

# **Municipal Directory**

## **Freedom of Information Act Required Postings**

### ***District and Community Profile***

#### **District and Community Profile**

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 members constitutes the governing board of the Elmhurst Park District. Commissioners are elected to six-year terms and serve without compensation.

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

**Appointed Officials:** The Park Board of Commissioners appoint an Executive Director, a Treasurer, an Assistant Treasurer, an Attorney, a Secretary, and designees for Freedom of Information Act and Open Meetings Act. 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:** Using 2023 ArcGIS Business Analyst data (U.S. Census data), the Park District's population is approximately 47,260. The percent of persons under age 20 is 26%, the median age is 41.8 years, and the percent of the population over 75 is 9%. The median household income is \$126,533 with less than 6% of the population below the federal poverty line. According to 2023 U.S. Census data for the City of Elmhurst, the number of households in the City's boundaries is 16,745.

**Real Estate:** The equalized assessed valuation (EAV) of real estate for 2023 is \$3,156,816,107.

**Tax Rate:** The tax rate for levy year 2024 is 0.3261 per \$100 of assessed value.

**Bond Rating:** Moody's Rating Service issued the District a bond rating of Aa1 in 2022.

**Fiscal Year Budget:** The budget for 2025 is \$26,790,079. The fiscal year is January 1 to December 31.

**Park Resources:** The Park District manages nearly 458 acres of parkland within 30 parks ranging in size from small neighborhood parks to large community 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 arts classes. The Wagner Community Center houses many recreation programs and includes the District's gymnastics center, while the Kies Recreation Center is primarily home to the District's offerings for adult offerings, along with others for all ages. 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 Administration, Finance, Marketing & Communications, Human Resources & Risk Management, Information Technology, Parks, Facilities, Recreation, Special Use Facilities, and Sugar Creek Golf Course. The Park District currently employs 79 full-time and approximately 680 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 (2007-2024).
- GFOA Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting (2007-2022).
- 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 or Park Award: Centennial Park (2022), 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 Mary E. Kies Recreation Center) (2022).
- Sugar Creek Golf Course Creek Restoration: American Public Works Association (APWA) Public Works Project of the Year Award (2024); DuPage Monarch Project Jane Foulser Habitat Award (2024).
- Ray Graham Association Monarch Effect Award - long-time partnership in supporting inclusivity for people with disabilities (2024)

**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 of 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 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 1960s, seven new parks were opened, including the York Commons Pool in 1967 adding a second pool for the community.

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 a 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 (former Library) from the City, 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 2015 the Pick Subdivision Park District, consisting of the entirety of the Pick Subdivision neighborhood of 282 homes immediately west of Route 83 and north of St. Charles Road, consolidated with and became part of the Elmhurst Park District.

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 active 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 (Centennial Park) and playground on the site.

