 4.9

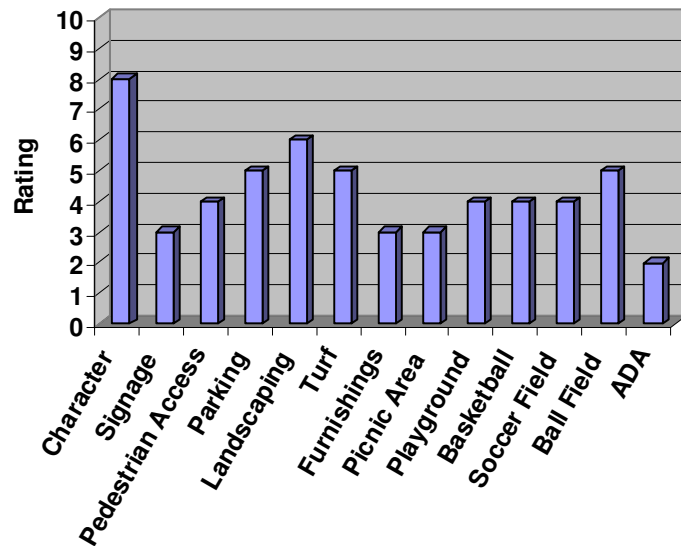


Marjorie Davis Park

Grantley & Myrtle
3.25 Acres

Marjorie Davis Park is a neighborhood parking located just north of North Avenue. The park exemplifies the character of a typical neighborhood park, but is in need of improvement to provide greater quality. Park signage is old and needs to be replaced. There are no sidewalks entering the park from the perimeter. Limited parking is available off Myrtle Avenue, where sidewalks were displaced to create head-in spaces. On-street parking is available throughout the neighborhood. The playground is older, with fibar mulch surface and plastic edging that is becoming cracked. Sidewalk access is provided to the playground. Site furnishings are limited and mixed in style and material. The ball field is in need of restoration, and lawn areas need improvement. The basketball court is in need of resurfacing. Nothing within this park is considered ADA accessible except the basketball court.

Marjorie Davis Park Rating - 4.3



Recommendations

- Re-cut ball field infields
- Pave bench/bleacher areas and provide walkways for ADA accessibility
- Continue to improve turf quality
- Replace and standardize trash receptacles, benches, etc.
- Pave bicycle rack area on both sides
- Replace playground, edging and surface for ADA accessibility
- Add picnic tables, including ADA accessible tables
- Resurface basketball court
- Modify perimeter sidewalks to provide ADA access around pull-in parking spaces



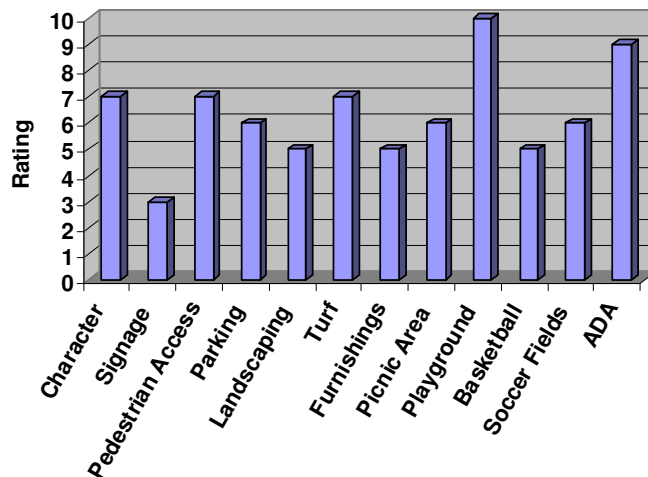
Pioneer Park

Mitchell & Prairie Path Lane
4.67 Acres

Pioneer Park is a neighborhood park adjacent to the Illinois Prairie Path and Wild Meadows Trace. The configuration of the park is such that it serves to link two neighborhoods. A new playground was constructed in 2006 and is ADA accessible. An adjacent sand play area spills onto the sidewalk. Acquisition of an adjacent parcel provides land for needed additional parking. The park has many large shade trees, many of which are exhibiting signs of stress. Over-mulching may be a contributing factor. An open play area is utilized as a soccer field, and is in generally good condition. The basketball court needs resurfacing. Overall a nice park needing improvements to furnishings and entry sequence.



Pioneer Park Rating - 5.8

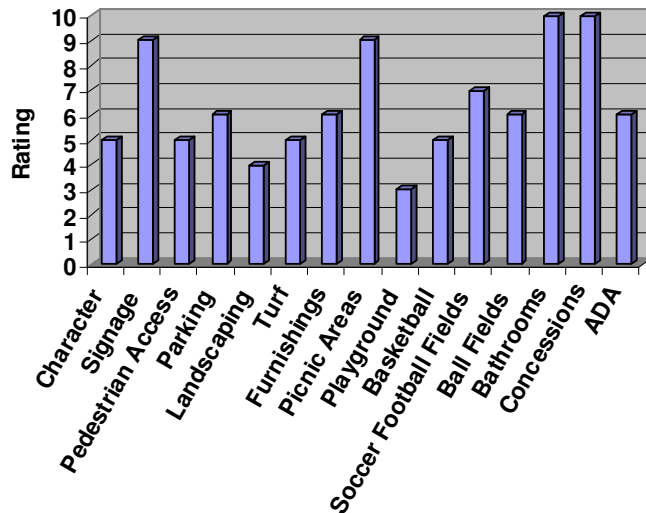


Recommendations

- Replace signage and develop a landscaped site entry
- Develop parking on adjacent property acquisition
- Continue to improve turf quality
- Add picnic equipment at east end of park, including ADA accessible tables
- Construct an 18" seat wall surrounding the sand play area to contain the sand
- Replace and standardize trash receptacles, benches, etc.
- Resurface basketball court

186 South West Street
16.03 Acres

Plunkett Park Rating - 6.4



Plunkett Park is a community park on the west side of the community that is home to Courts Plus. The park offers athletic facilities and neighborhood amenities. The parking area fits within the building and park amenities in a layout that is functional yet requires caution when driving through. Pedestrian access from the neighborhood is ADA accessible, but the park, in general, has the feel of a destination-oriented park that people tend to drive to access. The athletic fields are in generally good condition, though the use of the Chicago-style

backstop may want to be reconsidered in the future. The concession/restroom/picnic area is very nice, with shade trees amongst the picnic tables and good visibility to the ball fields. The playground area, especially the surfacing, is in poor to fair condition, though the diversity of equipment is greater than most other playgrounds in the system. The playground and older picnic grounds take advantage of the mature trees on the north side of the park. The open space/detention area between courts plus and the playground offers generic open space, but does not seem to get much use by the community.



Recommendations

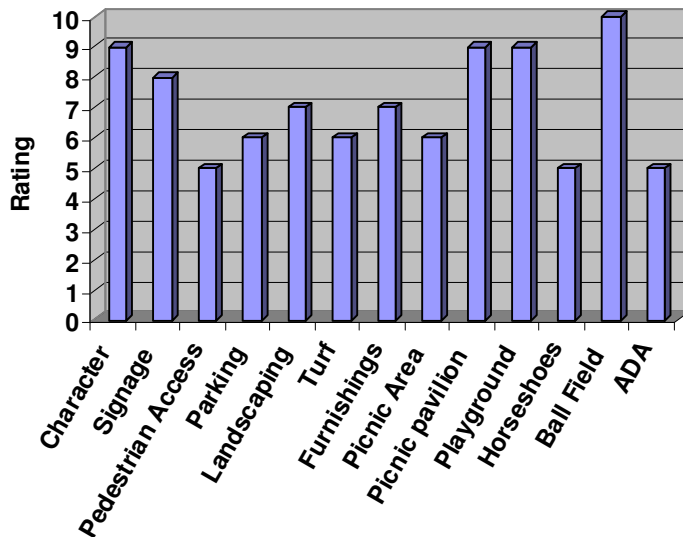
- Develop a new park master plan for the east side of the park that looks at alternate methods of stormwater management in order to better utilize the property
- Consideration should be given to removing the neighborhood components of the park and focusing on this as a destination park that could accommodate expansion of Courts Plus if grant restrictions can be met
- Develop additional off-site directional signage
- Replace and standardize trash receptacles, benches, etc.
- Resurface basketball court

Salt Creek Park

574 West Second Street
10.00 Acres

Salt Creek Park is a neighborhood park just north of Plunkett Park adjacent to Route 83. The new ball field facility provides an excellent amenity that is used by Elmhurst College and the community. There is parking along Second Street and in a gravel lot along the Route 83 frontage. Pedestrian access is not very good, with no sidewalks along the street, poorly designed stairs into the playground and limited walkway access into the park. The playground area is nice and is surrounded by shade trees. There is a nice open area and mature trees on the east side that provided needed open space. The park offers a significant picnicking venue, with a large pavilion and numerous picnic tables throughout the park. The park sign is located in a manner that it is partially blocked by a large shade tree.

Salt Creek Park Rating - 7.1



Recommendations

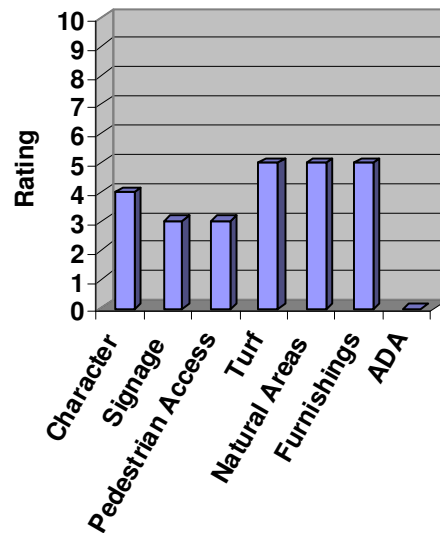
- Move signage to parking entry or turn in place to face street, and landscape in an appropriate manner
- Pave parking area on west side of site
- Continue to improve turf quality
- Add ADA-accessible picnic equipment at east end of park
- Replace and standardize trash receptacles
- Pave bicycle rack area on both sides
- Consider removing horseshoe pits and creating non-programmed open space for multi-use purposes.



Sleepy Hollow is a part of the linear greenway park along Salt Creek that provides a north-south trail as a part of the Salt Creek Greenway. As the northern terminus of Maple Trail Woods, Sleepy Hollow has similar conditions and recommendations. There is no EPD park sign at this park. Other signage is old and in need of replacement. The park access is defined by guard rail. Spruce trees and ornamental shrubs do provide some character.



Sleepy Hollow Rating - 3.6



Recommendations

- Provide new park signage
- Remove guardrail barrier to create an inviting landscaped park entry
- Provide ADA accessible walkways connecting the to the main trail
- Replace and standardize trash receptacles
- Add interpretive signage along the trail to tie in with nature center amenities and programming at Eldridge Park

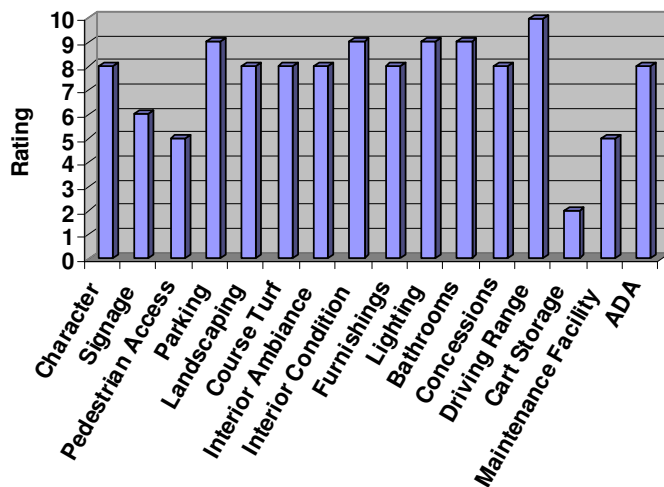
Sugar Creek Golf Course

500 East Van Buren
43.26 Acres

Sugar Creek Golf Course is a 9-hole community course that is jointly owned by the Elmhurst Park District and Village of Villa Park. The course and clubhouse have undergone significant renovations that have increased the quality of the course and the overall golfing experience. The course modifications included the addition of sand traps, the reconfiguration of holes and the completion of the cart path. The clubhouse has a new banquet room, dining area, outdoor deck and pro shop. The driving range was recently built. The maintenance facility and golf cart storage need attention. The parking area is nicely laid out and utilizes parking islands for stormwater management. Signage is good, though in need of landscape improvements. Wayfinding signage is needed to make the public more aware of the course.



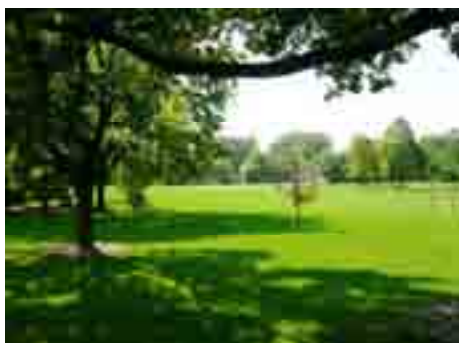
Sugar Creek Golf Course Rating - 7.5



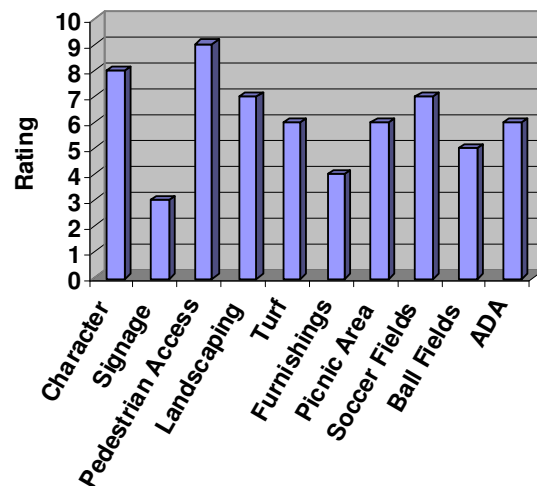
Recommendations

- Provide new signage for advertising and wayfinding
- Commission a structural analysis of the crib wall surrounding the pond to determine future reconstruction requirements
- Replace pump
- Explore acquisition of adjacent parcels for future development of new maintenance facility, cart storage and pitch 'n putt

Van Voorst Park is a neighborhood park adjacent to Jefferson Elementary School in the southeast corner of the District providing athletic fields and open space. There are many mature trees in the park, but many have health issues that should be addressed. The picnic area along the western edge of the park gets significant use by schoolchildren during recess, resulting in recycled plastic tables that will need to be replaced often. The ball field is in need of work as the infield area is ill defined and rough. ADA access to the ball field should be provided. All lawn areas, including the ball field and soccer field, are in need of reconditioning.



Van Voorst Park Rating - 6.1



Recommendations

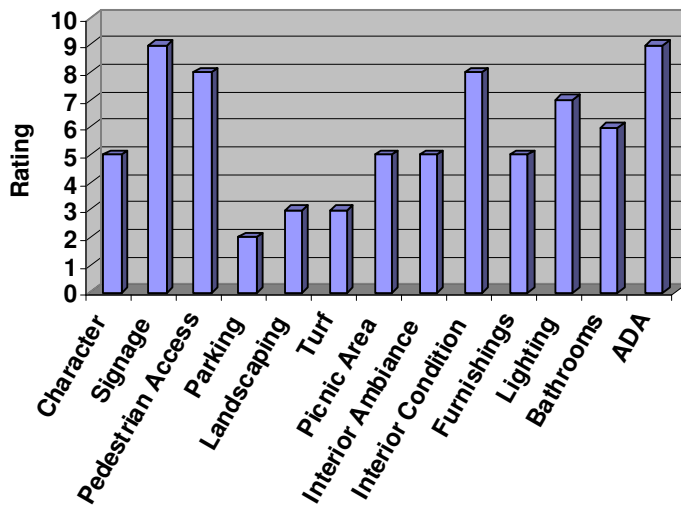
- Re-cut ball field infields
- Pave bench/bleacher areas and provide walkways for ADA accessibility
- Replace and standardize trash receptacles, benches, etc.
- Pave bicycle rack area on both sides
- Resurface walkway

Wagner Community Center

615 North West Avenue

The Joanne B. Wagner Community Center provides 32,000 square feet of office, programming and multi-purpose space for the District. Recreation Division and registration offices are located here, as well as a variety of preschool, music, dance, fitness, gymnastic and craft classes. While the building is a success from a programming perspective, the building itself lacks character inside and out. The

Wagner Community Center Rating - 5.8



interior is well-maintained, but is very drab and uninteresting. The paved parking is crumbling and landscaping is old and lacks aesthetic quality. The front lawn adjacent to the gymnasium is in very poor condition. Lawn areas on the west side of the building, including the tot soccer area, are in generally good condition. The picnic area equipment needs to be replaced, and site furnishings should be standardized. There is open space to the east of the building that offers opportunity for future expansion.



