



# 2022-2032 COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN

## PARK DISTRICT OF LA GRANGE



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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank the many citizens, stakeholders, district staff, Board of Commissioners, and community groups who provided extensive community input and insight by their participation in various engagement methods throughout the planning process in the development of this Comprehensive Master Plan. The efforts of this community will continue to ensure the success of the Park District of La Grange.

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**Chapter 1**  
**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Park District of La Grange (PDLG) provides a comprehensive system of public parks, activity buildings, a 125,000 sq. ft. Recreation Center, and recreation amenities that greatly contribute to the quality of life for residents and visitors of the Village of La Grange, Illinois. The PDLG prides itself on providing diverse and affordable recreation opportunities for people of all ages, interests, and abilities. To plan for the future of this valuable system, the Park District commissioned the Planning Resources Team (Planning Team) to develop this dynamic Comprehensive Master Plan to identify the values of the community; provide a community-driven vision for parks, open space, and facilities; and provide strategies for the planning, development, and administration of parks and recreation programming for the district.

The Planning Team was led by **Planning Resources Inc.** and consisted of a comprehensive team of park and recreation experts strategically assembled to meet the Master Plan's criteria and scope. The outdoor park assessments were completed by Planning Resources Inc., the facility study and architectural expertise was performed by **TRIA Architecture**, community survey knowledge and analysis were conducted by **Readex Research**, and **Executive Decisions** performed the recreation programming analysis and assessment. Each team member brought valuable insight to the Plan by contributing in-depth knowledge on key issues, influences, opportunities, and conditions affecting the future of the Park District of La Grange.

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in over 2.5 million confirmed cases and over 32,000 deaths and climbing within the State of Illinois as of January 13, 2022. During the lockdown and restrictions placed on public activities and gatherings, public parks and open spaces have become one of the only sources of resilience as residents continue navigating through the coronavirus pandemic,

because of their positive effects on an individual's psychological, physical, and social needs and spiritual wellness. Nationwide, park visitation has increased since March 2020 compared to visitor numbers prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Restrictions on social gatherings, movement, and the closure of offices, commercial and indoor recreational places, are correlated with increased visits to parks. Demand from residents for parks and open spaces has increased since the outbreak began and has highlighted the important role and benefits parks and open spaces provide.

While the pandemic did not impact the results and recommendations of this master plan directly, the long-term effects of this crisis will continue to be seen within PDLG and on parks and recreation systems in communities across the country for years to come. Communities like La Grange have developed a newfound appreciation for the outdoors while local park districts and recreation agencies face budget cuts resulting from the economic downfall. From the community engagement perspective, the virtual engagement sessions held during the planning phase proved successful with regards to resident participation far exceeding the traditional in-person engagement meetings. The statistically valid survey provided an opportunity for non-park users and residents who may not have internet access to mail in their survey responses.

Park design and recreation system strategies in response to the pandemic illustrate the core challenges of healthy community planning – specifically the recognition of park equity as a health priority and to revisit strategies to increase or reallocate park resources for parks and open spaces within deprived communities during the pandemic and beyond. This plan has considered COVID impacts on the parks and recreation system throughout the document as it relates to parks, open spaces, facilities, and programming.

The following is an overview of the contents of this Comprehensive Master Plan Report Document:

### **Chapter 1 - Executive Summary**

Understanding the community's history, culture, and traditions as well as the Park District's history and missions are significant in planning for the future, since these are underlying principles that help shape the community along with the people it serves. In addition to identifying the Planning Team and their key roles in the comprehensive master planning process for the Park District of La Grange, this chapter presents a brief overview of the development of the Village of La Grange and the Park District of La Grange's profile and highlights key events during the Village's celebrated history to provide a greater understanding of uniqueness and characteristics of both the Park District and the Community. This information is helpful for determining the suitable planning goals for the Park District.

### **Chapter 2 – Rediscover the Fun: The Planning Context**

The Park District of La Grange undertook a Comprehensive Open Space Master Plan in 2011 which was later updated by staff in 2014. This document outlined a strategic plan for park and program improvements over a ten-year planning horizon. Many of the action items identified in the plan have been completed or are in progress. Likewise, the nation-wide "Stay-at-Home" order and the closure of entertainment venues, forced Park Board, staff, and community residents to recognize the positive impact their local parks, open spaces, and recreation services have on the community's quality of life. Therefore, an update challenging community residents to "Rediscover the Fun" is necessary to accommodate this re-emergence of park interest, changing trends in demographics, recreation, and mandates by state and national grant funding sources.

