

Municipal Directory

Freedom of Information Act Required Postings

District and Community Profile

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The Elmhurst Park District of Illinois is duly organized and operates under the provisions of the Illinois Park District Code (70ILCS 1-1 through 13-9e), compiled as part of the Illinois Compiled State statutes.

Chartered: In 1920, the residents of Elmhurst created a unit of local government to provide for the community's recreational and park interests. The establishment of the Elmhurst Park District and election of its first Commissioners took place on June 5, 1920.

Governance: A community-elected non-partisan Board of Commissioners consisting of seven (7) members constitutes the governing board of the Elmhurst Park District. Commissioners are elected to six (6) - year terms and serve without compensation.

Officers: The Commissioners elect from among themselves a President and a Vice President to serve one (1)-year terms.

Appointed Officials: The Park Board of Commissioners appoint an Executive Director, a Treasurer, an Assistant Treasurer, an Attorney and a Secretary. The Executive Director serves as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for the Park District and carries out the policies of the Board.

Boundaries: The Park District currently encompasses 9.8 square miles covering Elmhurst and small portions of unincorporated Elmhurst and the cities of Addison, Berkeley and Northlake.

Demographics: The Park District's population is approximately 45,326 and the number of households is 16,808 (boundaries are not coterminous with the City of Elmhurst and data from Vision 2020 Plan demographic analysis). According to the United States Census (2021 estimates), the percent of persons under age 18 is 25.1%, the median age is 40.7 years, and the percent of the population over 65 is 16.5%. The median household income is \$123,869 and per capita income is \$59,911 (2020 dollars).

Real Estate: The equalized assessed valuation (EAV) of real estate for 2021 is \$2,889,485,535.

Tax Rate: The tax rate for levy year 2022 is 0.3279 per \$100 of assessed value.

Bond Rating: Moody's Rating Service issued the District a bond rating of Aa1 in 2017.

Fiscal Year Budget: The budget for 2023 is \$26,048,307. The fiscal year is January 1 to December 31.

Park Resources: The Park District manages 475 acres of parkland within 29 parks ranging in size from small neighborhood parks to large parks with facilities for softball, baseball, soccer, tennis, pickleball, basketball and playgrounds. Within the parks system, the District also maintains and operates the Wilder Park Conservatory and Museum and the Elizabeth Friendship Walk, which features flowers, exotic foliage, and tropical plants. The District is also responsible for the operation of the Courts Plus Fitness Center (multi-use fitness facility with indoor pool), Wilder Mansion (conference, banquet and community meeting center), and Sugar Creek Golf Course (9-hole, par 32 course and driving range) jointly owned and operated by the Elmhurst Park District and the Village of Villa Park.

Programs and Services: The District offers a diversity of recreational opportunities including sports, specialized summer camps, gymnastics programs, preschool programs, before and after school child activity programs, and performing art classes. The Wagner Community Center houses many recreation programs and includes the District's gymnastics center. The District is also a member of the Gateway Special Recreation Association, which provides recreational services for children and adults with disabilities. Additionally, the District has two outdoor, heated community pools and offers swim lessons at both locations. The District also operates The Hub with miniature golf, batting cages, spray ground and a concessions building.

Organizational Structure and Staffing: The District has ten functional areas that include Parks, Facilities, Recreation, Courts Plus & Wilder Mansion, Sugar Creek Golf Course, Marketing & Communications, Information Technology, Finance, Human Resources, and Administration. The Park District currently employs 65 full-time and approximately 200 part-time and seasonal workers.

Affiliations: The Park District is a member of the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), the Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD), the Illinois Park and Recreation Association (IPRA), and the Gateway Special Recreation Association.

Awards:

- The National Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management Finalist (2006-08, 2010-11).
- Illinois Distinguished Agency (accreditation from Illinois Association of Park Districts and Illinois Park and Recreation Association (IPRA)) (1999-2005). Reaccredited (2006-2011, 2012-2017, 2019-2024).
- Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Distinguished Budget Presentation Award (2007-2022).
- GFOA Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting (2007-2021).
- Park District Risk Management Association Loss Control Review Award (Level A accreditation) (2002-2004). Reaccredited (2005, 2008, 2012, and 2016).
- American Planning Association Illinois Chapter Community Outreach Award: Vision 2020 Plan (2018).
- American Society of Landscape Architects-Illinois Chapter Communications Honor Award: Vision 2020 Plan (2017).
- Governor’s Sustainability Award (2010-11), Finalist (2013) and Honorable Mention (2014).
- United States Tennis Association (USTA) Outstanding Facility Award (2019).
- Recipient of "Chicago Tribune’s Top Workplaces" (2019).
- Elmhurst Chamber of Commerce “Good Works Award” (2021).
- IPRA Outstanding Facility Award: Wilder Mansion redevelopment (2009), East End Pool redevelopment (2008), Berens Park renovation (2004), Courts Plus expansion (2003), Norman P. Smalley Pool (2000), Safety Town (1999).
- IAPD Best of the Best Award: Intergovernmental Cooperation (collaborative effort between the District and the City of Elmhurst resulting in Metropolitan Family Services of DuPage moving to Kies Recreation Center) (2022).