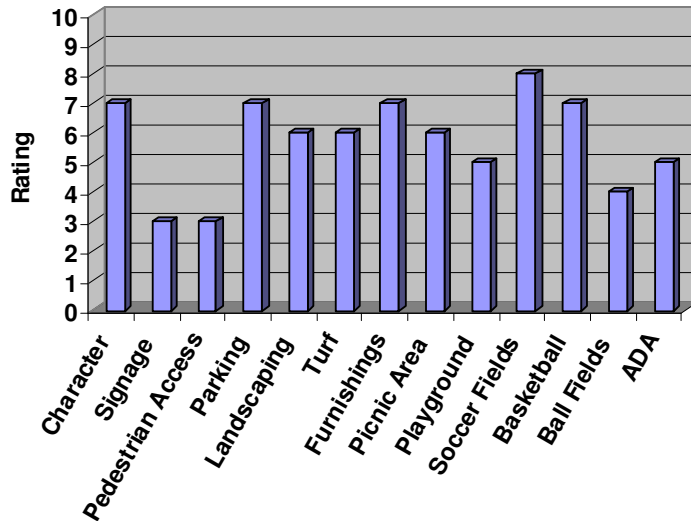
Recommendations

- Maintain the land east of the building as non-programmed space for future building expansion
- Continue landscape improvements at the front of the building
- Repave the entry drive and parking lots
- Sod the lawn areas in front of the building
- Create architectural interest at the entry and inside the building foyer area
- Add color to classrooms to create a more interesting and vibrant learning environment

Washington Park

Poplar & May
3.20 Acres

Washington Park Rating - 5.7



Washington Park is a small neighborhood park located just south of St. Charles Road on Poplar Avenue. The variety of trees provides a nice shady park with some passive open lawns and several active recreation amenities. The street corner is defined by a split-rail fence and landscape area that acts as a partial buffer for the playground. There is a walkway from the perimeter sidewalk into the playground and basketball court, with access to a bench at the ball

fields and to one picnic table. These specific items are ADA accessible, though other areas are not. The ballfields overlap, with the skinned infields separated by only 10' of lawn. The soccer field is an overlay. Athletic field lawns are in fair to good condition, while the infields are in poor condition. The playground is in good condition, with a rubberized surface and wood edging. There is a small parking area on-site. The parking and basketball court are separated from the street ROW by a galvanized chain link fence. Site furnishings and picnic tables are from various manufacturers and made of various materials.

Recommendations

- Resurface basketball court
- Replace galvanized fence with decorative metal fencing
- Build up soil surrounding raised utilities to eliminate trip hazards
- Re-cut ball field infields
- Lawn restoration
- Replace park sign
- Add picnic tables, including ADA accessible tables
- Replace barrels with decorative trash receptacles
- Pave around bicycle rack
- Repave walkways and picnic table pads
- Add dog bag dispenser



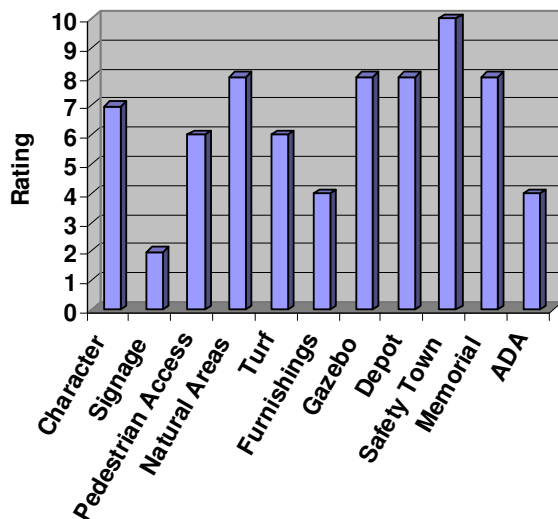
Wild Meadows/Trace

South & Stratford
57.37 Acres

Wild Meadows Trace is a linear park that parallels the Illinois Prairie Path. Wild Meadows is an adjacent parcel on the eastern end of the Trace. The park is characterized by its diversity, from restored prairie to a memorial park. There are areas of heavy brush and also an urban park with a historic building. Parking is available only along the streets that run near the park. Signage is limited to a few key areas. Access is generally adequate, but the Wild Meadows site needs better entry design from the adjacent residential streets. The Depot site is a nice urban park, with a commemorative fountain. Safety Town is a great bicycle training area for young children. The Trace once had an exercise trail that has, over time, disappeared. A 9/11 memorial and a gazebo complete the built components of the park. There are opportunities for development in a manner that maintains the open space while provided amenities that are of interest to the community.



Wild Meadows Park/Trace Rating - 6.5



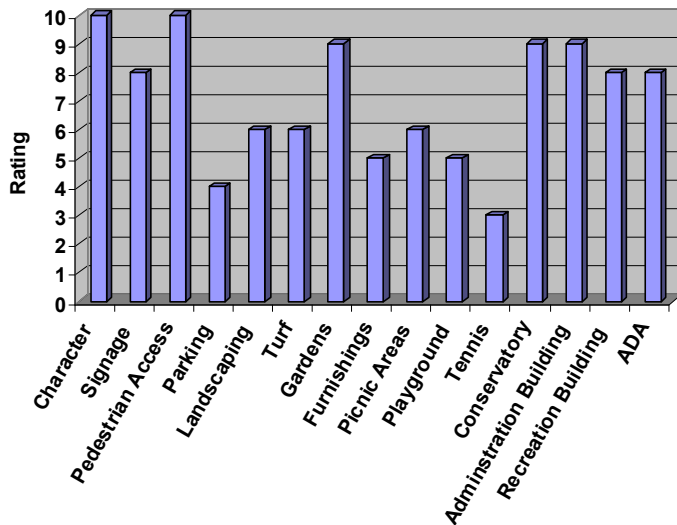
Recommendations

- Provide new park signage in appropriate locations
- Remove barriers to create inviting landscaped park entries
- Provide ADA accessible walkways connecting the to the Prairie Path
- Re-introduce exercise stations, but locate them off the Prairie Path
- Add a linear 9-hole disc golf course along the non-prairie section of the Trace

175 Prospect
17.30 Acres

Wilder Park is a community park that many consider the District's crown jewel park. Located just south of the city center, Wilder Park has numerous amenities unique to this one park, including a conservatory, herb garden and two museums. The park is the host of concerts, weddings and a variety of other events. The District's administration offices are located here, and the Wilder Mansion will soon be open for additional programming. Parking within the park is very limited. The recreation building is host to a variety of programs. The tennis courts are in poor condition. The

Wilder Park Rating - 7.1



playground receives much use from children attending the school adjacent to the park. It is in good condition, but may need to be replaced on a more compacted cycle. Site furnishings are an eclectic mix of materials and styles. The Veterans Memorial offers a tribute to the armed services and those who have fought for freedom. The garden areas are beautifully designed and maintained, and along with the conservatory, have the opportunity to be a regional amenity.

Recommendations

- Develop a master plan that addresses redefining uses for the Wilder Mansion, Administration Building and Recreation building
- Explore senior adult uses within Wilder Park
- Maintain that open space that remains in the park
- Renovate tennis courts
- Restore lawn areas
- Replace and standardize picnic tables, trash receptacles, benches, etc.
- Pave around bicycle rack
- Repave walkways and picnic table pads

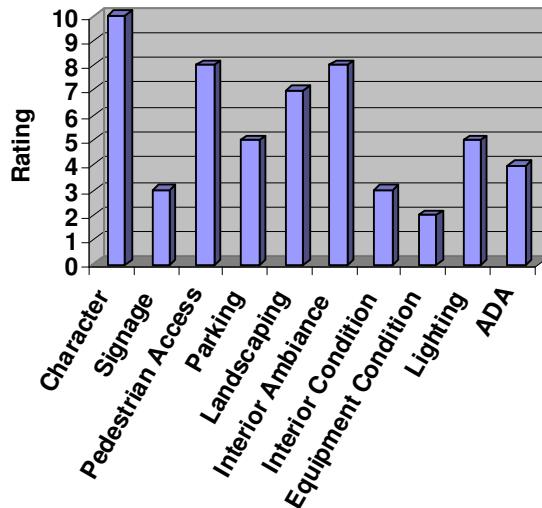


Wilder Park Conservatory

Wilder Park

The Wilder Park Conservatory facility is made up of the show conservatory and adjacent greenhouse that is used for horticultural production. The conservatory provides a unique asset to the District that is available in few communities in the region outside Chicago. Its presence in Wilder Park enhances the overall experience and character of the park itself. With seasonal displays and horticultural programming, the conservatory is often a destination facility within the District. The show conservatory is limited in space availability, and has little flexibility for display diversity. The production greenhouse technology is very old and inefficient, with only limited viability for upgrades. Overall the conservatory facility is in disrepair and needs major restoration. A study completed in 2004 outlines recommendations for modifications and repairs that are necessary. With restoration, the Wilder Park Conservatory has the ability to become a more regional asset that will benefit the community and District.

Wilder Park Conservatory Rating - 5.5



Recommendations

- Initiate the recommendations of the 2004 study in as little time as possible rather than over an extended period in order to make the conservatory efficient and play on its ability to be a regional asset
- Explore the utilization of the current administration building for greater programming relative to horticultural endeavors, making it an integral part of the conservatory
- Enhance the physical and programming ties between the conservatory and adjacent gardens
- Replace signage

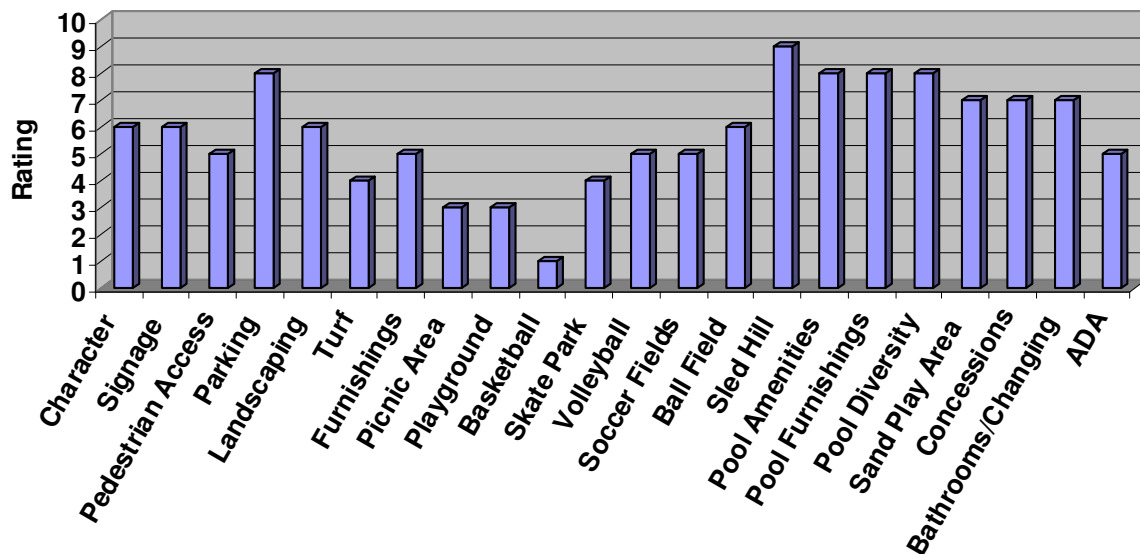


665 South York
11.62 Acres



York Commons is a community park that is home to Smalley Pool and a skate park amongst many other recreation amenities. Parking is good, with some neighborhood on-street parking also available. Pedestrian access is good, though the destination quality of the park means that most users drive to the park. The park has nice mature shade trees in various areas throughout the park. The playground is old and needs to be replaced. Its location next to the skate park should be considered in developing a new design. The skate park is made up of above-grade rusting metal components that create an uninteresting industrial-like venue. The Smalley Pool complex is relatively new and contains a variety of water features and other recreation amenities. The sand play area clogs drains and spills onto pool decking. The basketball hoop in the parking lot is virtually unusable. The athletic amenities are generally in good condition.

York Commons Rating - 5.7



Recommendations

- Prepare a redevelopment plan for the playground, skate park, sand volleyball and sand play areas.
- Address proximity issues of skate park adjacent to children's amenities
- Maintain that open space that still remains in the park
- Continue to improve lawn areas
- Replace and standardize picnic tables, trash receptacles, benches, etc.
- Repave walkways and picnic table pads

Recommendations

8



Mission Statement

The Elmhurst Park District has developed a Mission Statement that provides the direction that guides the Park Board of Commissioners and the EPD Administration in managing the District. The Mission Statement includes an overlying philosophic statement and two sub-statements that express the District's dual mission to provide benefits to both individuals and the community.

MISSION STATEMENT

Mission: Lifetime Enjoyment

The Elmhurst Park District exists to provide opportunities for the enjoyment of residents and visitors, particularly those opportunities that people cannot supply for themselves.

Personal Benefits: Provide benefits which can enhance the enjoyment, health, or self-esteem of an individual.

- Create opportunities for everyone for fun, play, entertainment and socialization by providing fair and balanced facilities and activities.
- Teach skills for, and encourage, wide and varied use of leisure time.
- Facilitate each person's health and fitness.
- Kindle each person's self-esteem through recreation.

Community Benefits: Provide social or community benefits which protect and improve the physical environment and the social environment.

- Protect and improve the natural environment.
- Create beauty wherever possible
- Influence urban form and the built environment.
- Develop our parks and programs to be a source of, and foundation for, community pride.
- Build strong families and strong communities.



Recommendations

Based on this philosophy, a series of goals are presented that address various aspects of Park District management and operations. These goals expand on the Mission Statement to express broad value statements that guide the Park District. Goals are developed in the following categories:

Administration

Interagency Cooperation

Financial Resources

Board/Staff Education

Customer Service

Communications

Public Awareness

Volunteers

Acquisition

Program Access

Programs

Health

Environmental Education

Maintenance and Planning

Image

Open Space and Historic Integrity

Park & Facility Enhancement

Capital Projects

Each goal is followed by a foundation statement that describes the basis for the goal, and includes an associated set of recommendations expressed as action items that will work toward realization of the goal. The recommendations vary from general to very specific, as many are presented to provide guidance while others seek to address needs that are very specific. The goals and associated recommendations are meant to work together in a manner that some of the recommendations work toward multiple goals.

Recommendations for improvements to specific parks and facilities are found in the Inventory and Assessment, and are designed to also work toward realization of the goals presented herein.



GOAL

Provide comprehensive and innovative administrative services that meet the needs and expectations of Park District residents and promote the interests of the Park District in the community.

FOUNDATION

Developing administrative techniques that are inclusive of all staff, consistent in delivery and equitable in interpretation provide agencies that operate efficiently, ethically and creatively in the best interests of the community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Assess the administrative structure of the Park District periodically to determine if it is continuing to function in an efficient manner that meets the changing community that it serves.

Promote and support annexation into the District that will allow EPD services to be provided to the residents and new parks and revenues to be realized.

Consider alternative approaches to the current park and recreation philosophy of athletics and programmed space to focus equal attention on programs and land uses that embrace the open spaces and natural areas within the Park District.

Develop a consistent approach to all public procedures and services that will allow front-line staff to address customer relations in the same manner and provide the public with a known process.

Continue to encourage EPD staff to use their expertise and initiative in developing new and creative approaches to the fulfillment of their positions.

Staff and Commissioners should participate in community projects and civic organizations in an ongoing manner to promote EPD interests and develop working relationships throughout the community.

Continue to include EPD staff in planning and administrative initiatives to ensure that the development of staff programs are supported and implemented.



Interagency Cooperation

GOAL

Maximize opportunities to work with other agencies and organizations to provide improved park and recreation services to the residents of the Elmhurst Park District.

FOUNDATION

Relationships between public agencies and between public and private agencies provide opportunities that may not exist within any one agency. Maintaining open communications and understanding the common goals and interests of other agencies allows EPD to work in a collaborative manner to provide enhanced services and facilities to the community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Commit to the Mission of the Park District and its established goals as the basis for all collaboration with other agencies.