This chapter identifies key issues, related planning efforts reviewed for relevance and background information, and the methodology used in the comprehensive master planning process.

### **Chapter 3 - Demographic Analysis & Trends**

Community profile and demographics play an important role in planning parks and facilities, recreation programs, amenities, and services for a park district. To help the Park District better satisfy the current and future demands of the community and residents, this chapter presents a detailed study of the community population, age distribution, ethnicity, language speakers, education attainment, family income, and poverty to identify the community's requirements related to both existing and future park facilities and services.

Additionally, this chapter provides a comparison of the Park District of La Grange to other park and recreation agencies within the region, providing a quantitative comparison of many of the more common elements found within parks. A comparative analysis of the Park District with other local park districts and national park and recreation agencies provides an understanding of the Park District's performances of park organization, programming, and services, amenities, and facilities provided within the industry. 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 illustrates the comparative analysis and conclusions that look at this comparison with respect to public needs.

## **Chapter 4 – What We Have Now - Inventory and Level of Service Analysis**

Park inventory and assessment is critical to the comprehensive planning process. This chapter presents an explanation of park evaluation criteria and assessments of each individual park developed based on onsite evaluation of each property. Each park assessment includes a 2021 Google aerial photo image of the park, a general description of the site, an assessment of the current conditions, an evaluation of the amenities and features of the park, a series of photographs of select elements and park features, and a summary of recommendations for park improvements.

Also included within this chapter are the assessments of the six Park District of La Grange facilities. The inventory and assessment of the existing facilities and buildings are another important step in the comprehensive planning process. An on-site facility evaluation provides the basis for formulating recommendations for improvement to each of them. Each facility assessment contains a delineation of general information, a summary of observation, an assessment of conditions, a series of photographs documenting existing conditions, and recommendations for each facility's improvement.

Lastly, this chapter presents a review of the core program offerings by the Park District, including the program success, participation, average class size, facility membership, financial review, and the relationship of the community-wide survey results, public meeting feedback, and demographics to future program offerings.

## **Chapter 5 – Community Visioning Process**

Community engagement is critical to the development of a Plan that reflects community goals and builds consensus among

stakeholders and residents. Involving user groups, residents, stakeholders, and staff in the planning process not only can acquire the opinions directly from the public but also promotes a sense of community pride and responsibility. The Community Visioning Process included a survey designed to obtain statistically valid results from households throughout the Park District. This chapter delineates the various methods that were used to obtain the opinions and recommendations of the public, staff, and stakeholders, as well as presents the analyzed findings. These valuable findings represent the community's vision of the future of the Park District.

## **Chapter 6 – Recommendations and Action Plan**

Recommendations are the blueprint for action. Chapter 6 includes a series of significant findings and "Priority Action Strategies" regarding the District's parks and open space; open space standards; recreational facilities, park programs, and operations and maintenance. These strategies aim to provide the public with a more efficient, relevant, and safe parks and recreation system. Enhancement recommendations include three categories: parkland, facility, and programming. Based on the detailed analysis and enhancement recommendations presented in the earlier chapters, Action & Priority Plan recommendations per individual park and facility are indicated in this chapter.

## **Appendix**

Sources and additional information utilized during the development of the Comprehensive Master Plan are found in the appendix. The community-wide survey is included as a separate volume to the Comprehensive Master Plan – included in a separate binder.

## INTRODUCTION

The La Grange, Illinois area is blessed with a multitude of recreation and leisure opportunities. The Park District of La Grange has in times past, and continues to provide, vibrant park and recreation programs for its residents. Park Board of Commissioners as well as staff members continually seek to improve and increase available programs and facilities. A formal Master Plan gives framework and suggested priority lists for the future direction of the Park District as well as acknowledges the District's current situation and the opinions of residents on recreational and park activities.

It is the mission of the Park District of La Grange to provide quality recreation programs, facilities, and parks that enhance the health, happiness, and quality of life by guiding future land use plans for parks and recreation facilities; by pursuing recreation and cultural opportunities that promote health, social, economic and environmental prosperity and by providing recreational infrastructure and space which promotes community activity.