Elmhurst Park District History: 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 to 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. 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 original East End Pool opened on June 26, 1937 with a “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 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.

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 the District's present land was purchased during this time, along with new park development. 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 was the result of collaboration in the early 1970s between the Elmhurst Park District and the Village of Villa Park who shared in the land acquisition and 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 District won the coveted National Gold Medal Award presented to outstanding park and recreation agencies.

On September 6, 2003, the Elmhurst Park District opened 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. In 2003, the new Elmhurst Public Library opened at the north end of Wilder Park following a land exchange agreement with the District and the City of Elmhurst and in 2007, the District received the keys to Wilder Mansion from the City (former Library), making its ownership official. The original 1860 home was remodeled without compromising the historic architectural features and provides an additional 14,000 square feet of multi-use space for the community.

In 2019 the District acquired 2.92 acres of property at 155 E. St. Charles Road to develop a park in a neighborhood which was identified as deficient in park space. The purchase also included the 11,800 square foot former Redeemer Center building that would eventually be repurposed to serve as an Adult/Senior Center. In 2020 the District observed its 100th anniversary and while the year was much less celebratory than had been planned due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was noteworthy that in July, the Park Board dedicated the property on E. St. Charles Road as Centennial Park, the first new park in Elmhurst in more than three decades with the name having been chosen to commemorate the 100th anniversary. Then in early 2021, the Abbey was sold to Elmhurst Community Unit School District 205. The proceeds from the sale were then used in 2021-22 to update the former Redeemer Center, now known as the Kies Recreation Center, and to develop a new park and playground on the site.

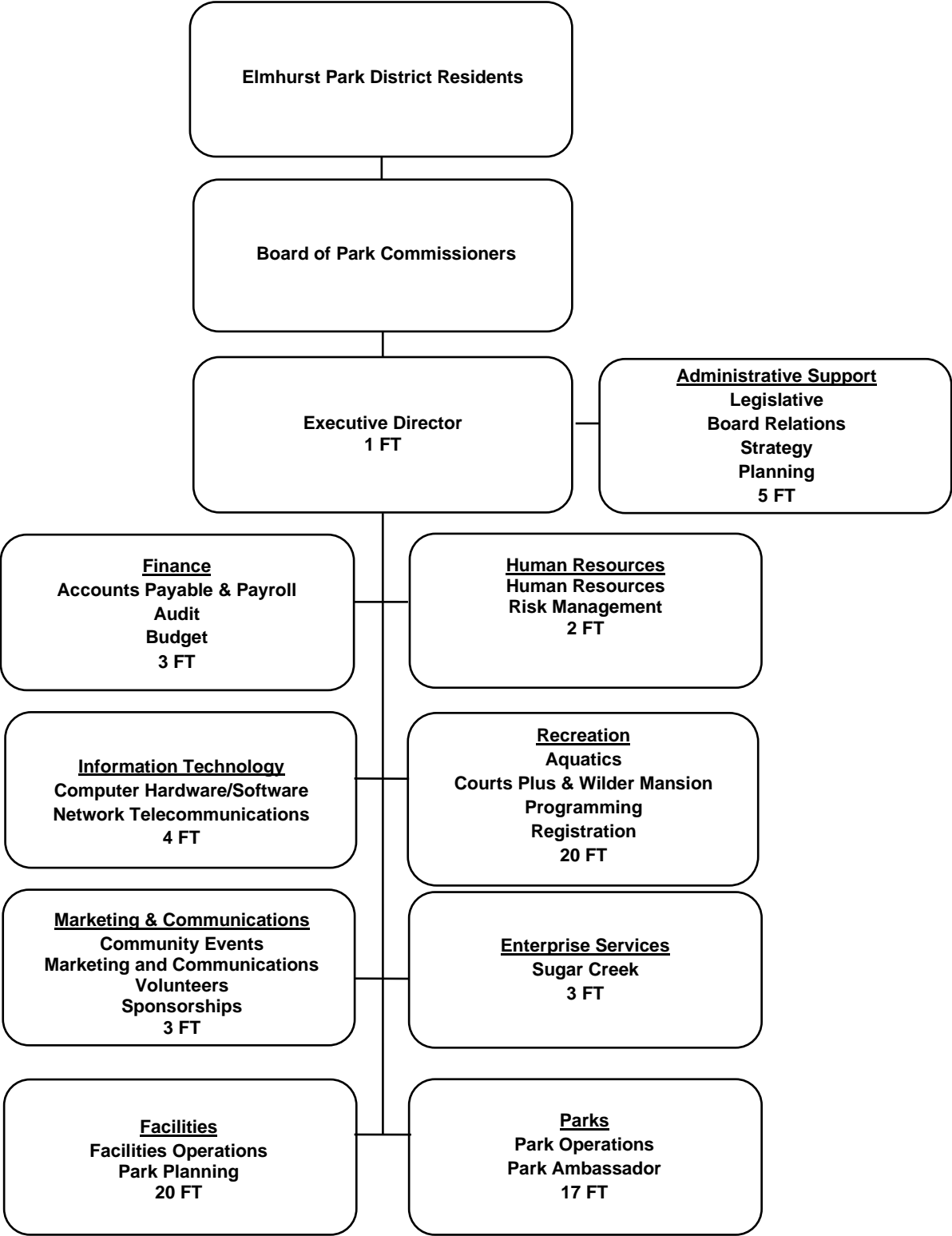
Also in 2021-22, the Park District acquired ownership of four parcels of property (three through a transfer from the City of Elmhurst) totaling just over an acre of land on Monterey Avenue in the Pick Subdivision, resulting in the establishment of another new park – Pick Park.