Establish regular monthly or bi-monthly group meetings with the City of Elmhurst, Community Unit School District #205, Elmhurst College, Chamber of Commerce and other agencies to continually review common issues, develop solutions beneficial to residents and promote EPD interests.

Coordinate programming with schools and other recreation providers, including adjacent park districts as appropriate, to broaden recreation, education, athletic and fitness opportunities.

- Take greater advantage of the agreement with Community Unit School District #205 to allow EPD use of the Joseph Newton Fieldhouse and develop scheduled use of the fieldhouse for EPD activities.
- Work with the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County to jointly develop a dog park and an adventure course on Forest Preserve lands within the boundaries of the Park District.
- Work with the City of Elmhurst to ensure safe pedestrian access to all parks through the development of sidewalks, crosswalks and ADA ramps where access is currently limited.
- Partner with the City of Elmhurst to acquire and develop a joint-use maintenance facility on the north side of the Park District.



Interagency Cooperation

- Encourage the City of Elmhurst to utilize the Elmhurst Park District Comprehensive Plan in preparation of City planning and development efforts.
- Partner with Elmhurst College and the City of Elmhurst to create a community-use performing arts space on the Elmhurst College campus.
- Partner with Community Unit School District #205 and the YMCA to provide joint use of aquatic facilities and joint programs that will allow EPD to have access to indoor facilities
- Work with Elmhurst Memorial Healthcare to develop outdoor gardens and use areas at the new facility that could be open for public use.
- Work with Elmhurst Memorial Healthcare to develop joint uses and programs at the former hospital site.

Continue to collaborate with the Chamber of Commerce in the marketing of the community and Park District.

Continue to nurture existing relationships and build new relationships with agencies and organizations that serve the community.

Financial Resources

GOAL

Develop creative and responsible funding operations that generate financial resources that are utilized efficiently and equitably.

FOUNDATION

While tax revenues, grants and program fees continue to provide a substantial portion of park and recreation agency funding, development of alternative funding sources through corporate partnerships is a trend designed to provide a means of increasing the quality of programs and facilities for the benefit of the community. It is important to balance the use of funding in an equitable manner that provides the necessary resources for daily operations as well as capital improvements.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Continue to work toward the goal to ensure that programs and facilities are self-sustaining to the greatest extent possible.

Seek to utilize alternative, non-tax funding sources, including sponsorships and grants, to fund all or part of new initiatives.

Utilize the web-site and select publications to incur sponsorship revenues that can be used to support programs, special needs and enhanced publications.

Continue to develop partnerships and promote sponsorship packages that include combinations of the web-site and other EPD publications without requiring superfluous name placement in return.

Design new and creative opportunities for sponsorship of parks, programs, events and facilities that ally businesses to specific related programs, support disadvantaged individuals interested in park programs and offer other non-traditional means of sponsoring EPD.

Broaden the utilization of the People for Elmhurst Parks Foundation, the Chamber of Commerce and other civic organizations to assist in developing corporate partnerships and sponsorships that will benefit the Park District and the residents served.

Encourage EPD programming in resident's personal estate planning.

Continue cost/benefit analysis of programs to determine program viability.

Utilize a portion of revenues generated by Enterprise Services to provide ongoing maintenance and enhancement of the Formal Garden, including providing additional horticultural and maintenance staff, and equipment.



GOAL

Maintain a well-educated staff that provides superior services, programming and administration.

FOUNDATION

On-going staff training is a key to providing high quality services that can maintain high levels of customer satisfaction and interest. Training is also important in keeping up with trends, from recreation trends to management style and information technology, training can come in many forms that will benefit a park and recreation agency. Keeping programming new and vibrant, dealing with customers in a positive manner and understanding the end user are all areas where training can help maintain quality.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Develop a staff training program that provides consistent annual educational courses in broad and job-specific areas that are tracked annually and expanded over time.

Develop a Board training program to enhance awareness of national and regional issues and trends in parks and recreation, business planning, professional ethics, team building and other subjects important to agency management.

Continue to utilize regional and national park and recreation conferences as a means for staff and Board development.

Engage local and regional professionals to speak to employee groups on general topics and on procedures that are job-specific.

Utilize in-house staff to research and present topics of interest, whether in program development, maintenance procedures, computer technologies or other areas, that provide cross-educational opportunities to staff that will create a broadened knowledge of the District.

Develop in-house training programs relative to all staff that can be easily modified as changes are realized.

Provide on-going customer-service training for all front-line staff, including seasonal staff, that includes improved personal communications techniques as well as detailed knowledge of the Park District, especially in the areas represented by each individual.

Keep up with technological improvements in everything from computer technologies to maintenance applications in order to maintain efficient use of resources.

Customer Service

GOAL

Provide customer service protocols that are friendly, consistent and easily accessible to all.

FOUNDATION

Customer service is an important factor in park and recreation agencies because contact with the clientele (residents) happens at a variety of levels and for a variety of reasons. From assisting with program registration and complaints to ensuring access to programs and facilities, customer service requires communications skills, adequate technology and collaboration to operate effectively.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Modify the random lottery registration process to allow each registrant equal opportunity of enrollment in each requested program by holding a separate lottery for each program.

Enhance on-line registration visibility to make it more accessible to all who prefer that method of registration.

Work with local senior communities and transportation providers to ensure that schedules for programs that are highly accessible to the non-driving senior population.

Continually monitor the quality of customer service through user satisfaction surveys, including direct point-of-contact questionnaires that can be placed in drop-boxes at each facility and on-line questionnaires when services are provided.

Continue to work with the athletic organizations to maintain consistent policies for athletic field use, weather cancellations and concession scheduling that is clear and fair to the users, does not jeopardize quality and provides appropriate levels of service.

Link all EPD facilities and staff with a common communications system in order to better communicate and address the needs of the residents.



GOAL

Create effective communications sources that provide comprehensive information to the community in an easy to understand and legible manner.

FOUNDATION

Effective communications are the most important marketing tools used by most park and recreation agencies. Developing quality publications that reflect the character of an agency help brand the agency and further develop the image that is so important in the park properties themselves. Branded communications are the critical link for providing information about programs and events to the community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Create a package of EPD communications that are consistent in quality and style, and offer a unique branding that becomes instantly identifiable as belonging to the Park District.

Provide more focus on the web-site and quarterly brochure on adult and senior programming to provide a better public understanding that the Park District is not just for children.

Revise the web-site home page to reduce the number of pull-down and side-bar menus, and focus on important events, articles, profiles and other features that market the Park District and inform the public of EPD opportunities.

Revise web-site park and facility descriptions to accurately reflect the amenities offered at each property.

Develop plan graphics for each property that shows the locations of all park facilities and amenities, and post in the facility/park descriptions on the EPD website.

Utilize quality paper stock that contrasts with ink color to provide highly readable and legible publications.



Public Awareness

GOAL

Enhance resident awareness and knowledge of the Elmhurst Park District to facilitate greater understanding of operations, programs and opportunities.

FOUNDATION

As in most park and recreation agencies, Park District residents typically have a very limited knowledge of the District that focuses on specific parks or events that are of interest. Presenting the District to the public in a broadened manner can provide more interest in the variety of facilities and programs available, create a better understanding of funding and operations, and make the District a more integral part of the lives of all resident. This will help remove misconceptions about District operations and promote even greater community support of the District.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Work closely with community organizations to educate their constituency about the role of EPD, its accomplishments and its future goals.

Continue to work with the press to go beyond reporting the Board process and develop interesting articles that present other aspects of the District, or parks and recreation in general, that will educate the public about the agencies behind the parks.

Utilize [all] existing EPD publications and the EPD web-site to 'present' the District to the public by including articles on operations/finance, profiles of Staff/Board members, volunteer initiatives and events/programs in other venues that can promote cross-interest.

Feature a park or facility and a program each month in EPD publications and on the EPD website to increase the visibility of each facility over time. The featured property and program can include history, amenities, events, future and recent improvements, and other anecdotal information that presents the Park District in a fun and positive manner.

Utilize the EPD web-site home page to proactively market new programs and new schedules/added classes to encourage registration for those programs and schedules that were requested by the public.

Further develop the Park Ambassador program to provide increased customer services within the parks and coordinate a comprehensive park user evaluation system.



GOAL

Engage volunteers in a variety of activities that will assist the Elmhurst Park District in living its Mission and realizing its goals.

FOUNDATION

Volunteers are very important to park and recreation agencies to assist with special events and maintenance, as advocates for parks in marketing and fundraising activities, and sometimes even as alternatives to salaried staff. Volunteer opportunities can be as varied as providing professional expertise to providing manual labor. The efforts of volunteers do require staff coordination, but the rewards for the community are many.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Continue to strengthen the collaboration with the People for Elmhurst Parks Foundation and encourage additional member activities and member recruiting drives.

Increase the visibility and description of the volunteer link on the EPD web-site to give the volunteer program a greater presence and appeal.

Continue to utilize volunteers to assist with special events, selected recreation programs and general park maintenance activities, and to engage local clubs, organizations and church groups to assist in annual clean-up events, especially in natural areas within the Park District.

Promote teen and youth volunteer efforts by increasing recruiting and EPD awareness campaigns in schools and youth organizations.

Engage residents and local business professionals with specific expertise to speak to employee groups on topics or procedures that are job-specific, or assist instructors as guest speakers for specific programs related to their fields of expertise.

Provide volunteers with training to match their areas of activity to ensure that customer service and volunteer activities meet the quality and philosophical goals of the Park District.



Acquisition

GOAL

Develop a funding source to support the acquisition of new lands and facilities to expand the open space and natural areas, and provide additional land or space to meet programming, administrative and facility management needs.

FOUNDATION

In communities that are built to near capacity, acquisition of lands for open space or parks and recreation purposes is difficult. Properties that are available are often urban lots of only 10,000 square feet or less. Land areas large enough to accommodate athletic fields or major recreation amenities likely require that multiple adjacent properties be put together. In communities like this, the land acquisition strategy is limited to select parcels that meet specialized criteria.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Target acquisition of properties that are adjacent to existing parks and facilities to allow expansion of recreation amenities or additional open space.

Consider acquisition of properties that become available adjacent to linear parks that can provide additional open space or provide pocket parks along trails.

Acquire additional lands along Salt Creek that can help protect wildlife and the riparian ecosystem.

Target acquisition of properties adjacent to the Sugar Creek Golf Course for development of golf amenities and maintenance facilities.

Encourage EPD programming in resident's personal estate planning that might include land donations to the Park District.

Cooperate with the City of Elmhurst, Forest Preserve District of DuPage County and other agencies in acquiring and developing lands that offer potential for joint use.

Identify and acquire appropriate properties in underserved areas of the District.



GOAL

Provide flexible program opportunities that are available to the greatest cross-section of Park District residents.

FOUNDATION

Programs offered by park and recreation agencies often include restrictions as to who can participate as well as scheduling that is not available to many potential users. Program registration methodologies also cause many to miss out on programs that are of interest. Greater flexibility restrictions and schedules will allow many residents to participate who are currently unable to do so.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Create flexible program scheduling that will meet the lifestyle needs of more Park District residents, including evening and weekend programming that will attract working adults.

Evaluate EPD programs to determine which programs are most popular over long time frames and provide additional sessions of popular programs to meet community demand.

Continue to work with area schools to provide comprehensive before and after school programs that include in-service/institute days, early release days and secondary holiday programming.

Develop flexible age guidelines for programs that can be waived as appropriate to meet special individual circumstances of Park District residents.

Programs

GOAL

Provide diverse educational, recreational and fitness programming opportunities that meet the changing needs of Park District residents.

FOUNDATION

While many program offerings by park and recreation agencies maintain user interest over time, other interests change with shifts in demographics, age and fads that permeate society. Maintaining the base of long-term programs is essential. But it is equally important to look for ways to provide programs that appeal to an even greater cross-section of the public, and to recognize trends that affect participation and interest.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Evaluate the Community Survey results to determine specialized program/facility needs and requests that will lead to new and expanded programs that will appeal to a cross-section of current and future residents of diverse age, gender and ability.

Conduct ongoing user surveys to evaluate existing programs and identify recreation trends at the local level, and continually monitor the viability of existing programs.

Continue to work with Gateway Special Recreation Association in developing and increasing the quality of programs for individuals with special needs

Add advanced/master levels in appropriate programs to develop life-long users of EPD programs and facilities.

Continue to expand the variety of programs, including educational, recreational and fitness, which allow participation by family groups.

Create senior programs that engage the mind and exercise motor skills to help keep individuals active and interested in recreation.

Increase senior services at Courts Plus and utilize the York High School's Newton Fieldhouse to provide expanded active senior programs.

Expand senior activities and programs in computers, music, exercise activities, reading and games to promote expanded interest and use of facilities and amenities.



Expand teen activities and programs in skating, basketball, music center, computers and performing arts.

Explore the development more teen programs that, while pre-programmed by EPD, are presented as more spontaneous offerings to gain an understanding of user habits.

Continue to increase teen services at Courts Plus and Sugar Creek Golf Course to create an atmosphere conducive to teen enjoyment of the facilities.

Develop specific teen nights at The Hub, Sugar Creek Golf Course, York Commons and East End Pool, with music, events and sports activities.

Develop outdoor winter athletic and educational programs to utilize the parks and view diverse natural systems during this unique seasonal opportunity.

GOAL

Provide programs, services and facilities that encourage healthy choices and lifestyles.

FOUNDATION

Healthy active living is one of the most popular and responsible trends nationwide in park and recreation planning. At the same time, child obesity, heart disease and many other diseases continue to be major health concerns that affect our quality of life. Providing healthy environments for park and recreation patrons in which everyone can participate will continue to be of great importance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Institute a policy that provides for a smoke-free environment on EPD properties.

Provide more concessionary items that offer low-fat, low-sodium alternatives to typical concessionary foods.

Create programs with Elmhurst Memorial Health Care that focus on health and wellness topics for children and adults, including programs that can be taken into schools.

Continue to enforce pool policies, especially those in reference to sanitation, health and safety.

Encourage greater use of alternative modes of travel by adding bicycle racks at each park and facility and by working with the City of Elmhurst to provide walkways and crosswalks that enhance pedestrian access to all parks and facilities.

Make sure that all parks have adequate areas of shade, especially in areas designated for athletics spectator seating.



GOAL

Develop programs in environmental topics that engage the residents in natural surroundings and promote a greater understanding of the natural world.

FOUNDATION

With stewardship of the land falling more and more to park and recreation agencies, it becomes increasingly important that park districts offer environmental education opportunities. Educational offerings can help protect the natural areas within a park district by provide a better understanding of natural systems, and can create a greater awareness of global ecological issues.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Enhance public awareness of the natural areas available within the Park District and their environmental significance.

Develop interpretive signage along the Salt Creek corridor and Wild Meadows Trace, and in other natural areas within EPD parks, that explain the ecological ecosystems, protective measures in place and historical significance.

Provide environmental educational programs that enhance District residents' relationship with the natural world and promote environmentally sensitive lifestyles.

Utilize the expertise of area environmental consultants and agencies such as the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County and Chicago Wilderness to develop environmental programs, presentations and lectures.

Plan and develop a nature center to act as the focus for environmental programming that is designed utilizing green building technologies where applicable and feasible.

Develop additional locals to provide access to Salt Creek in a manner that will allow utilization as an enjoyable environmental resource by the community.

Add tree and shrub markers to provide horticultural identification in appropriate locations throughout the parks.



Maintenance and Planning

GOAL

Provide proactive maintenance programs that anticipate needs and reduce reactive maintenance of parks and facilities.

FOUNDATION

Maintenance of facilities and parks is an extremely high priority as park and recreation agencies search for ways to stretch the viable functional expectancy of products and reduce the time and effort needed for ongoing maintenance. Utilizing materials and products that have extended life under extreme wear and tear allows agencies to extend replacement schedules. Other products and materials can be utilized that require less on-going maintenance, thus reducing the effort needed to maintain them and allow time to be appropriated to other needed endeavors. Maintaining and enhancing existing parks and facilities is a key to the future effectiveness of the Park District.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Provide additional trained horticultural and design/planning staff to promote efforts toward more efficient, natural and context sensitive parks and open space that can reduce maintenance requirements within the parks.

Adopt and utilize Illinois Department of Natural Resources best management practices and other appropriate environmental management techniques, and control exotic and invasive species that inhibit ecological diversity.

Acquire GIS/GPS technology to complete an inventory of trees, unique plants, special habitats and other features that will assist in park enhancement and re-development.

Develop more woodland and grassland areas on park sites and utilize no-mow grass mixes in non-sports field areas that will reduce the areas to be mowed and, over time, require significantly less maintenance and care.