In the fall of 2020, the Park District of La Grange, (PDLG) recognized that it was necessary to update their 2011-2021 Comprehensive Master Plan in order to provide long term direction for delivery of services and to sustainably meet community expectations. This document is a high-level strategic plan for park and recreation facilities within the Park District of La Grange. The planning horizon is from present to 2032. Analysis for this report document will consider park and recreation service provisions, park and facility assets, capital development and program recommendations, and funding opportunities.

Providing park and recreation services are the primary function of the Park District. It is proven that recreational facilities help to promote public health and provide for an important sense of community. The District's first park land acquisitions were purchased in November 1929: Shawmut Park (*Gordon Park*), Eastview Park (*Sedgwick Park*) Waiola Park, and Gilbert Park. Since that time, the PDLG has worked to develop parks, open spaces, and facilities to meet the community's need.



## INTRODUCTION *(continued)*

The COVID-19 Pandemic brought more residents into the District's parks with the forced government shutdown of businesses and face-to-face programs. Residents flocked to these outdoor spaces to recreate instead of gyms and fitness centers, resulting in a renewed interest in how their tax dollars are being used and distributed within their local parks and district open spaces. The 2022-2032 PDLG Comprehensive Master Plan is guided by residents' opinions, based on a statistically valid survey of 232 households, and 656 on-line participants within the Village of La Grange. The Park District feels confident that the community has had a strong voice in the planning process as the Plan reflects the community's vision for recreation programming and park activities.

This 2022-2032 Comprehensive Master Plan is the successor to the PDLG's previously prepared 2011-2021 Plan and the District's very first Master Plan adopted in 1993. The timing of this Master Plan takes advantage of five factors:

- Many of the recommendations of the previous 2011-2021 Master Plan have

been implemented, and these investments and accomplishments have generated new opportunities.

- While the population has remained stable, the subtle demographic changes within the Village of La Grange's population requires an adjustment of park services to meet a variety of needs. For example, the very active seniors within the community are looking for different types of recreation activities and amenities than those currently provided.
- Community interest in new trends in outdoor recreation and sports has changed with time and facilities. Park programming and management of these programs and facilities need to adjust to take this into account.
- The PDLG, as with other park districts, suffered financially due to the pandemic. The cancellation of revenue-generating programs, events, and inability to receive user fees required adjustments to park service delivery. As funding stabilizes, it is important to evaluate how operations changes have impacted performance and examine alternatives and creative solutions for future operations.



## BENEFITS OF RECREATION FACILITIES



### ***Health***

According to the Trust for Public Land and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), parks provide amenities designed to get people active and out of the house away from their sedentary lifestyles (Sedentary lifestyles are directly linked to obesity). “Studies have shown that when people have access to parks, they exercise more, and...individuals living closer to parks are more likely to exercise regularly, leading to weight loss, increased energy, and better overall health.” The Park District of La Grange provides a variety of park and open space facilities located throughout the community for use by its residents to promote community wellness and support healthy lifestyles.

### ***Social***

As identified by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), parks provide safe gathering and meeting places where community members can develop social ties, as well as where healthy behavior is modeled and admired. Residents within the PDLG gather to share experiences, socialize, and build community bonds in these common open spaces, parks, and facilities within the District. In addition to developing a sense of community and social inclusion, the District parks bring people of different backgrounds, cultures, and religions together. They are often the glue that binds communities like La Grange together while supporting and improving future positive social interactions.

### ***Economic***

The NRPA also identifies park and recreation areas as “... economic engines that improve the quality of life making communities more livable and desirable for businesses and homeowners.”

### ***Environmental***

Trees buffer and remove a wide variety of pollutants from the air. (U.S. Forest Service estimates trees remove nineteen million pounds of pollutants each year - a service that would cost \$47 million if performed by a company.) Public parks are large contributors to the urban tree canopy. One acre of trees produces enough oxygen for eighteen people while at the same time, absorb enough carbon dioxide to equal emissions from driving a car over 26,000 miles. According to the Trust for Public Land and U.S. Forest Service, “One tree over a 50-year period will provide \$62,000 worth of air pollution control and generate \$31,250 worth of oxygen. Trees have been proven to absorb airborne pollutants, in one year a mature tree will absorb more than 48 pounds of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and release oxygen in exchange. Trees and grass also provide a more aesthetic and less expensive method of managing stormwater rather than below ground storm sewers and concrete drainage ditches.