Overview of the City of Elmhurst: Elmhurst (incorporated in 1882) is a community rich in culture and history, dating back to its settlement in 1834. While the suburbanization of Chicago encompassed Elmhurst and many other regional communities, Elmhurst clearly developed as a community with its own distinct heritage and image, casting aside its suburban label. 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 Line, with a station stop in the heart of Downtown Elmhurst. The City of Elmhurst has a healthy business and industry base, with numerous retail business areas outside the downtown area. The City is also home to three industrial parks located in the perimeter areas of the community.

Elmhurst has already realized the growth pressures of the past several decades and is in a period of very slow growth fueled largely by redevelopment. In the past two decades, numerous older homes and commercial buildings have been demolished to make way for new larger homes or townhouse/condominium developments. According to the Chicago Metropolitan Agency on Planning, the population of Elmhurst is projected to grow to 43,075 by the year 2030, an increase of less than one percent. The 2020 Census illustrates that this number has already been surpassed with 45,786 as the City of Elmhurst population.

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 residents. For additional economic and demographic data on the City of Elmhurst and the Elmhurst Park District, please refer to the charts on the following pages. On the next page is a map of District properties..

FUNCTIONAL SUBDIVISIONS



LOCATION OF DISTRICT OFFICES

Administrative Office

375 W. First Street
Phone: (630) 993-8900

Kies Recreation Center

155 East St. Charles Road
Phone: (630) 993-8193

Courts Plus Fitness Center

186 S. West Avenue
Phone: (630) 833-5064

Joanne B. Wagner Community Center (Registration Office)

615 N. West Avenue
Phone: (630) 993-8901

Park Maintenance Facility

985 S. Riverside Drive
Phone: (630) 993-8944

Sugar Creek Golf Course

500 E. Van Buren, Villa Park
Phone: (630) 834-3325

Lee A. Daniels Pavilion at The Hub

493 Oaklawn Avenue
Phone: (630) 782-4955

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

A community-elected non-partisan Board of Commissioners consisting of seven (7) members constitutes the governing board of the Elmhurst Park District. Commissioners are elected to six (6) - year terms and serve without compensation.

Kevin Graf, President (Term Expires 2027)
Tim Sheehan, Vice President (Term Expires 2029)
Claire Kubiesa (Term Expires 2025)
Meghan Scarsella (Term Expires 2027)
Susan Smentek (Term Expires 2029)
Vince Spaeth (Term Expires 2025)
Carolyn Ubriaco (Term Expires 2027)

Board Committees/Liaisons

Intergovernmental Relations – (one liaison: Spaeth) Represents the Board with other government organizations to be an active partner in community planning and opportunities for cooperative efforts, ensure that community's parks and recreation needs are considered, and avoid duplication of facilities and services.