Modify shrub pruning techniques to promote natural growth habits that are healthier and provide greater seasonal interest.

Develop a more aggressive tree planting and replacement program to create greater shade areas in parks.

Continue to upgrade/replace maintenance equipment on an annual basis and acquire new equipment that can result in greater efficiency.

Assess facility wear on an annual basis to track lifecycle of carpeting, tiles, wall covering and other common features that can assist in determining future material use and replacement schedules.



GOAL

Develop a common image that creates a distinct character unique to the Elmhurst Park District.

FOUNDATION

Place-making, imagescape and sense of place are all terms used to describe that phenomenon whereby the physical elements work together to create a place that is distinct; where users are aware of their surroundings and the unique feeling within those surroundings. Much of the ability of a location to project an image in this manner is through the use of amenities, furnishings, lighting and landscaping that all work together due to similarity of style and character. While each EPD property can have its own character or theme, providing a common look throughout the system works toward presenting an image that can be identified as a part of the Elmhurst Park District, making District properties instantly recognizable.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Continue to replace EPD signage at all locations.

Develop a standardized palette of site furnishings to be used throughout the Park District and replace existing furnishings on an as-needed basis until the conversion is complete. Selected furnishings should be of high quality to project a positive image, and should be of a similar style and character that strengthen the image of the Park District.

Include standardized furnishings in the redevelopment of park sites except when a distinct theme is proposed for a specific park or facility.



Open Space and Historic Integrity

GOAL

Preserve and enhance open space, natural areas and the historical site and architectural features of the parks.

FOUNDATION

Historically, parks were created first and foremost to provide open space in areas where land development was taking place. Programming of park land for athletics and other active recreation activities were important components in some park lands, but park land purely for the sake of passive uses, floral displays and creation of picturesque open spaces was the dominant feature in early park development. Increasingly active lifestyles continually put a strain on open space within EPD parks, as programmed uses like athletic fields and courts, playgrounds and special use amenities become the dominant features of park lands. Maintaining some level of non-programmed open space in parks is important in achieving a balanced offering of active and passive pursuits, as well as in respecting the environmental and historical character of the parks.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Balance recreational land use with open space preservation by restricting the development of high-impact uses in those areas that are currently non-programmed open space.

Adopt a master plan for Wilder Park that respects the historic character of the park as urban open space, creates a program for maintaining and enhancing existing open space.

Enhance the Salt Creek corridor by working with the Salt Creek Watershed Network, Sierra Club, DuPage County and the Illinois Department of Environmental Protection in developing an improvement program that is consistent with the common goals of these organizations/agencies.

Limit development within Wild Meadows Trace to uses that require minimal land disturbance, including a nine-hole disc golf course and re-establishment of exercise stations.

Consider establishment of prairie-style landscaping in open space areas that are not directly a part of active recreation features, including outside ball field outfields, outside golf course fairways and in parks that have remote access areas such as Maple Trail Woods and Golden Meadows.

Enhance public awareness of the natural areas available and provide only limited access that respects the ecological character of the site(s).



Park & Facility Enhancement

GOAL

Provide parks and facilities that are state of the art and well-maintained, and improve facilities on a regular basis to keep up with new technologies and District resident needs.

FOUNDATION

As new recreations trends reach the area, demographics change and parks show signs of wear, undertaking significant enhancement programs can ensure that the facilities continue to meet the needs of the community being served. Many enhancement initiatives are district-wide needs to provide a greater quality throughout the agency. Others are site specific, and include redevelopment of certain parks and changes of use at others.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Embark on a program of district-wide improvements that utilize standardized furnishings, quality materials, enhanced landscaping, improved safety, wayfinding, athletic field improvements and continued ADA compliance.

Continue to replace site furnishings, playground equipment and other site amenities on a programmed schedule that will provide regular improvements on a cyclical basis while maintaining an understanding of the capital expenditures needed to meet the ongoing cycles.

Utilize green building products and technologies in building and site development projects where applicable and feasible.

Track recreation trends, demographic changes and changes in local interests to determine redevelopment needs of parks and facilities.

Undertake the park and facility recommendations found in the Inventory and Assessment over the next five years to maintain the quality of EPD parks and facilities.

Add public bathrooms to all parks where program athletics and activities are accommodated.

Capital Projects

GOAL

Add new facilities and re-develop existing park sites to elevate the quality and provide enhanced program opportunities.

FOUNDATION

Many of EPD's larger parks have been redesigned and constructed in recent years to provide amenities that are for use by the entire community. While there continue to be large-scale projects to be initiated or completed, it is equally important to upgrade many of the smaller neighborhood parks. Several parks are identified as needing more than simple playground replacement or walkway resurfacing. These parks need new master plan designs that balance the needs for open space with programmed activity areas. New facilities have also been identified for possible addition to the Park District in order to meet the increasing program needs of the residents both in the near and distant future.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Review optional venues and facilities to provide enhanced services, amenities and programs to the senior and teen population in an environment that encourages greater use and interaction.

Complete the master plan components of Berens Park, including the pedestrian pathways, amphitheatre, skate bowl, picnic shelter and other amenities, re-develop the volleyball courts and neighborhood playground area, and initiate a tree planting program to provide shade at the parking lots, ball field spectator areas and other appropriate areas throughout the park.

Explore options for the expansion and modifications to Courts Plus, including the addition of a therapy pool, completion of recommendations from 2005 study (with emphasis on locker facilities and HVAC equipment) and interior space modifications to meet changing family, teen and senior program needs.

Design and construct a new park plan for Crescent Park that maintains the park as open space through significant landscape and turf improvements and the additional of limited picnic and seating areas as well as other site furnishings/amenities.

Prepare a new park master plan for Eldridge Park that includes development of a combined recreation center and nature center directly on the lagoon that utilizes this feature as well as close proximity to Salt Creek for related amenities and programming, and create a landscape/site design character to reflect these uses.



Prepare a new park master plan for Eldridge Park that includes development of a combined recreation center and nature center directly on the lagoon that utilizes this feature as well as close proximity to Salt Creek for related amenities and programming, and create a landscape/site design character to reflect these uses.

Design and construct a new park plan for Kiwanis Park that maintains the park as open space through significant landscape and turf improvements and the additional of limited picnic and seating areas as well as other site furnishings/amenities.

Develop a conceptual master plan for future expansion of the Wagner Community Center to determine the feasibility of expansion and the probable gain of program space that will be realized by such an expansion.

Design and construct a new park plan for Wild Meadows Trace that maintains most of the park as open space, re-establishes the fitness course, improves ADA accessibility and creates new entry designs at each access point into the park. Location neutral

Initiate development of the Wilder Park master plan and explore redefining uses for the Wilder Mansion, Administration Building and Recreation building.

Restore the Wilder Park Conservatory utilizing the recommendations of the 2004 study in order to make the conservatory more efficient, and enhance the integration of the current administration building and gardens areas as a means of expanding horticultural programs and services, and playing of the marketability of the Conservatory complex as a regional asset.

Prepare a redevelopment plan for the playground, skate park, sand volleyball and sand play areas at York Commons that maintains the existing level of open space and addresses proximity issues of the skate park adjacent to children's amenities.

Evaluate efficiencies and lifecycles of HVAC systems at all facilities to develop replacement strategies and schedules, and initiate replacement based on findings.

Develop gender-specific locker facilities at maintenance facilities throughout the District.

Identify an appropriate location and develop a disc golf facility.

Sources

Appendix A



A variety of information was researched in order to develop this Comprehensive Master Plan. The listing below includes only sources outside the Elmhurst Park District. Thanks to all of these organizations and agencies for the use of data and background material used in the preparation of this document.

- City of Elmhurst
- Elmhurst College
- Elmhurst Memorial Health Care
- National Recreation & Park Association
- Illinois Park & Recreation Association
- Illinois Association of Park Districts
- Elmhurst Chamber of Commerce & Industry
- University of Illinois, Department of Recreation, Sport and Tourism
- Indiana University, Department of Recreation and Park Administration
- Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission
- U.S. Census Bureau
- Addison Park District
- Bensenville Park District
- Buffalo Grove Park District
- Des Plaines Park District
- Downers Grove Park District
- Elk Grove Park District
- Glen Ellyn Park District
- Glenview Park District
- Itasca Park District
- Lisle Park District
- Lombard Park District
- Mount Prospect Park District
- Northbrook Park District
- Oak Brook Park District
- Rolling Meadows Park District
- Schaumburg Park District
- Streamwood Park District
- Wheaton Park District
- Wood Dale Park District
- ReadEx Research
- Wikipedia
- Illinois Periodicals On-Line

Community Survey Data

Appendix B



An Illinois Distinguished Agency

YOUR FEEDBACK IS REQUESTED!

Dear Neighbor,

Please join us in planning your Park District's future!

Your household has been randomly selected to participate in the Elmhurst Park District's Attitude and Interest Survey. You have an opportunity to provide your opinions that will be considered as we plan future programs, activities, services and facilities for the District's ten-year Comprehensive Plan. Your opinions are **important** whether or not you use Park District facilities and programs.

We hired Edwards and Kelcey, an independent planning and research firm, to conduct the Comprehensive Planning process and this survey. Edward and Kelcey drafted the survey questions based on the input received at Comprehensive Planning meetings held with the Board, residents, affiliated groups and staff.

Please take the approximately 10 minutes to complete the enclosed survey. Return your completed survey in the postage paid envelope we have provided by June 21, 2006. All responses are kept confidential and you will not be identified or contacted because of your responses. Any person requiring a reasonable accommodation to complete this survey should contact Edwards and Kelcey at (312)384-6311. A summary of the survey results will be posted on www.epd.org.

Thank you! We value your input and support.

Sincerely,

Board of Park Commissioners

225 Prospect • Elmhurst, Illinois 60126 • Phone: (630) 993-8900 • Fax: (630) 993-8913 • www.epd.org

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

Peter G. Gonsowski • Chris Hardy • Mary E. Kies • Collette M. Kubiak • Patricia Monacelle-Mull • Nann Reinhardt • Carolyn Whitson



ELMHURST PARK DISTRICT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2006 COMMUNITY SURVEY

DEMOGRAPHICS

1. Referencing the adjacent Elmhurst Park District map, in which area do you reside? (please check one)

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A | <input type="checkbox"/> D |
| <input type="checkbox"/> B | <input type="checkbox"/> E |
| <input type="checkbox"/> C | <input type="checkbox"/> F |

2. Are you: (please check one)

	18-20	21-29	30-45	46-55	56-65	65>
Male	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Female	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Please indicate the number of additional family members residing in your home in each age and gender group.

	<5	5-10	11-15	16-17	18-20	21-29	30-45	46-55	56-65	65+
# of Males	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
# of Females	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___

4. How long have you lived within the Elmhurst Park District boundaries? (please check one)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 years or less | <input type="checkbox"/> 11 - 15 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 - 5 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 16 - 20 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6 - 10 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 21 years or more |

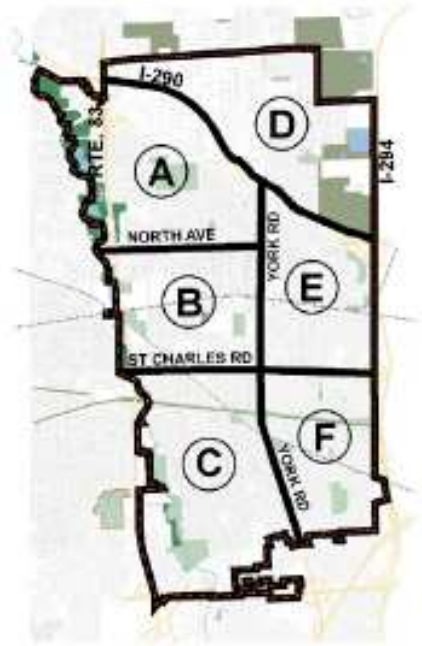
PARK AND PROGRAM USE

5. Do you or a member of your household have a: (please check one on each line)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Courts Plus Membership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sugar Creek Golf Course Resident Card	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outdoor Pool Pass	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Fitness Club	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. How many Park District programs, including those at Courts Plus, do you and members of your household typically register for in a year? (please check one)

- 10 or more 8-9 6-7 4-5 1-3 None



7. On average, how often have you and members of your household visited Park District facilities or parks in the past year or participated in Park District programs during a typical use season?
(please check one on each line)

	<i>3+ times per week</i>	<i>1-2 times per week</i>	<i>2-3 times per month</i>	<i>once per month</i>	<i>a few times per year</i>	<i>never</i>
General Facilities						
Neighborhood Parks (playgrounds, tennis, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Athletic Fields (soccer, football, baseball, softball, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trails (cycling, walking, jogging, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Special Use Facilities						
Courts Plus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Smalley or East End Pool	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Abbey Leisure Center	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sugar Creek Golf Course/Driving Range	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wagner Community Center	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Hub	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programs						
Structured outdoor programs (camps, tennis, swim lessons, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Structured indoor programs (preschool, dance, martial arts, Courts Plus, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programs for persons with disabilities (Gateway Special Recreation Association)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. What are the reasons that you do not use your parks more often? (please check all that apply)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not enough time | <input type="checkbox"/> Facilities do not meet needs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Access/Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Nothing matches my interests |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Location | <input type="checkbox"/> ADA Accessibility (Americans with Disabilities Act) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parking | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal safety concern | |

9. What are the reasons that you do not participate in Park District activities and programming more often? (please check all that apply)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nothing matches my interests | <input type="checkbox"/> Parking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not enough time | <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of programs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cost | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal safety concern |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Access/Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know what programs are available |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scheduled when I cannot participate | <input type="checkbox"/> Facilities do not meet needs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Location | <input type="checkbox"/> Wait-Listed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Classes are full | <input type="checkbox"/> Language spoken |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special needs not provided for | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ADA Accessibility (Americans with Disabilities Act) | |

10. For the areas in which you are familiar, please indicate your level of satisfaction with the Elmhurst Park District. (please circle one number in each row)

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Never Used</u>
<i>Programming</i>						
Early Childhood Programs (Pre-K)	5	4	3	2	1	0
Youth Programs (Grades K-5)	5	4	3	2	1	0
Middle School Programs (Grades 6-8)	5	4	3	2	1	0
High School Programs (Grades 9-12)	5	4	3	2	1	0
Adult Programs	5	4	3	2	1	0
Senior Citizen Programs	5	4	3	2	1	0
Special Events	5	4	3	2	1	0
Instructors	5	4	3	2	1	0
Program Fees / Value	5	4	3	2	1	0
Programming for Persons w/ Disabilities	5	4	3	2	1	0
<i>Communications</i>						
Handling Problems/Complaints	5	4	3	2	1	0
Park District Publications	5	4	3	2	1	0
<i>Program Registration</i>						
On-line (www.epd.org)	5	4	3	2	1	0
In Person	5	4	3	2	1	0
Random Lottery	5	4	3	2	1	0
Staff Knowledge	5	4	3	2	1	0
Staff Customer Service	5	4	3	2	1	0
<i>Indoor Facilities</i>						
Quality	5	4	3	2	1	0
Safety	5	4	3	2	1	0
Cleanliness	5	4	3	2	1	0
Quantity	5	4	3	2	1	0
<i>Parks</i>						
Quality	5	4	3	2	1	0
Amenities (courts, benches, paths, etc.)	5	4	3	2	1	0
Safety	5	4	3	2	1	0
Maintenance (mowing, repairs)	5	4	3	2	1	0
Bathrooms	5	4	3	2	1	0
Cleanliness (litter, garbage barrels)	5	4	3	2	1	0
<i>Athletic Fields</i>						
Availability	5	4	3	2	1	0
Maintenance (day to day)	5	4	3	2	1	0
Quality (infrastructure)	5	4	3	2	1	0
Spectator Seating	5	4	3	2	1	0
Lighting	5	4	3	2	1	0
Turf	5	4	3	2	1	0
Safety	5	4	3	2	1	0
<i>Governance/Operations</i>						
Administration	5	4	3	2	1	0
Maintenance personnel	5	4	3	2	1	0
Office personnel	5	4	3	2	1	0
Park District Board	5	4	3	2	1	0
<i>Concessions</i>						
Quality	5	4	3	2	1	0
Staff	5	4	3	2	1	0
Cleanliness	5	4	3	2	1	0
Food Items Offered	5	4	3	2	1	0

11. How would you rate the quality of the following Park District facilities?

(please circle one number in each row)

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
The Abbey Leisure Center	5	4	3	2	1	0
Courts Plus	5	4	3	2	1	0
The Hub	5	4	3	2	1	0
Park Playgrounds	5	4	3	2	1	0
Prairie Path	5	4	3	2	1	0
Safety Town/The Depot	5	4	3	2	1	0
Skate Park	5	4	3	2	1	0
Smalley Pool	5	4	3	2	1	0
Sugar Creek Golf Course	5	4	3	2	1	0
Sunbeams & Rainbows Preschool Bldgs.	5	4	3	2	1	0
Wagner Community Center	5	4	3	2	1	0
Wilder Park Conservatory	5	4	3	2	1	0

12. How effective are the following resources in providing you with information regarding the Elmhurst Park District and its programs/services?