## ABOUT... The Village of La Grange



The Village of La Grange is a suburb in Cook County located approximately 14 miles southwest of Chicago. The Village is 2.52 square miles according to the latest Census data, and encompasses the area between East Avenue, Ogden Avenue, Gilbert Avenue/Willow Springs Road, and 55th Street/East Plainfield Road.

The Village of La Grange is a land-locked community with no place to grow or expand. Countryside, McCook, Brookfield, La Grange Park, La Grange Highlands, and Western Springs are neighboring communities sharing a common border with La Grange.

At the 2010 census, the Village had a total population of 15,545 according to the United States Census Bureau.

The founding father, Franklin D. Cossitt, was born in Connecticut, but raised in La Grange, Tennessee. He moved to the Chicago area and built a successful grocery business after his cotton farm was destroyed during the Civil War. After the Chicago Fire destroyed his wholesale grocery business, Mr. Cossitt purchased 600 acres adjacent to the railroad that included the area bounded by Ogden Avenue on the north, 47th street on the south, Bluff Avenue to the east and Waiola Avenue to the west. Mr. Cossitt had a vision of developing a community with fine homes, schools, churches, and transportation.

It was incorporated as the Village of La Grange in 1879.

Population growth west of Chicago rapidly increased after the Great Chicago Fire of 1871 as people wanted to escape to a suburban sanctuary. Mr. Cossitt advertised La Grange as being a sharp contrast between the dangerous city and the idyllic suburban retreat. When Mr. Cossitt began developing the area, it was served by a post office known as Kensington. However, he learned that there was another town in Illinois named Kensington. He, therefore, decided to name his town in honor of La Grange, Tennessee which in French means “barn”. As people learned what the Village of La Grange had to offer, the growth of the community increased quickly and soon it became one of the largest towns between Chicago and Aurora.

### **Awards**

La Grange is an award-winning Village and highlighted in several publications for its vibrant downtown, good schools, and lively dining scene. The Village of La Grange was voted as “Best Downtown” by **CHICAGO** magazine in 2009. La Grange was once again honored by the magazine in April 2014 as one of the “Best Places to Live.” **West Suburban Living** magazine featured the Village in their “Town Profile” section in a March 2019 issue.

## ABOUT... The Park District of La Grange

The Park District of La Grange was established on April 18, 1929, via a public vote by 567 residents of La Grange. The final tally was 345 residents in favor of the formation of a park district, a separate taxing body, whose focus and mission would be to provide open space and recreation amenities to the Village. The original park commissioners were E.E. Barrett, B.E. Gordon, Arthur B. Hall, W.E. Keller, and Charles L. Rice. In November 1929, the Park Board authorized the Sites Committee to purchase four parcels of land, which included Shawmut Park (currently Gordon Park), Eastview Park (currently Sedgwick Park), Waiola Park, and Gilbert Park.

On April 16, 1957, a portion of tax money intended for the Park District of La Grange was inadvertently sent to the Village of La Grange Park. At this point, the Park District officially changed its name to the Park District of La Grange.

In the 1960's and 1970's, the Park District renamed Eastview Park to Sedgwick Park after long-standing Commissioner/President Robert Sedgwick. Shawmut Park is renamed as the Bert E. Gordon Park after one of the original commissioners, Sawyer Park (now Rotary Centennial Park) becomes the Park District's fifth park and the Park District purchases five acres along Gilbert Avenue from William S. Denning for \$200,000. In 1979 the Park District moves into its new headquarters at 4903 Gilbert Avenue.

The 1990's saw new growth in parkland and the development of park sites. Denning Park was expanded, a referendum passed in 1995 provided funds for the purchase of the Spring Avenue Tot Lot, and in 1997 Elm Park is opened to the public,

Early 2000's: The Park District receives grant funding for the expansion of Denning Park, and passes a \$260,000 referendum to repair and resurface the tennis courts at Sedgwick Park and Gilbert Park.

February 2004: The Park District holds a Winterfest at Gilbert Park to commemorate its 75th Anniversary.

2005: The Park Board decides to place another referendum on the ballot for the development of a new recreation center. The Park District of La Grange Recreation Center opened on September 18, 2006. A month later, the Chicago White Sox Academy announces it will be leasing space in the new recreation center.

2006: The La Grange Little League constructed a concession stand and installed ball field lights at Sedgwick Park which were donated to the Park District.

2010: The Park District is awarded a grant by Lyons Township for redevelopment at Denning Park for multi-use fields, new playgrounds, and updates to the entrance.