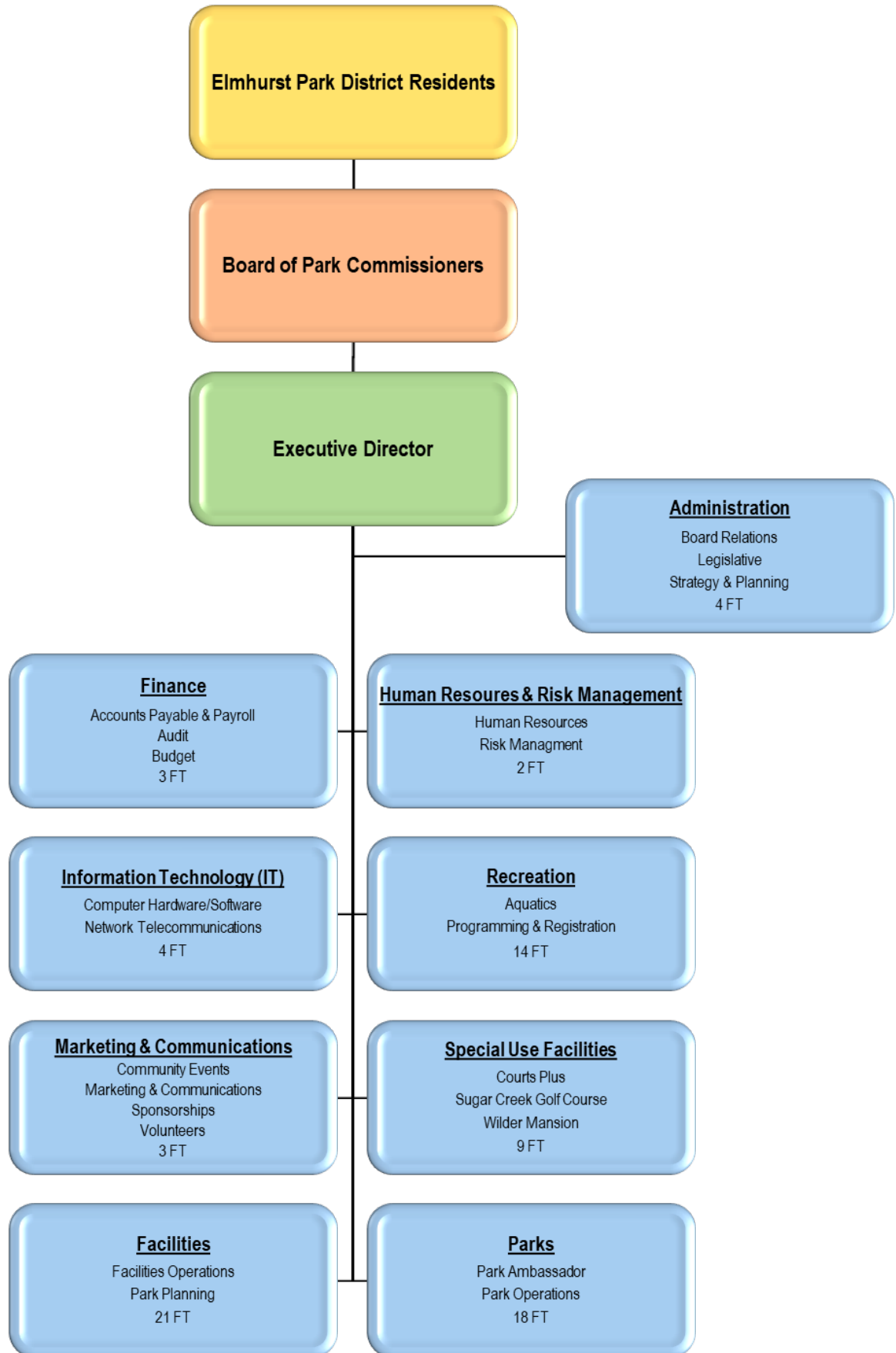
Also in 2021-22, the Park District acquired ownership of four parcels of property (three through a transfer from the City of Elmhurst) totaling just over an acre of land on Monterey Avenue in the Pick Subdivision, resulting in the establishment of another new park – Pick Park.

**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 was 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.

## 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

### **Sugar Creek Golf Course**

500 E. Van Buren, Villa Park

Phone: (630) 834-3325

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

### ***Board Committees/Liaisons***

**Intergovernmental Relations** – (one liaison: Ubriaco) 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, Spaeth, Chaplain H. Scott Matheney; Park District Attorney Andrew Paine Matheney) 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: Kubiesa)  
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: Sheehan, Smentek)  
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;
- Elmhurst Parks 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.

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### **SUBMITTING A FOIA REQUEST**

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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  
Administrative Office  
375 W. First Street  
Elmhurst, IL 60126

**E-Mail:** [FOIAOfficer@epd.org](mailto: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. Requestors who decide not to use the provided form must submit a detailed description of the documents they are requesting, indicate whether the request is for commercial use, and specify the preferred format (i.e., electronic/paper) for the response.

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### **FOIA OFFICERS**

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

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### **RESPONSE TIME FOR FOIA REQUESTS**

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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.

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## COPIES AND FEES

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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.

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### Elmhurst Park District – FOIA Policy (excerpt from Administrative Policy and Procedure Manual)

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#### **1.12 - Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)**

The District will disclose public records as required by the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 ILCS140/1, *et seq.*). Records subject to disclosure include any materials prepared by, for, or in the possession of the District or in the possession of an agency/entity with whom the District has contracted to perform a governmental function on behalf of the District or that directly relates to the District's functions. 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.