(please circle one number in each row)

	<u>Very Effective</u>	<u>Somewhat Effective</u>	<u>Somewhat Ineffective</u>	<u>Not Effective</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
Annual Report	4	3	2	1	0
Friends/Neighbors/Relatives	4	3	2	1	0
Fun Times School Newsletter	4	3	2	1	0
Internet Web-site	4	3	2	1	0
Mailers/Fliers	4	3	2	1	0
Newspapers	4	3	2	1	0
Park District Staff	4	3	2	1	0
Quarterly Brochure	4	3	2	1	0
Update Newsletter	4	3	2	1	0

FUTURE PLANNING

13. When planning for the future, how should the Elmhurst Park District prioritize each of the following areas? (please circle one number in each row)

	<u>First Priority</u>	<u>High Priority</u>	<u>General Priority</u>	<u>Low Priority</u>	<u>Not a Priority</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
Condition of facilities	5	4	3	2	1	0
Funding/Finances	5	4	3	2	1	0
Increasing available facility space	5	4	3	2	1	0
Increasing natural areas	5	4	3	2	1	0
Land acquisition	5	4	3	2	1	0
Maintaining open space in existing parks	5	4	3	2	1	0
Park and facility maintenance	5	4	3	2	1	0
Program scheduling	5	4	3	2	1	0
Restoration of Wilder Park Conservatory	5	4	3	2	1	0
Teen Spaces & Programming	5	4	3	2	1	0
Upgrade athletic fields	5	4	3	2	1	0
Other _____	5	4	3	2	1	0

14. How do you prefer to register for Park District programs? (please check one)

- Internet
 Mail/Drop-Box
 In Person
 Not Applicable

15. What is your level of interest in the Park District adding the following?

(please circle one number in each row)

	<i>Highly Interested</i>	<i>Very Interested</i>	<i>Somewhat Interested</i>	<i>Low Interest</i>	<i>Not Interested</i>	<i>Don't Know</i>
Additional In-line Skate Facility	5	4	3	2	1	0
Additional Interpretive Trail(s)	5	4	3	2	1	0
Additional Meeting Rooms/Spaces	5	4	3	2	1	0
Additional Outdoor Basketball Courts	5	4	3	2	1	0
Additional Outdoor Ice Rinks	5	4	3	2	1	0
Additional Sprayground(s)	5	4	3	2	1	0
BMX Bicycle Trail	5	4	3	2	1	0
Bocce Ball	5	4	3	2	1	0
Event Space/Banquet Hall	5	4	3	2	1	0
Exercise Trail	5	4	3	2	1	0
Frisbee Golf	5	4	3	2	1	0
Gymnasium	5	4	3	2	1	0
Indoor Ice Rink	5	4	3	2	1	0
Indoor Performing Arts Space	5	4	3	2	1	0
Indoor Soccer Facility	5	4	3	2	1	0
Indoor Swimming Pool	5	4	3	2	1	0
Indoor Walking/Running Track	5	4	3	2	1	0
Lacrosse	5	4	3	2	1	0
Nature Center	5	4	3	2	1	0
Outdoor Amphitheatre (concerts, shows)	5	4	3	2	1	0
Skate Plaza (urban-type space for skate use)	5	4	3	2	1	0
Teaching/Demonstration Kitchen	5	4	3	2	1	0
Teen Activity Space	5	4	3	2	1	0
Other _____	5	4	3	2	1	0

16. When considering the programming and facility needs of your family over the next five years or more, what do you think will be your family's highest priorities? (please check your 5 highest family priorities)

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Open/Passive Space | <input type="checkbox"/> Ice skating | <input type="checkbox"/> Volleyball |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental education | <input type="checkbox"/> In-line skating | <input type="checkbox"/> Swimming |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Before/after (middle) school care | <input type="checkbox"/> Skateboarding | <input type="checkbox"/> Soccer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Weekend programs | <input type="checkbox"/> Cycling | <input type="checkbox"/> Football |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Programs for Persons with Disabilities | <input type="checkbox"/> Martial Arts | <input type="checkbox"/> Baseball/Softball |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-school | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Lacrosse |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crafts | <input type="checkbox"/> Running/Walking | <input type="checkbox"/> Senior programs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dance | <input type="checkbox"/> Theatre/Performing arts | <input type="checkbox"/> Senior trips |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Culinary Arts | <input type="checkbox"/> Visual arts | <input type="checkbox"/> General interest trips |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fitness | <input type="checkbox"/> Racquetball/Handball | <input type="checkbox"/> Family activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Golf | <input type="checkbox"/> Tennis | <input type="checkbox"/> Family fitness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gymnastics | <input type="checkbox"/> Ping Pong/Table Tennis | <input type="checkbox"/> Teen activities |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor Adventure | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Basketball | |

17. If you have any additional comments, please use the space below to convey this information. If your comments are in regard to a specific question within this survey, please make reference to the question number. (please attach additional pages, if necessary)

Thank You!

(Please check that you've answered questions on all 6 pages, and then return your survey in the postage-paid envelope provided.)

This form is coded only to avoid troubling you with reminder mailings once your survey is received. Your answers will be kept strictly confidential and used only in tabulation with others. © 2006 Readex Research

project #11767-_____

Readex Research 2251 Tower Drive West Stillwater, MN 55082 651.439.1554 FAX 651.439.1564

**ELMHURST PARK DISTRICT
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2006
COMMUNITY SURVEY**

**'Other' Responses and Additional Comments
to Questions as Numbered**

Question #5 – Additional Comments

- § Had, but considered too expensive for our non-use. At time we had it, they had minimal kid facilities. Non-kid attitude (limited pool time etc.)

Question #8 – Other

- § Age & Disabled.
- § Enjoy when I do.
- § Our daughter participates in Illinois Shotokan Karate classes offered by most other park districts. She takes classes in Wheaton, Lombard & Glen Ellyn.
- § Swimming pool not close.
- § Usually only go to parks with my grandchildren.
- § 75 years old / wheelchair
- § My age
- § Need a dog exercise area.
- § It's across town – cost of gasoline.
- § Smalley Pool for kids under 10 only.
- § Cleanliness issues at Courts Plus.
- § Our age – 84 & 90
- § Due to age
- § Age
- § Used to belong to Courts Plus for years – it became too crowded & parking too difficult
- § We are Seniors
- § Age
- § I like the YMCA better – price, programs, flexibility better
- § Age
- § Lack of energy
- § Have alternatives
- § Toilets are not always available
- § Elderly
- § Just moved here recently
- § Restrooms
- § Kids are older now. Used to do many parks & programs
- § No bathrooms at some

Question #8 – Additional Comments

- ⊗ We use them quite often –very negative question.
- ⊗ I would like a park between tracks & North Avenue and West & York Rd.
- ⊗ Personal safety concern – Cant walk; have to drive - too far to walk; have to cross RR tracks or North Ave.
- ⊗ We go every day

Question #9 – Other

- ⊗ Age
- ⊗ 75 years old / wheelchair
- ⊗ My age
- ⊗ Need a dog park or area with designated times to allow dogs to run off-leash.
- ⊗ Cost of gasoline.
- ⊗ No ice skating area.
- ⊗ Cleanliness issues at Courts Plus.
- ⊗ I worked last summer for EPD – wasn't called back for 2006 season. Budget considerations were cited... I was grateful for my 2005 turn at bat though.
- ⊗ Our age.
- ⊗ Due to age
- ⊗ Used to belong to Courts Plus for years – it became too crowded & parking too difficult
- ⊗ We are Seniors
- ⊗ We go when we can
- ⊗ Age
- ⊗ Have alternatives
- ⊗ Abbey programs & activities too expensive
- ⊗ Too old
- ⊗ Neighborhood tennis courts in disrepair
- ⊗ 3x week is comfortable for me
- ⊗ Too old
- ⊗ Gateway does not correctly handle behavior disorders, they focus on DD and physical disabilities
- ⊗ Teenagers have limited use of Courts Plus facilities
- ⊗ Recent park taxes & fees
- ⊗ My current schedule of 3x week suits my needs
- ⊗ Just moved here recently
- ⊗ Kids are older now. Used to do many parks & programs
- ⊗ Programs are not sophisticated enough (particularly sports)

Question #9 – Additional Comments

- ⊗ We believe that the park district offers many fine programs and are strong supporters of the park district. We are simply too busy to currently use many of the programs offered. These programs being readily available to add to our perceived quality of life. We like knowing they are available when we finally have free time to participate.

- § Reasons that I participate at The Abbey –
 - Easy accessibility – no stairs to climb
 - Parking available close to the building and adequate parking for 100 people to park close to the building
 - Quality of programs is great
 - The facility meets our needs
- § [Scheduled] during prime nap time
- § We live near Abbey. We can't drive so have to be by Abbey for senior trips

Question #11 – Additional Comments

- § Parks Playgrounds – Depends. In our area (north side of 'C') is poor – only for small kids. Some parks are beautiful.
- § Smalley Pool – Too small. Way underestimated #s of patrons
- § Safety Town/The Depot – It's almost never open – what a waste.

Question #13 – Other

- § Consider adding Shotokan Karate classes.
- § Some parks are neglected – Marjorie Davis
- § Senior facility.
- § Just don't raise my taxes again.
- § A new and better pool.
- § Restore the Wilder Mansion
- § TV monitors ON exercise equipment @ Courts Plus
- § Upgrade so all preschools are equal to Wagners, including gym
- § More seating for adults
- § Discount of outdoor pool fee should be given to Courts Plus members. Seniors are discriminated against at present time – only families with children get discounts for outdoor pool passes
- § Better policy for field use

Question #15 – Other

- § Instructional classes

Question #16 – Other

- § Instructional classes
- § Too old

**ELMHURST PARK DISTRICT
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2006
COMMUNITY SURVEY**

Additon Comments

17. If you have any additional comments, please use the space below to convey this information. If your comments are in regard to a specific question within this survey, please make reference to the question number.

It seems people from out of town leave the most trash in our park (Berens Park).
#13 -- Our park district consistently cancels games scheduled for our fields when other suburbs will play. York games have had to play at opposing teams fields! We all have similar weather conditions. Fix your policies or improve the fields so they will drain!
We take care of our young grandchildren during the summer. Why are they not considered our residents when you buy a pool pass? They stay with us all summer, why do we have to pay extra for them? We are retired and it gets to be very expensive to take them to the Spray Park and pools.
I have 2 sons. There is not much for my older son who is 4 years old. We never get into coached programs. You need to offer more things for preschool boys.
I think the Park District does a terrific job in setting meetings, etc., to obtain resident feedback. Also, a great job in trying to meet the needs of many diverse groups within the community such as seniors, increasing youth, preschool, and family population, historical preservationists, visionaries.
More trips from Abbey for senior citizens.
Do not raise taxes.
I love going to The Courts! I think it is well run and I'm proud of it as a resident of Elmhurst.
Level of tax bill has always been poor cost/benefit ratio for years. Park Board administration spends far too much. Costs of facilities like The Courts should be available to taxpayers of Elmhurst who built it without high fees. What do taxes get us? Pool facilities should be for residents.
We love the Rec Station programs. Teenagers need to be allowed more usage of Courts Plus gym facilities with less time constraints. Outdoor tennis facilities at Wilder need repairing!
#16 and #9 -- Since the park district broke with NEDSRA, the quality of programs for our behavior disordered son plummeted. We are now faced with a young adult (17-1/2 year old) for whom special needs programs are not available in Elmhurst. The programs offered for DD and physically disabled children, youth, and adults are not an approachable mix for BD person. He has some possible access to socializing and activities in Wheaton through adult mental health services, but nothing locally. NEDSRA offered separate programs for BD person. Gateway does not and we had to withdraw our son after a couple of tries. The inclusion aide service was very helpful, but not available to an 18 year old.
More umbrellas at the Spray Park inside to shade baby siblings and regular chairs. There is an open gym in the winter for 6 months to 4 years that is 12:30-2:00. The time does not seem appropriate since most kids nap from 12:30-3:00 at this age.

Our community requires some basic level of Park District facilities and programs, but I would ask the board and staff to focus on keeping expenses in line, and resist the natural temptation to build a bigger empire and keep up with every new wrinkle other park districts decide to do. We taxpayers are not able to afford it!
We would like to request more trees at the Butterfield Park near the fields 2 and 3.
I use the Prairie Path for walking and to walk my dog. Additional water fountains along path, trash receptacles. Villa Park dog water bowl water fountain designs are great -- just a thought. Overall, park rating is very good!
#15 -- Bensenville has an indoor walking track we use.
The Wilder Mansion is deteriorating. Stop discussing and take some action as should have been done 2 years ago.
Focus on what the Park District only does (outdoor areas and parks) rather than expand into areas already being served.
Discover Salt Creek! It could be a water prairie path filled with paddlers. Maintain the shoreline. Keep it navigable. Buy land if necessary. Eldridge Park ramp is a start. Keep going!
Park Ridge and Schaumburg and Oakbrook put our Park District to shame as far as facilities go. I do realize it costs a lot more, but it would be nice to have something to do inside in the winter like swimming, ice skating, or things we can do as a family.
I would have been better able to help you some 50 years ago. I'm sorry.
Goose poop park -- oops, I mean Eldridge Park is gross! I don't even let my kids play there. Please try and clean it up -- thanks.
Please take a look at restoring Wilder Park to be more aligned with how it was when the mansion was built.
We enjoyed more things in our younger days. Lived in Elmhurst 45+ years.
Need to have more adult programs on evenings and weekends.
The Courts offer wonderful programs, but is maxed out. We need to look at other similar communities and offer comparable quality facilities. We pay enough money, let's build our programs. We need an indoor aquatic center that can meet many of these needs. We use the Oakbrook Recreational Facility due to quality, value, cleanliness, and professionalism.
An excellent facility in the Oakbrook Park District. Elmhurst has a solid, good facility and programs. Excellent programs for newborns through 5th/6th grade and seniors. The middle school and teen segment has few programs. We need programs that are interactive for the teens -- outdoor adventure, etc.
Members of Courts Plus should not have to pay for additional courses like Pilates and yoga. Membership should cover it.
A park as big as Eldridge should have more bathroom facilities than just one port-a-potty!
The Courts Plus facility and staff consistently exceeds our expectations of quality. They should be the example of what works here.
All areas nonsmoking!
Staff needs to be courteous at all times. They also need the authority to satisfy most customer service situations.
On few occasions, quarterly brochure was not delivered to home. Had to pick one up at Abbey.
Please support Elmhurst Choral Union again!
Would like to see a teen center for ages 9 to 15 and would like to see more programs offered for this age group.