Ethics Committee – (two Board members, one resident: Sheehan, Ubriaco, Matheney plus Ethics Officer Attorney Paine) Per the Gift Ban Act, the Board created an Ethics Board to enforce the provisions of the law. The committee shall meet as needed to perform its duties.

Finance Liaison – (two Board members: Scarsella, Spaeth)
Reviews check registers weekly with Friday approval to release vouchers to vendors.

Human Resource Liaison – (Vice-President: Sheehan)
Coordinates the Executive Director's yearly evaluation. The committee reports to the Board relative to the progress being made in the various areas the Board has asked the Executive Director to address.

Legislative Liaison – (one Board member: Ubriaco)
Establishes relationships with legislators, attends legislative events, and reports as needed on legislation affecting parks and recreation through the Illinois General Assembly.

Policy Review Committee – (two Board members: Kubiesa, Sheehan)
The Board has a standing Policy Committee. The role of the Policy Committee is to meet to review various Board policies, when necessary, and recommend action to the full Board.

External Organization Representation (Approved April 27, 2020)

To ensure that the Board is represented on Board and Commissions of external organizations with which the District has a formal agreement, the Board may appoint liaisons or individual representatives to these Boards and Commissions at the first regular meeting after the Board's Annual Meeting, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Elmhurst Art Museum Board;
- Gateway Special Recreation Association (SRA) Board;
- People for Elmhurst Parks (PEP) Foundation Board;
- City of Elmhurst Senior Citizen, Veterans Memorial and Youth Commissions; and
- Sugar Creek Golf Course Administrative Board.

All appointments expire at the next Annual Meeting.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT REQUESTS

The District will disclose public records as required by the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) pursuant to the Illinois Open Meetings Act 5 ILCS 120. The District can deny a request for records that are specifically exempt from coverage under the Act, including information that would constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy or a compromise of security. For additional information, please see the District's FOIA policy on the following page.

SUBMITTING A FOIA REQUEST

To review a record, a person must submit a request in writing via personal delivery, mail, or email. The requestor must clearly state if the request is going to be used for commercial purposes (for the sale, resale or solicitation or advertisement for sales or services).

Requests can be submitted via the following means:

Drop-off or Mail:
Elmhurst Park District
FOIA Request
Administration Office
375 W. First Street
Elmhurst, IL 60126

E-Mail: FOIAOfficer@epd.org

All requests must be submitted in writing to the attention of the Freedom of Information Act Officer. Applicants may use the Elmhurst Park District FOIA Request Form available at <http://www.epd.org/freedom-information-act>, or may submit their own written request for records. Applicants choosing not to use the provided form must provide their full name, current address, phone number, a detailed account of the documents they are requesting and whether or not they are requesting the documents for commercial use.

FOIA OFFICERS

The Elmhurst Park District appointed FOIA Officers are the Executive Director, Director of Finance and Human Resources and Administrative Office Supervisor. Their responsibilities include receiving information requests from the public and sending responses in compliance with FOIA.

RESPONSE TIME FOR FOIA REQUESTS

Within five business days after the date the District receives the request, one of the designated FOIA officers reviews and responds to the request. Beyond the five business days, the FOIA Officer can extend the response time for no more than five additional business days. Requests made for commercial purposes can be extended for no more than twenty-one additional business days. The time period can only be extended if the requested information:

- is stored at a different location;
- requires the collection of a substantial number of documents or an extensive search;
- has not been located;
- needs to be reviewed further by staff to determine whether the information is exempt from FOIA;
- cannot be produced without unduly burdening the public body or interfering with its operations;
- requires the public body to consult with another public body that has substantial interest in the requested subject matter; or
- both parties agree in writing to an extension specifying when the request will be filled.

When additional time is required for any of the reasons above, the Officer must, within 5 business days after the receipt of the request, notify the person making the request of the reason(s) for the extension and the date by which the response will be forthcoming. If the request is unduly burdensome for the District to complete, the Officer will work with the person making the request in an attempt to reduce the request to manageable proportions.

COPIES AND FEES

If a public record is available on the District's website(s), the Officer directs the requestor to the website where the records can be reasonably accessed. If a public record is not available online, the Officer provides it in an electronic format or provides hard copies as follows:

- No charge for the first fifty (50) black and white pages (letter or legal size).
- After the first fifty (50) black and white pages, \$0.15 per page additional charge.
- Actual per page cost for color and/or abnormally sized copies.
- Cost of the electronic medium.