**FOIA Officers:** The Park Board appoints one or more FOIA Officers who annually complete an electronic training curriculum developed by the Illinois Attorney General's Office. Their responsibilities include receiving information requests from the public and sending responses in compliance with FOIA. The current Board appointed FOIA Officers are the Executive Director and Administrative Office Supervisor.

**Submitting a Request:** To review a record, a person must submit a request in writing in person or by mail, email, or facsimile. Requestors can use the District's Requests for Public Records Form available on the District's website and/or submit requests directly from a link on the District's website to the FOIA Officers' email at FOIAOfficer@epd.org. The person does not have to submit the request on a standard form or specify the purpose of a request, except whether the records requested are for a commercial purpose or he/she requests for a fee waiver. A commercial request is when the requestor seeks to use public records for the sale, resale, solicitation, or advertisement for sales or services.

**Review and Response:** Within five (5) business days after the date the District receives the request, the following procedure is followed after one (1) of the designated FOIA Officers reviews the request:

- A. If a public record is available on the District's website(s), the Officer directs the requestor to the website location where the records can be reasonably accessed.
- B. If a public record is not available online, the Officer provides it in an electronic format or hard copies as follows:
  1. No charge for the first fifty (50) black and white pages (letter or legal size).
  2. After the first fifty (50) black and white pages, \$0.15 per page additional charge.
  3. Actual per page cost for color and/or abnormally sized copies.
  4. Cost of the electronic medium.

***Voluminous Request:*** If the request fits the FOIA definition of a voluminous request, the Officer must respond within five (5) business days and notify the requestor that the request is being treated as a voluminous request and why. A voluminous request is defined as any request made by a person, other than the news media and non-profit, scientific or academic organizations, that:

- A. includes more than five (5) individual requests for more than five (5) different categories of records;
- B. includes a combination of individual requests that total requests for more than five (5) different categories of records in a period of twenty (20) business days; or
- C. requires the compilation of more than 500 letter or legal-sized pages of public records unless a single requested record, such as a memorandum, book or report exceeds 500 pages. The law specifies the procedure for handling this type of request and the related fees that can be charged for copies of the requested records.

***Extending a Response:*** Beyond the five (5) business days, the FOIA Officer can extend the response time for no more than five (5) additional business days. Requests made for commercial purposes can be extended for no more than twenty-one (21) additional business days. The time period can only be extended if the requested information:

- A. is stored at a different location,
- B. requires the collection of a substantial number of documents or an extensive search,
- C. has not been located,
- D. needs to be reviewed further by staff to determine whether they are exempt from FOIA,
- E. cannot be produced without unduly burdening the public body or interfering with its operations, or
- F. 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 due to any of the reasons above, the Officer must, within five (5) business days after the receipt of the request, notify the person making the request of the reasons 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 can work with the person making the request in an attempt to reduce the request to manageable proportions.

***Deleting Exempt Material or Denying a Request:*** To delete exempt material or to deny the request, a FOIA Officer must provide a written response to the respondent that includes a detailed factual basis for the application of any exemption claimed as the reason for denying the request, a citation to supporting legal authority, and notice that the requestor has the right to review by the Public Access Counselor (PAC) in the Illinois Attorney General's Office and to challenge the denial in court. The response should clearly state the names and titles or positions of persons responsible for the denial. If the District intends to invoke either the "unwarranted invasion of personal privacy" exemption or the "preliminary drafts" exemption as a basis for denying a FOIA request in whole or in part, a FOIA Officer must notify both the requesting party and PAC. The PAC would then determine within five (5) days whether further inquiry is required.

The Board President or Attorney can request that the Attorney General's PAC issue an advisory opinion regarding compliance with FOIA (e.g., to verify if a record must be disclosed). This request must be in writing.

***Penalty for Non-compliance:*** If a court determines that the District willfully and intentionally failed to comply with this Act or otherwise acted in bad faith, it can impose upon the District a civil penalty of not less than \$2,500 nor more than \$5,000 for each occurrence (considering the budget of the public body and whether the public body has previously been assessed penalties for violations of the Act) (5 ILCS 140).