<p>My biggest problem is that most kid's classes are at the WCC, but that takes us 20 minutes to drive there. I would love to see different options for locations of classes, especially the outdoor ones (I understand there is not many options for indoor classes).</p>
<p>We loved Mrs. Berger's Spanish class and think that early exposure to languages is important. We loved Touch a Truck (though think fewer horns would be good!). The Easter egg hunt was disappointing. Turnout was much too high for the space and eggs. Thanks for all your great work!</p>
<p>My son has a fall birthday so he was not able to start kindergarten in August. In preschool 3 days a week, I was hoping to enroll him in Park District classes on the other 2 days or in PM on school days. I found there to be very few sports classes for children this age and if there was a class, it was always in AM when my son was in school.</p>
<p>Live within your budget. Do not raise taxes in order to build additional facilities.</p>
<p>Not sure how the random lottery works. It appears to me that the Park District starts filling classes based on the date the applications are received versus waiting until the deadline and then randomly selecting them. If I wait until a day before the due date (yet still before the deadline), it seems like I am always wait listed. There needs to be more age-appropriate classes for kids that miss the September 1st deadline to start school. Two of my three kids have a September birthday and so they couldn't start preschool until a year later. There are very few classes offered that are appropriate for these kids. Most classes lump them with 2 year olds.</p>
<p>I feel the parks program is successful and see no need for additional programs. Just keep up the present programs and parks.</p>
<p>To answer the above question (#16) I could not check gymnastics, but my daughters were in the program for about 7 years. Although we did not have the opportunity to use the new facility, we have seen it. I strongly urge you to continue this program.</p>
<p>We loved the classes when our daughter was young, but most classes and the dance especially didn't keep up after about 2nd-3rd grade. We hate Smalley Pool. We went to York Commons every day from 3:30-7 p.m. We built a pool since Smalley.</p>
<p>Wilder Park is a major highlight of our town and has been since my great grandparents built their home here. It should be preserved and highly maintained always.</p>
<p>When my children were young, we enjoyed all aspects of what the Park District offered -- Sunbeams, York Commons, etc. Great job with the Hub and all you do!</p>
<p>Court Plus is too expensive for average residents. If the fee is low, I would become a member.</p>
<p>Add a turf field along with the school district (either joint project or parallel project). Youth football, soccer, softball practice that all would benefit.</p>
<p>Keep costs Spartan and programs self-supporting to keep taxes reigned in.</p>
<p>You might want to keep the public more aware of what impact things have on their tax bill. About 2 years ago Park District taxes doubled with no explanation. They decreased the following year, again with no explanation.</p>
<p>Not sure what Wilder Park Conservatory is -- old library? Parking at Eldridge Park needs review. Very dangerous on Spring Road.</p>
<p>Whenever I go to some park, there are no bathrooms in which some areas are needed. The activities that you sponsor are great and work out with everyone's schedule.</p>
<p>What I would like are more senior trips not involving river boat gambling. All seniors do not want to gamble. More theatre and Chicago trips would be great.</p>
<p>#10 -- Park bathrooms. There needs to be bathroom options at each park. Preferably not port-a-johns.</p>

I have had my children in many activities in the past and have always been frustrated with the scheduling as both parents work full time and cannot make most programs. Also, one of the teachers asked my son to leave and when I addressed this with the office, there was never any follow-up. I have stopped using the Park District for programs. I have instead been using the non-sponsored programs.

Residents in Crown Estates, Elmhurst, Illinois should not have to pay such a high fee to use the library. Programs offered cannot be utilized without a library card. Fee too high for families.

One reason our family moved to Elmhurst 40 years ago was the parks. We used them extensively as our family was growing up and we still do when our grandchildren visit. Children have enough structured activities. Please maintain and continue adding open spaces and playgrounds. Why are there lifeguards at the pools, but no one monitoring the skate park? It is not safe.

Enforce the posted parking ban for soccer by Golden Meadows Park.

When will our former library become our historical museum?

Maybe add some fun things for parents and high school students to do together for a fun night or few hours, or a craft or cooking or nature thing, but not costly.

Overall, Elmhurst does a great job with its parks, but there are quite a few muddy spots in the parks including the softball fields.

I have small children that go to the playgrounds frequently. I would like to see all the playground turf to artificial turf like at Berens Park. It is safer and I don't have to worry about them putting it in their mouths or injuring one another.

Parking at Courts Plus is terrible. Most senior fitness classes are during working hours.

I would support a skate plaza to get the kids off the stairs of my and other Elmhurst stairs and railings, also city hall.

I often question the staffing levels at The Courts. Why are there so many people there doing nothing?

It would be great if Courts Plus had an indoor pool with deep water for exercise, sports, etc. It could be where the sunbathing area is -- no one uses it! Separate pool, no lap lanes, 6-foot shallow/12-foot deep end. Pool is too small for number of users. Thank you.

I think the Elk Grove PD offers an amazing model of beautiful facilities that are very family-oriented. One of the biggest problems for Elmhurst is the extremely bad attitudes of the employees. I have been made to feel again and again that I'm bothering the person at the desk at WCC or The Abbey for registration. There is no sense of customer service at all. Also, we've found that most children's program instructors are more interested in each other than the kids. This isn't true of Kid Rock or Kindermusik though.

I don't like that field use can be restricted to official team use only. Please keep control of the Wilder Mansion and do not embark on any of the city's expensive ideas for the Elmhurst Historical Society.

Will be nice to have more senior programs like water aerobics or painting or any art at low fees/cost.

My only concern with The Hub is the fencing. Multiple small children can get out of the Spray area quickly.

#8 and #10. The problem is unleashed dogs. I live across the street from Wilder Park and bring my grandchildren there when they visit. My grandchildren have been knocked down by unleashed, romping dogs. I have been cursed and challenged when I asked dog owners to please leash their dogs. I have reported this to no avail.

I dislike the way the lottery is done. A lottery should be done on a per class basis. I have a hard time getting into classes. My sign-up sheet must always be at the bottom!

Financial advice. Retirement. Medicare. Taxes. Investing. Healthcare. Prescription drug programs. Veteran's information.
Parks need to have parking lots, not have cars pulling out onto streets directly (Spring Road) and blocking traffic and causing near accidents.
Some gymnastic instructors/assistants do not display genuine interest in making progress with the student/children. It is more like they are babysitting, not teaching.
Build an amphitheater or a nice stage and sound system in a current park for evening concerts, shows, etc.
I have a problem with the expanding facilities taking place, and why must they do away with some streets that have always been a shortcut to church, the post office, etc.? Gas prices are at its highest in the history of this country.
Smalley Pool is way too small. Seems to be for younger kids only. Consider grooming a nature path at Berens for walking dogs and enjoying woods. The path where the old hay rides were held right now is all swampy and muddy, but it could be so nice! Keep it shady. Dog parks -- lots of people in Elmhurst have dogs. Would love a safe area to walk/run them.
I have lived in Elmhurst all my life and am presently 85 years old. Please evaluate on that basis.
No cultural center in Wilder Park!
Thank you for your good work!
Washington Park updates are awesome! Plastic bags for dog walkers are a wonderful idea. Thank you.
I think East End Pool should become a millennium pool as slides, waterfalls, beach volleyball courts, not a boring pool. All the cities around Elmhurst have slides or waterfalls or something, why can't Elmhurst? We should think like a child!
#15 -- More interested in an outdoor amphitheater if it were to be used for concerts by local bands that teens would enjoy hearing or Battle of the Bands activities.
Elmhurst's schools and parks are a large reason for families looking to relocate here.
Family used most park facilities when kids were here.
Elmhurst has done a great job improving Park District facilities and programs. Remember, our parks like our schools enhance the quality of life and land values in Elmhurst. I moved here in 1975 because Elmhurst is a great place to live. Thanks.
All-in-all Elmhurst Park District is first rate, but funding in proper places would bring low areas up to par. Money for properly trained workers would help.
Because #10 and #15 are of no interest to us -- we are in our 80s so I did not respond.
There really aren't many programs available for youths with disabilities that could help with acceptance and socialization I realize it is difficult, but let's not try to include them more in the programs you offer.
Question #7 -- Facilities and classes are good. I like silversmithing/jewelry making -- maybe 1 night a week at a special use facility. Also, cutting and polishing stones for jewelry 1 night/week.
I think The Abbey is an insult to every senior in Elmhurst. I went here as a teenager when it was the youth center and I don't think anything has changed! As a taxpayer since 1965, I would like to see some of the money put to senior use!
Question #13.
#15 -- The future planning should ideally be done with young parents. It seems that each generation is becoming less active. The activities listed in #15 allow for a wide variety of interests and should appeal to a large group.

Regarding The Hub -- miniature golf is way overpriced. We went once and for a family of 5 its \$25 -- that's just not worth it. Also, Spray Park is so small. You had the room, why not model it after the Ty Warner one?
Aim to lower taxes. #13 -- Taxpayers paid for parks, etc., and then they are given away. Tennis courts and athletic fields. Preserve Wilder Mansion for use of the citizens of Elmhurst.
Regarding #15 -- Indoor swimming pool with deep water in order to offer deepwater aerobics classes year round. Instructors -- staffing of Courts Plus water aerobics classes are at times not very consistent. We need quality instructors. Pay more to get the best! Train them! Expand water aerobics class offerings. Whenever I call or write to the person in charge of water aerobics classes, I always get a response telling me why it could not be done!
I think it would be wonderful if the Wilder Park Conservatory could be restored. It has such a rich history in our town, and so many people used to visit it regularly. It is sad to see it in such disrepair.
I think Wilder Park may be great for small parties, kids, seniors, senior activities, plays, gatherings, meetings for community issues.
Are you working with the college on a joint performing arts theatre?
I feel EPD is a fine government agency doing a fine job. There is a vast amount of programs offered to all ages and interest. Keep up good work and do not neglect one area for another!
Although we are not personally interested, for the value of our homes, programs mentioned above are necessary, but cost can be a factor. I go to a private health club because the senior rate is very reasonable.
Gateway does not offer enough lesson-type activities. At least at appropriate times. Their focus seems to be on special activities and field trips. I have had to register my daughter with WDSRA for swimming and dance lessons (out of district).
Need to have summer camps for children older than 6th grade. Also need to offer more camps that do not require the full 5 days of a week. The fields, especially soccer are in poor condition. Courts Plus has a noxious smell to it. Can't they clean the facility with something that is not as repulsive?
I'd like just one park where it is quiet. No games, just grass and trees. How about it?
The costs are ridiculous! The annual report tells so little, it's almost useless. How much time, money, and energy is spent on Courts Plus and we can't use it without a membership? Management is often unresponsive.
A park district shouldn't have such a high membership fee. Either it's private or public -- which is it? Main priority for us will be children's swimming and tennis lessons. At the time, considering trading to a nicer facility -- perhaps Oakbrook. Thanks!
Question #15 -- My family is grown; therefore, I would support new activities and programs if the overall community interest exists. I think the services provided by Elmhurst Park District are superior, always have been.
Enough expansion. Maintain existing facilities to a level we can be proud of.
The Berens Park baseball game announcing is way too loud! It is so annoying we can't sit out on the patio at all. If it can't be reduced, area residents should be advised of the schedule in time to make plans to leave the area for the duration of the game. Perhaps the scores could be broadcast on low-power FM or headphone reception. Pet owners taking their dogs to the park should be reminded to clean up after their dog craps on resident's lawns!

Check-in staff at Courts Plus should be trained in public contact. Desk is usually overstaffed and staff is preoccupied in socializing with each other. They give no expression or eye contact to those checking in.
Why send our tax money to Minnesota? Get local statistics and local questionnaires!
The concession stand at The Hub is severely lacking. Most weekends by evening they have run out of food. I have yet to be there this year and have the stand open the hours posted. Also the mini golf is too expensive.
Please encourage park board to re-emphasize positive working relationship with city of Elmhurst, especially on Wilder Park cultural campus area, and reuse of Wilder Mansion with historical museum. All will benefit economically!
I have seen the grounds by the library being taken care of by illegal aliens. Our teens could use the jobs. We have many mildly handicapped in town. Why are they not hired? Where is the compassion?
Over the years in the past, our family has thoroughly enjoyed most of the Park District programs and facilities. However, they are now grown and are out of Elmhurst.
Customer service at Courts Plus is almost nonexistent. Some training and cross-training must be done for any staff member dealing with the public. Very few people there have an answer to your question and that is when they bother to see if you have a question.
The new cafe in Courts Plus is extremely well run with very friendly personnel. The food is delicious!
All of your performing arts (dance, acting, video) are at Wagner Community Center. We live in South Elmhurst. During rush hour and evening when classes scheduled, it is very inconvenient traffic to get there; therefore, do not use.
Please restore information about the Greenway Trail to the Web site.
Courts Plus facility needs to be renovated, especially locker room and amenities. We would pay more monthly and spend more money there. We would love to help introduce lacrosse to Elmhurst. My husband played college lacrosse and would love to be involved.
The Courts could use expansion and/or updating. I would like to see another aerobics studio and more aerobics classes and a larger and better nursery/kids plus. The kid's area is way too crowded and presents a safety/security issue with such chaos. They need more adult supervision and better toys and equipment.
Skating parks questionable. I would not let my children ever go alone.
Because I am a stroke victim, The Courts only meets my needs.
The director of parks/recreation services, Jim Rogers, is particularly doing a fantastic job!
I am a senior, but I circled items I think our young teens really need more of to keep them busy. I also found items for my interest, but please don't go crazy with prices!
Question #10 -- Program registration. Families try to register all children in the same family for swimming lessons at the same time. Your random lottery puts children into different time slots. Please keep families together.
Most programs offered by EPD are not challenging, are run poorly and are excessively overpriced. We look directly at outside run programs for sports such as AYSO basketball and youth baseball. The fact that it costs a family of 6 over \$50 to ice skate is absurd. Freeze some parks and offer free skating in the winter.
Our Park District is great. Just don't keep raising taxes so we can't afford our home or to live in Elmhurst. Been here 40+ years and can't afford taxes for schools and parks. Great as they are.
#12 -- Did not receive catalog for a couple years. #8 -- Hanover Park and Wayne Township have quality and quantity programs for seniors. #9 -- Cost high for a tax-supported organization.

I just would like to see more interest for teens.
Hub food is overpriced. Need over 40 sports leagues, e.g., softball, soccer, basketball. Turf problems at many parks.
We love the classes, but we never get in!
Need more preteen and teen activities and parks. Need parks closer to Berkley and Prairie Path Lane that teens can use.
The above includes interests of not only me but my grandkids.
I feel that program fees for the classes at The Courts are based on an outdated system when looking at who is using the fee classes and The Courts in general. You need to compete with modern health clubs with a higher fee and all classes are included in that fee. More people would then use the advanced classes.
When did Internet registration become available? Why go to Abbey and then to Courts Plus to register? Why can't one place handle both?
I noticed that the regular outdoor parks do not have basketball courts near my apartment (Spring Road area, West Avenue). I think they should!
Adding anything to or for the Park District sounds great, but there is no way anyone wants taxes to go up any more!
Overall, I feel the Park District and its programs are excellent; however, I feel that all course fees are too high, e.g., gymnastics, dance, tumbling, etc.
Summer camps should have a monthly payment option like the YMCA. Can't expect residents to pay camp monies all at one time. Families have many expenses during this time of year, e.g., Rec Station program, religious education programs, etc.
Elmhurst needs a teen center. The Abbey served this purpose many years ago. Perhaps it could be utilized as a teen center once again. There needs to be a Peace Memorial just as we have a Veterans Memorial. We should honor Gandhi, King, Mandela, Mother Theresa, and others who have peacefully uplifted humanity.
#10 -- Complaints/handling in regards to golf course. The manager says one thing in regards to using facility and then comes back with something else when you talk to him again.
Any way you could have a teen and preteen database in which teens without regular jobs could mark jobs they would be willing to do and residents can hire for lawn care, babysitting, etc.?
Wilder Mansion is an asset not to be lost. Use as civic center and performing arts center. Connect Virginia Avenue to Alexander as a parking lot drive through for whole museum campus.
Nice job.
I am not aware of any interesting senior programs. Trips at a reasonable price would be welcomed.
I feel the cost of a single membership to Courts Plus is very high, especially in comparison to a family membership.
Why can't Elmhurst institute same service as North Lake for snow removal and grass cutting for seniors? Also, government subsidies for senior programs!
The Hub should have a more challenging mini golf for the teenagers and adults. Smalley Pool could use more water park type equipment such as slides, a lazy river, and a more updated locker/changing area. The Park District could acquire more gymnasium space, especially for basketball. A more challenging rock climbing wall for teens only. Offering of Kendo classes for differing age groups.
There are several dog (off-leash) parks that are accessible to everyone from everywhere. We need one for the locals of Elmhurst.

The lottery is not good. Please consider doing a separate lottery for each program. If a family is picked last they get nothing as opposed to getting one class, but not another. It is very frustrating.
Indoor ice skating rinks like the towns of Addison and Bensenville.
#9 -- I would like more classes on the weekends. With being a working mom, the weekend is the only chance I have to do fun classes with my 2-year-old son.
It is difficult to match increases in programs/facilities with tax monies. Young people need more places available to them (within cost constraints). You are doing a great job.
Offerings and activities for teens, ages 14-17/18, need to be addressed! There is not enough available for this age group. Yoga, Pilates, etc., would be great additions.
I've gone to the activities coordinator several times regarding putting classes that fit with working parents. We aren't all stay-at-home moms.
Work to make one of the swimming pools available for adult use into 1st or 2nd week of September. It is a waste to close them so early. Lifeguards could be found.
Courts Plus could use updating. Adult dance classes -- salsa and others. More exercise class choices and times.
If I waited to join activities when I finally received the Park District catalog, we would never find an available class. I always go online, thankfully.
#13 -- Would like to see more classes of Cubbie Play offered with a qualified instructor. Current instructor is very poor.
I used the pool at The Courts for rehab last year. I really should take the time to use this facility on a regular basis.
I think Elmhurst needs a lot more picnic shelters and picnic tables. I think this would bring out a lot of families.
Ladies locker room showers need a deep cleaning at Courts Plus. All aerobic instructors are great. Quality programs are given with a good variety and scheduling.
Not interested in anything that will cost the taxpayers to have taxes raised. We blow enough money around here and we're not rich!
Soccer fields in all of Elmhurst are in poor condition. You need to spend some money and improve them. Consider raising the price for nonresident pool passes. People from other communities come here because we are so cheap. You could raise the price and make more money. Also, improve concessions and you would make more money.
We will definitely be needing places/activities for teens to hang out.
The opportunity to use our athletic fields and open spaces is diminished by overuse by nonresidents, e.g., Berens Park.
I believe that we are blessed with a very good Park District, but after working 4 part-time jobs and with 6 children and 1 grandchild, my husband and I have very little free time to enjoy our parks and programs.
I have an MS in urban forestry. I am a teacher with CPS. I would appreciate if you could use my services. Thanks.
Elmhurst Parks should be used only by the Elmhurst taxpayers!
The construction of Smalley Pool is largely viewed by those I know as a huge failure. It is impossible for children less than 5 years to swim! The new plan to East End is also not an option. The barrier in the pool to separate the lanes makes for no large open space. At any time only a few people use the swim lanes; therefore, use a rope to separate the swim lanes so it can be removed if needed.
Consider programs for homeschoolers.
There should be an indoor or outdoor pool at Berens Park to serve that area of the community.

I live alone and I search the park information for activities I can participate in. Age generally blocks me out.
I am single with no children and relocated to Elmhurst from the East Coast 16 months ago.
Overall, I am very pleased with the parks and facilities and programs offered by the Park District. My only negative experience has been with the summer swimming lessons. I found them to be a waste of time and money because the instructors (at least the ones we had in 2005) were mostly focused on each other. The kids spent a lot of time lined up along the edge of the pool, just waiting for someone to tell them what to do. Other than that, our experiences with the Park District have been great.
We do not need additional park space. Consolidate select services -- school district and/or city.
Elmhurst Park District rocks!
Smalley Pool was a huge mistake. Pool should be redone to allow swimming lanes, diving, etc. Once kids reach 2nd grade, they outgrow it.
Health issues regarding cleanliness of Courts Plus locker rooms.
After living here 45 years and raising 3 children here, we are now senior citizens and have outside interests.
Preserve the natural ecosystem of the North Avenue and Route 83 woods and any others that may be under the care of the Elmhurst Park District.
We are near Eldridge Park. Why can't there be more benches? Also, what about a pavilion so there is somewhere to go if it rains? The other parks seem to get all the goodies and Eldridge nothing.
Overall, I am very pleased with our Park District.
Your summer programs need to be more conducive to working parents and children/family of multiple age groups. To have several kids at several locations is not convenient!
To underscore earlier comments, the PD is really great, but there is no way, especially after school referendum that we are willing to pay any more. Use the money well, or give us a gift and reduce spending.
Would like to see Elmhurst Hospital and Park District build fitness center. Therapy pools fitness with instructor for person with disabilities. We are senior citizens with adult family member with disability.
Sugar Creek Golf Course could be managed much better. I don't play it often because play is so slow and no one manages this. Why does it take 3 hours to play a short course like that?
Smalley Pool is too small and overcrowded. The plan for East End looks like it will also be. Courts Plus -- dated, overcrowded, not enough group exercise throughout the day. New gym at Wagner not good enough to compete with private gyms in the area. Dance studios sit empty. Why don't you rent them out? The board makes very poor planning and design decisions and we end up with facilities that are just so-so.
Outdoor basketball attracts adults from other communities and get unruly. Love The Hub and Spray grounds. Use the parks a lot. Preschool more socially based than educationally based.
Should either locate facility in triangle north of North, east of York, south of 290 or provide underground access below York because there are no parks or open spaces in that area. Improve quality of health club at Courts Plus. Provide towels. Improve equipment. Have youth basketball and adult basketball more accessible. Tennis program is generally good. Open more Pilates/yoga/aerobics classes when working people can go. I feel activities leave out working people. It is insulting that nonresidents pay basically what residents pay at Courts Plus and it is always crowded when I go before work and on weekends.

<p>The Park District function, which I use primarily for Courts Plus tennis and exercise, is just fine. Given the tax dollars expended for Park District, I feel expansion and expense are not necessary. Funds to conduct this survey are unnecessarily used.</p>
<p>More walking and bike paths would be great! Also, Courts Plus needs more space or a second location in Elmhurst! It has gotten too busy. Some equipment is not available at all times.</p>
<p>Installing an adult pool adjacent to Smalley will be a great benefit to families with children older than age 10. It also will give teenagers a healthy/constructive activity, and a place where they can meet their friends (so that they don't have to just hang out in Center City on summer evenings).</p>
<p>Would like swimming lessons that are 1-2 times per week, not 4 days per week for only 2 weeks. Takes up too much time from our summer time and no one learns to swim in 2 weeks. Why aren't there kids' lessons at Courts?</p>
<p>Consolidate your offices. You are spread out all over the place. It is too costly to operate.</p>
<p>Please try to include more programs for children on weekends and evenings. Full-time working parents can't allow children to participate any other way!</p>
<p>I was very upset with the golf course when they charged us for a holiday fee on Good Friday this year. Our senior golfing group thought that was a real stretch on the definition of a holiday. Also, it doesn't seem right that they increase the resident card fee at the course every year. Senior residents should not have to pay that much to obtain resident fees.</p>
<p>Running the Prairie Path and Salt Creek brings me great joy, especially when the Duke Cross Country team flies by. I'm beaming with Elmhurst pride.</p>
<p>Our family has resided in Elmhurst since 1951. We had 4 children, all active in various sports and activities. We actively supported the Park District and especially Sugar Creek Golf Course. We think it is a shame the winners of former tournaments and plaques are not displayed!</p>
<p>Please make the pool and/or programs affordable. Not everyone who lives here is rich.</p>
<p>Doing a good job. Could use indoor pool year round. No more in-line skate facility -- one by smaller pool enough.</p>
<p>It doesn't pay to have a resident golf card unless one plays a lot of golf. Nearby towns have much better value for golf. Cost for Elmhurst/VP golf is high relative to other neighboring areas. Good quality of condition though. Difference between resident and nonresident is small.</p>
<p>Good luck! Wilder Park should be a showplace for Elmhurst -- make the old library into an event space for public events! Get first-class catering and you'd make a fortune!</p>
<p>The baseball fields at Berens and Plunkett need to be maintained better. Outfields need reseeding to avoid injury.</p>
<p>The population of Elmhurst is changing. As a single mom of 1 child, I often pay the same amount as a family of 6 for things like pool passes. Can you consider a price break? It's hard enough to keep it balanced!</p>
<p>Courts way too crowded.</p>
<p>An indoor pool/water park to compete with Oakbrook or Elk Grove would be a great addition to EPD so that programs (camp, Rec Station, etc.) can use it as well as for parties and such.</p>
<p>#15 -- belong to Courts Plus. Many seniors surveyed would like bocce ball courts. Great activity for all ages! If large family on limited income, costs can be an issue!</p>
<p></p>

Need bench at the rollerblade hockey court in Eldridge Park for players to change from street shoes to rollerblades. At the access gate, called the park office on this 3 years ago and no one ever called back.
The playground next to Eldridge Park building (the building for preschool) needs to be redone.
My children are both under the age of 3 so we have not had a chance to participate in the programs, yet since we are not home during the week, we hope to in the future. Holding athletic games on week nights instead of weekends would be helpful.
Elmhurst parks are good/some OK. Need more space. Wheaton parks are better maintained/cleaner as a general comparison.
Sand volleyball courts at East End Park. Outdoor ice skating rinks. Better maintenance of baseball and soccer fields.
Landscaping in parks with perennial gardens.
Take down the old Wilder library. I don't care if you build a new functional building on the property. Too expensive to restore or renovate.
I strongly oppose saving the old library!
We use Rec Station extensively for before and after school care and I believe it's a great service, value for money, etc. Sometimes the quality and control abilities of the caregivers are questionable. While Evia Brady is great, some of her staff in the schools is not!
With my kids, I'm traveling to many park districts around the Depage area. I'm surprised to see their parks in much better shape than ours -- clean and well groomed. With a first-class town like Elmhurst, we should have the highest class parks.
For the amount of money spent in taxes that go to the Park District, I feel you are not doing a good job (Scott Caskey, parks and recreation mayor from Kansas University).
Public pools should open before 12 noon or there should be at least 1 pool open before then. Noon is too late of an open time for younger children who nap. Splash park is overcrowded in mornings due to this lack of pool options.
We badly need teen space and programs. Flexible exercise classes not too late in evening. More cultural/arts classes and shows.
#16 -- Would like to see more evening and weekend events (classes) for adults.
Regarding #15 -- We have some of the same services (pool/indoor track) at Courts, but those are ones we are most interested in. If they are looking to expand, these would be great areas. Increase use at Courts.
Overall, we appreciate and enjoy the EPD's great facilities and offerings, particularly since the birth of our first child. This was a factor in moving to Elmhurst from Chicago. Thanks for the opportunity to provide input. We'd appreciate any additional resources for young children/families.
I am afraid I am a poor candidate for your survey since all our children are raised and out of the house! I am mainly interested in gardening and computer workshops and of course the aesthetics of a well-kept grounds and a dog park.
Some athletic fields are in poor shape. Program lottery should be per class, not per registration form.
The turf at the soccer fields is terrible! Other towns are much nicer.
Maintenance of fields is awful. Access to other communities limits taxpayer use. Figure it out without relying on funds from other communities. Our taxes are too high and services not in line.

<p>I am very disappointed that I have lived in this town for over a decade and this is the first time the district has actively sought my opinion. Programs are nice, but I'd like to see more free and unrestricted (and even unmanned) options. Parks could be redesigned for better separation of activities, sound reduction, beautification, underground parking. More shaded areas would be a plus and also the addition of a dog park. There is a definite need for wider, paved, and interconnected bicycle trails. More drinking fountains, garbage, and recycling areas are also needed. You could also save money by mailing only one survey!</p>
<p>Additional exercise facility.</p>
<p>Park District programs like volleyball should be governed by EPD people, not overzealous participants who tend to alienate other would-be participants not in their clique.</p>
<p>An indoor track would be nice.</p>
<p>Question #16 -- I marked it before noting the 5 point limit. The numerals represent my correction.</p>
<p>Eldridge baseball field is terrible -- no parking, no restrooms, no place for spectator to seat. The goose droppings are out of control!</p>
<p>Park District needs to share facilities with city and school district. The school and Park District boards need to have joint meetings periodically.</p>
<p>At age 90 I am very much home oriented.</p>
<p>#11 -- New facilities are much too small for our town. Nonresident fees should be increased.</p>
<p>Wilder Mansion should be used by the entire community. Moving the historical museum there would also be a plus. The Wilder Mansion needs to be preserved.</p>
<p>Coach Ed is great! Wagner Center front desk staff could be friendlier.</p>
<p>Bathrooms at most parks are atrocious. Mostly locked or filled with urine and toilet paper. Pop and Gatorade machines are always empty. Butterfield concession is never open during baseball games. No access to Butterfield Park if you live south of Butterfield. Children cannot access across Butterfield Road.</p>
<p>I enjoy the Courts Plus center very much.</p>
<p>Need upgrade for all free weights at Courts Plus. Much of this equipment is in poor condition. Also, could use more equipment such as weight benches, etc. Would however need additional floor space.</p>
<p>Recommend Starbucks at The Hub.</p>
<p>I'm not sure what user's fees are (e.g., soccer fields at Berens Park). You have something outside groups need and want. Charge much more for facility!</p>
<p>While the Wagner Center is a very complete facility, we have passed on several classes held there due to location. It is too far from home to be running up there all the time -- both distance and time required to cross town.</p>
<p>Wagner Center is lovely, and the teaching staff (particularly toddlers/preschool) is first rate. However, we usually end up in Oak Brook or Oak Brook Terrace for hiking, and at the Edge in Bensenville for ice skating and year-round swimming lessons.</p>
<p>It is very disturbing to have diapered children in the public pools. No diaper is leak proof. I don't want my own children and family swimming in contaminated water, no matter how much and many chemicals are used afterward. Please change policy on the use of diaper/swim pants in the pools.</p>
<p>It would be great if the Park District's Sunbeams and Rainbows were expanded to add morning classes for its 4-year-old program. My oldest son was enrolled in Sunbeams and Rainbows and would have benefited from a 5 morning/week program. He has a September birthday and was really ready for kindergarten by January. A 5-day/week might benefit kids with earlier birthdays.</p>

<p>We loved the Elmhurst Fall Festival in 2005 and hope that Elmhurst holds another one in 2006. We would like to see Wilder Mansion used for weddings, banquets, etc. It would compliment the weddings at Wilder Park.</p>
<p>The pool (outdoor) should be open to public in the morning. That is when young kids are most active. An indoor pool with water activities and slide would be great!</p>
<p>A well-rounded program should focus on excellence in every facility/activity/program it operates. It should avoid mediocrity by trying to be all things for all people or competing with other Park Districts.</p>
<p>The EPD should not be considered a profit center. It is for the people.</p>
<p>I have a concern that Elmhurst is turning our town into a city. Building huge homes on 50-foot lots, there goes the land areas, natural water drainages, high fences all over. Elmhurst is not the town I grew up in -- 6-foot fences, no yards.</p>
<p>Truthfully this was a waste of time for you as well as me. Now if this questionnaire came 20 years ago I could have been more agreeable on a lot. The kids are grown; the grandchildren are grown and live in different states and towns! Sorry I know I wasn't helpful!</p>
<p>I am very interested in after care for middle school for working parents. Rec Station for 1-5 is great and then there is nothing. I would have to think that there is a market for this in Elmhurst!</p>
<p>Just a homeowner.</p>
<p>Would like Park District to run baseball. Would like more golf lessons for kids in the evening.</p>
<p>Knowing that funding \$s are limited, though necessary, EPD needs to reach out to adjacent communities - Villa Park, Oak Brook, Bensenville, Berkley, Addison - and attract more people/\$s to EPD programs.</p>
<p>Skate Park is an awesome amenity! However it needs some type of accountability for who is using it and what goes on, on a regular basis there.</p>
<p>Babysitting for younger siblings/toddlers during non-child classes would be wonderful. Earlier morning hours at the pools (9 or 10AM) would draw lots of mothers with babies and toddlers.</p>
<p>The program cost is not realistic for large families with multiple children. Consider offering free programs and donation programs. We can put the kids in wonderful programs thru local churches for \$25.00 for several weeks. Also the fee for the pool pass that isn't purchased early is outrageous. Why do you not have the cost of the pool pass remain the same all season ??? Who cares when it is purchased by? You still get the money. I think that it is ridiculous that you charge to use the spray ground. There has to be a benefit of living here in Elmhurst that our Park District offers - a free sprinkler perhaps, or how about outdoor ice skating - freeze the tennis courts. Programs are not affordable. Thank you.</p>
<p>Thank you for the opportunity to give you my comments regarding the Park District and programming. In general I love the Elmhurst Park District and what it offers the residents of Elmhurst. I find the programming to be educational and fun for my children and feel very fortunate to have the resources at hand that we do. I will take this opportunity to discuss two items that I have issue with.</p>

First, I feel there is an issue with the cut-off dates of programs, especially for preschool-aged children. I am lucky enough to have 2 kids that have birthdays in the fall; therefore, they always miss the cut-off date to participate in many programs. By the time they do qualify, many of the programs are no longer of interest to us. For example, my son turned 2 years old in September. Last fall, I wanted to put him into a program like Huggie Bears, but he didn't make the deadline. I had to put him in Big Bear Little Bear. He was eligible for Huggie Bears in January, but most of the slots were filled by then and therefore, he ended up in Big Bear, LB again.

I understand the reason you use the cut-offs, but I feel like in the preschool years, there could be more flexibility for some of these programs, or programs added to accommodate these kids. It is a shame that by the time a child meets the age requirements, many are too old for the program, but too young for the next level program. I hope this makes sense.

My second comment is regarding the Courts Plus Day Camps that are held in the summer. I live one block from Plunkett Park. The Day Camps monopolize the park for the neighbourhood kids and virtually leave us late afternoon and evening use only. I wish you could rotate your camp to other parks or at least put the in an area which they are not scaring away the neighbourhood kids. The bigger kids have a tendency to just "sit" on the equipment and not use it.

In addition, my really big complaint is that they leave the park a mess all summer long. I constantly clean up garbage after the campers leave. I feel that if you are using the parks, each camp counsellor should be instructed to make clean-up a part of wrap-up activities. Each camp counsellor should also be responsible to leaving the grounds clean. The park district should be checking on this. It is sad that your own employees are some of the worst offenders of keeping the park clean.

Thank you for allowing me a venue to express my thanks and concerns. Good luck in compiling all of this data and sorting it out!!!

4. How long have you lived within the Elmhurst Park District boundaries?

Residency Duration

	3 yrs or less	4-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	21 years or more	Total Responses
	84	125	55	81	130	428	903
	9.30%	13.84%	6.09%	8.97%	14.40%	47.40%	

5. Do you or a member of your household have a membership or pass for any of the following?

Member/Pass Holder

	Courts Plus	Sugar Creek	Pool Pass	Other Fitness Club
Yes	348	82	298	132
	41.93%	11.68%	38.60%	18.91%
No	482	620	474	566
	58.07%	88.32%	61.40%	81.09%
Total	830	702	772	698

6. How many Park District programs, including those at Courts Plus, do you and members of your family typically register for in a year?

	10 or More	8-9	6-7	4-5	1-3	None	Total Responses
	54	33	43	108	321	339	898
	6.01%	3.67%	4.79%	12.03%	35.75%	37.75%	

7. On average, how often have you and members of your household visited Park District facilities or parks in the past year or participated in Park District programs during a typical use season?

General Facilities

	3+ Times per Week	1-2 Times per Week	2-3 Times per Month	Once per Month	A Few Times per Year	Never	Total Responses
Athletic Fields	107 13.21%	122 15.06%	59 7.28%	26 3.21%	172 21.23%	324 40.00%	810 100.00%
Trails	139 16.41%	127 14.99%	138 16.29%	74 8.74%	232 27.39%	137 16.17%	847 100.00%
Neighborhood Parks	159 18.45%	180 20.88%	140 16.24%	62 7.19%	216 25.06%	105 12.18%	862 100.00%

Special Use Facilities

	3+ Times per Week	1-2 Times per Week	2-3 Times per Month	Once per Month	A Few Times per Year	Never	Total Responses
The Hub	27 3.21%	39 4.64%	74 8.81%	53 6.31%	210 25.00%	437 52.02%	840 100.00%
Wagner Community Center	15 1.82%	87 10.56%	40 4.85%	17 2.06%	138 16.75%	527 63.96%	824 100.00%
Sugar Creek Golf Course	1 0.12%	26 3.13%	37 4.45%	39 4.69%	151 18.17%	577 69.43%	831 100.00%
Abbey Leisure Center	2 0.24%	12 1.45%	11 1.33%	13 1.57%	148 17.90%	641 77.51%	827 100.00%
Smalley/East End Pool	98 11.69%	128 15.27%	57 6.80%	21 2.51%	141 16.83%	393 46.90%	838 100.00%
Courts Plus	200 23.42%	104 12.18%	41 4.80%	12 1.41%	93 10.89%	404 47.31%	854 100.00%

Programs

	3+ Times per Week	1-2 Times per Week	2-3 Times per Month	Once per Month	A Few Times per Year	Never	Total Responses
Programs for persons with disabilities	4 0.48%	3 0.36%	2 0.24%	1 0.12%	7 0.84%	820 97.97%	837 100.00%
Structured Indoor Programs	76 8.93%	130 15.28%	36 4.23%	27 3.17%	116 13.63%	466 54.76%	851 100.00%
Structured Outdoor Programs	50 5.93%	66 7.83%	37 4.39%	20 2.37%	101 11.98%	569 67.50%	843 100.00%

8. What are the reasons that you do not use your parks more often?

Repondents were allowed to provide multiple answers to this question	# Responses	Reason Given
	514	Not enough time
	191	Nothing matches my interests
	127	Facilities do not meet needs
	67	Other
	33	Location
	32	Age
	30	Parking
	23	Access/Transportation
	20	<i>Children are grown</i>
	18	Personal safety concern
	17	Cost
	6	ADA Accessibility

9. What are the reasons that you do not participate in Park District activities and programming more often?

Repondents were allowed to provide multiple answers to this question	# Responses	Reason Given
	424	Not enough time
	272	Scheduled when I cannot participate
	232	Cost
	222	Nothing matches my interest
	105	Classes are full
	69	Don't know what programs are available
	63	Other
	62	Wait-listed
	46	Quality of programs
	43	Facilities do not meet needs
	34	Location
	20	Age
	19	Access/transportation
	16	Parking
	10	ADA Accessibility
	7	Personal safety concern
	7	Special needs not provided for
	0	Language spoken

10. For the areas in which you are familiar, please indicate your level of satisfaction with the Elmhurst Park District.

Programming

	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor	Total Responses
Early Childhood (Pre-K)	101 31.08%	172 52.92%	39 12.00%	7 2.15%	6 1.85%	325 100.00%
Youth Programs (K-5)	59 18.15%	174 53.54%	68 20.92%	18 5.54%	6 1.85%	325 100.00%
Middle School Programs (6-8)	18 9.63%	78 41.71%	52 27.81%	21 11.23%	18 9.63%	187 100.00%
High School Programs (9-12)	16 11.94%	40 29.85%	34 25.37%	20 14.93%	24 17.91%	134 100.00%
Adult Programs	35 10.57%	152 45.92%	100 30.21%	33 9.97%	11 3.32%	331 100.00%
Senior Programs	30 21.13%	57 40.14%	34 23.94%	16 11.27%	5 3.52%	142 100.00%
Special Events	44 12.50%	197 55.97%	82 23.30%	24 6.82%	5 1.42%	352 100.00%
Instructors	58 12.83%	251 55.53%	116 25.66%	20 4.42%	7 1.55%	452 100.00%
Program Fees/Value	38 7.22%	202 38.40%	179 34.03%	76 14.45%	31 5.89%	526 100.00%
Programs for persons w/disabilities	6 13.33%	13 28.89%	11 24.44%	9 20.00%	6 13.33%	45 100.00%

Communications

	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor	Total Responses
Park District Publications	137 22.35%	307 50.08%	134 21.86%	31 5.06%	4 0.65%	613 100.00%
Handling Problems/Complaints	52 15.66%	132 39.76%	79 23.80%	42 12.65%	27 8.13%	332 100.00%

Program Registration

	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor	Total Responses
On-Line (www.epd.org)	49 21.59%	96 42.29%	55 24.23%	20 8.81%	7 3.08%	227 100.00%
In Person	136 24.42%	275 49.37%	116 20.83%	22 3.95%	8 1.44%	557 100.00%
Random Lottery	19 7.85%	79 32.64%	92 38.02%	26 10.74%	26 10.74%	242 100.00%
Staff Knowledge	86 17.10%	242 48.11%	133 26.44%	32 6.36%	10 1.99%	503 100.00%
Staff Customer Service	104 20.39%	251 49.22%	118 23.14%	26 5.10%	11 2.16%	510 100.00%

Indoor Facilities

	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor	Total Responses
Quality	133 21.52%	341 55.18%	113 18.28%	21 3.40%	10 1.62%	618 100.00%
Safety	157 25.82%	353 58.06%	79 12.99%	15 2.47%	4 0.66%	608 100.00%
Cleanliness	146 23.29%	327 52.15%	112 17.86%	29 4.63%	13 2.07%	627 100.00%
Quantity	98 16.78%	288 49.32%	138 23.63%	44 7.53%	16 2.74%	584 100.00%

Parks

	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor	Total Responses
Quality	211 28.17%	413 55.14%	100 13.35%	19 2.54%	6 0.80%	749 100.00%
Amenities	160 21.59%	411 55.47%	128 17.27%	35 4.72%	7 0.94%	741 100.00%
Safety	179 24.66%	397 54.68%	131 18.04%	12 1.65%	7 0.96%	726 100.00%
Maintenance	194 25.87%	416 55.47%	103 13.73%	25 3.33%	12 1.60%	750 100.00%
Bathrooms	69 11.13%	230 37.10%	194 31.29%	84 13.55%	43 6.94%	620 100.00%
Cleanliness	158 20.73%	390 51.18%	157 20.60%	49 6.43%	8 1.05%	762 100.00%

Athletic Fields

	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor	Total Responses
Availability	44 11.58%	167 43.95%	105 27.63%	43 11.32%	21 5.53%	380
Maintenance	48 11.85%	193 47.65%	119 29.38%	27 6.67%	18 4.44%	405
Quality	41 10.28%	195 48.87%	109 27.32%	33 8.27%	21 5.26%	399
Spectator Seating	23 5.61%	140 34.15%	140 34.15%	74 18.05%	33 8.05%	410
Lighting	44 11.55%	173 45.41%	111 29.13%	38 9.97%	15 3.94%	381
Turf	29 7.42%	151 38.62%	111 28.39%	55 14.07%	45 11.51%	391
Safety	49 11.98%	204 49.88%	123 30.07%	21 5.13%	12 2.93%	409

11. How would you rate the quality of the following Park District facilities?

Facility Quality

	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor	Total Responses
Courts Plus	163 28.06%	311 53.53%	77 13.25%	25 4.30%	5 0.86%	581 100.00%
Park Playgrounds	138 20.60%	419 62.54%	95 14.18%	14 2.09%	4 0.60%	670 100.00%
Prairie Path	195 27.16%	430 59.89%	78 10.86%	13 1.81%	2 0.28%	718 100.00%
Safety Town/The Depot	71 23.36%	166 54.61%	52 17.11%	11 3.62%	4 1.32%	304 100.00%
Skate Park	17 10.24%	74 44.58%	51 30.72%	15 9.04%	9 5.42%	166 100.00%
Smalley Pool	43 9.58%	212 47.22%	92 20.49%	55 12.25%	47 10.47%	449 100.00%
Sugar Creek Golf Course	61 21.11%	149 51.56%	66 22.84%	11 3.81%	2 0.69%	289 100.00%
Sunbeams & Rainbows Preschool Bldgs.	22 12.94%	85 50.00%	52 30.59%	10 5.88%	1 0.59%	170 100.00%
The Abbey Leisure Center	37 12.21%	121 39.93%	92 30.36%	42 13.86%	11 3.63%	303 100.00%
The Hub	148 32.17%	243 52.83%	50 10.87%	15 3.26%	4 0.87%	460 100.00%
Wagner Community Center	81 21.43%	198 52.38%	78 20.63%	17 4.50%	4 1.06%	378 100.00%
Wilder Park Conservatory	137 24.51%	294 52.59%	86 15.38%	34 6.08%	8 1.43%	559 100.00%

12. How effective are the following resources in proving you with information regarding the Elmhurst Park District and its programs/services?

Resource Effectiveness

	Very Effective	Somewhat Effective	Somewhat Ineffective	Not Effective	Total Responses
<i>Update Newsletter</i>	190 31.46%	329 54.47%	59 9.77%	26 4.30%	604 100.00%
<i>Quarterly Brochure</i>	324 48.43%	275 41.11%	44 6.58%	26 3.89%	669 100.00%
<i>Park District Staff</i>	113 24.04%	234 49.79%	60 12.77%	63 13.40%	470 100.00%
<i>Newspapers</i>	171 25.95%	342 51.90%	98 14.87%	48 7.28%	659 100.00%
<i>Mailers/Fliers</i>	286 40.51%	349 49.43%	46 6.52%	25 3.54%	706 100.00%
<i>Internet Web-Site</i>	96 25.07%	190 49.61%	44 11.49%	53 13.84%	383 100.00%
<i>Fun Times School Newsletter</i>	73 21.28%	173 50.44%	44 12.83%	53 15.45%	343 100.00%
<i>Friends/Neighbors/Relatives</i>	183 29.00%	329 52.14%	62 9.83%	57 9.03%	631 100.00%
<i>Annual Report</i>	113 22.07%	236 46.09%	70 13.67%	93 18.16%	512 100.00%

13. When planning for the future, how should the Elmhurst Park District prioritize each of the following areas?

Planning Priority

Planning Priority	First Priority	High Priority	General Priority	Low Priority	Not a Priority	Total Responses
Condition of Facilities	223 29.73%	359 47.87%	154 20.53%	5 0.67%	9 1.20%	750 100.00%
Funding/Finances	146 20.80%	297 42.31%	230 32.76%	19 2.71%	10 1.42%	702 100.00%
Increasing Available Facility Space	45 6.58%	157 22.95%	306 44.74%	131 19.15%	45 6.58%	684 100.00%
Increasing Natural Areas	101 14.03%	172 23.89%	291 40.42%	111 15.42%	45 6.25%	720 100.00%
Land Acquisition	54 7.80%	116 16.76%	244 35.26%	188 27.17%	90 13.01%	692 100.00%
Maintaining Open Space in Existing Parks	227 30.07%	284 37.62%	205 27.15%	28 3.71%	11 1.46%	755 100.00%
Park & Facility Maintenance	217 29.01%	350 46.79%	167 22.33%	6 0.80%	8 1.07%	748 100.00%
Program Scheduling	93 13.08%	286 40.23%	285 40.08%	33 4.64%	14 1.97%	711 100.00%
Restoration of Wilder Park Conservatory	57 8.07%	165 23.37%	293 41.50%	128 18.13%	63 8.92%	706 100.00%
Teen Spaces & Programming	107 16.04%	228 34.18%	246 36.88%	51 7.65%	35 5.25%	667 100.00%
Upgrade Athletic Fields	73 11.09%	166 25.23%	286 43.47%	89 13.53%	44 6.69%	658 100.00%

14. How do you prefer to register for Park District programs?

Registration Preferences

In Person	306	42.56%
Mail/Drop Box	163	22.67%
Internet	250	34.77%
	<u>719</u>	<u>100.00%</u>

15. What is your level of interest in the Park District adding the following?

Future Interests

	Highly Interested	Very Interested	Somewhat interested	Low Interest	Not Interested	Total Responses
Indoor Swimming Pool	158	144	146	87	168	703
Indoor Walking/Running Track	143	169	164	75	153	704
Outdoor Amphitheatre (concerts, shows)	124	195	207	67	114	707
Teen Activity Space	120	150	166	63	169	668
Indoor Ice Rink	108	132	137	92	207	676
Additional Outdoor Ice Rinks	91	134	159	94	197	675
Exercise Trail	84	187	233	85	116	705
Nature Center	76	141	215	105	151	688
Gymnasium	63	105	159	116	207	650
Indoor Performing Arts Space	60	102	181	120	204	667
Teaching/Demonstration Kitchen	54	103	141	130	243	671
Indoor Soccer Facility	52	68	105	117	303	645
Additional Interpretive Trail(s)	41	90	198	127	174	630
BMX Bicycle Trail	41	50	129	131	302	653
Additional Sprayground(s)	34	60	128	117	253	592
Additional Outdoor Basketball Courts	29	68	147	136	277	657
Event Space/Banquet Hall	28	57	150	130	277	642
Skate Plaza	26	49	107	123	328	633
Frisbee Golf	24	78	128	125	276	631
Additional In-line Skate Facility	21	36	87	114	404	662
Lacrosse	21	21	72	116	385	615
Bocce Ball	19	44	153	139	285	640
Additional Meeting Rooms/Space	13	21	107	207	297	645
Other	25	8	5	7	43	88

16. When considering the programming and facility needs of your family over the next five years or more, what do you think will be your family's highest priorities?

Repondents were allowed to provide multiple answers to this question

Future Family Needs	# of Responses
Running/Walking	325
Fitness	314
Swimming	272
Open/Passive Space	213
Theatre/performing arts	178
Senior programs	167
Golf	162
Senior trips	161
Family activities	154
Ice skating	150
Baseball/Softball	149
Teen activities	140
Music	137
General interest trips	131
Family fitness	122
Soccer	122
Cycling	117
Culinary Arts	105
Tennis	104
Basketball	97
Dance	94
Crafts	87
Weekend programs	84
Pre-school	81
Outdoor Adventure	79
Gymnastics	75
Before/after (middle) school care	70
Environmental education	70
Volleyball	57
Programs for Persons with Disabilities	47
Martial Arts	40
Racquetball/Handball	39
Visual arts	39
Football	31
In-line skating	30
Ping Pong / Table Tennis	27
Skateboarding	25
Lacrosse	20
Other	22