2010: The State of Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation awarded \$73,318 to the Park District to replace all the lighting fixtures in the Recreation Center with energy efficient fixtures.

2010: The Neighborhood Network pricing plan was initiated to provide favorable nonresident pricing to residents of the communities adjacent to the Park District of La Grange. The goal is to increase program participation to their optimal levels and reduce the cancellation of programs for low enrollment.

February 2011: An ADA needs assessment was completed by Recreation Accessibility Consultants.

January 2012: The Park District entered into an intergovernmental agreement with School District 102 to take over their Before & After School Program.

August 2012: The Park District entered into an agreement with the City of Countryside. Under this agreement the residents of Countryside will receive resident rates when they register for any of our recreational programs.

## ABOUT... The Park District of La Grange *(continued)*

In return, the Park District will receive 22.5 acres of park land on which we can operate recreation programs. All revenue from these programs will remain with the Park District. In addition, the City of Countryside will continue to maintain the acreage.

December 18, 2012: The District issued \$2,530,000 par value of General Obligation Park (Alternate Revenue Source) Bonds series 2012C to finance Phase I of the Gordon Park improvements. With financing for this project finally in place, the Park District requested and was granted an extension for the OSLAD Grant from the State of Illinois on the project until December 31, 2013.

July 27, 2013: Denning Park, which was under renovation was reopened for use.

2013: A community park watch initiative called "Be Our Eyes" was begun after a fire destroyed the Elm Park playground.

2014: PDLG was awarded a State of Illinois' Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) matching grant of \$400,000 for the renovation of Gordon Park. The project was delayed and reevaluated due to concerns over funding. The land sale, which was still the subject of ongoing litigation, was intended to provide the funding for this project.

Summer 2014: A community garden was started in Denning Park.

August 2014: The Before and After School Program was expanded to include an additional location for the students from the St. Frances Xavier School.

August 2014: Gordon Park renovation was completed, and the park reopened for public use.

August 1-3, 2014: The Park District partnered with the La Grange Business Association to run the La Grange Endless Summerfest special event for the community.

September 2014: The entire Recreation Center was used to host The Cure, a not-for-

profit organization of medical professionals dedicated to providing medical screenings, dental, and vision services to the less fortunate in the community.

October 18, 2014: The State of Illinois awarded the Park District a PARC Grant for the construction of a fitness center inside the Recreation Center.

September 2015: The Park District once again supported CURE, a not-for-profit organization of medical professionals dedicated to providing medical screenings, dental, and vision services in one location to the less fortunate in the community. For two days, the entire Recreation Center was used to host this organization. Services were provided to over 750 individuals needing care. At the same time, the Greater Chicago Food Depository used the Park District Community Center to provide fresh fruits and vegetables.

October 2015: The walking pathway at Waiola Park was removed, widened to meet ADA standards, and replaced.

September 11, 2017: The Park District's new fitness center, La Grange Fitness Center opened.

December 17, 2017: A playground was installed at Meadowbrook Manor.

July 11, 2018: Completion of the sale of 2.82 acres in Gordon Park to Pathway Senior Living.

July 2019: Gilbert pathway was removed and replaced, part of the Recreation Center roof was repaired, and the Recreation Center front doors and three office windows were replaced.

November 2019: Sedgwick tennis courts were resurfaced via overlay, and Sedgwick 47th St. parking lot was removed and replaced.

February 2020: Community Center roof replaced.

March 18, 2020: All Park District operations were shut down due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

July 2020: Some Park District operations were reopened with limited occupancy.

February 12, 2021: The Park District purchased just under 3 acres of land adjacent to the Recreation Center with the intention of using the property for parking.

### **Mission Statement**

*Our mission is to provide quality recreation programs, facilities, and parks that enhance the health, happiness and quality of life of Park District residents and program participants.*

The Park District currently maintains 78.5 acres of parkland at 11 locations. The Park District serves a three-square mile area nearly contiguous with the boundaries of the Village of La Grange not including unincorporated La Grange Highlands.

### **Organizational Structure**

The Park District Board of Commissioners are the primary decision-makers for the Park District. The Board consists of five officials elected by the residents to serve a 4-year term. The Park Board President and Vice President are elected internally by the Board on an annual basis. The Park Board evaluates and selects the Executive Director for the District in addition to appointing the District treasurer, secretary, legal counsel, and District representative to the SEASPAR board.

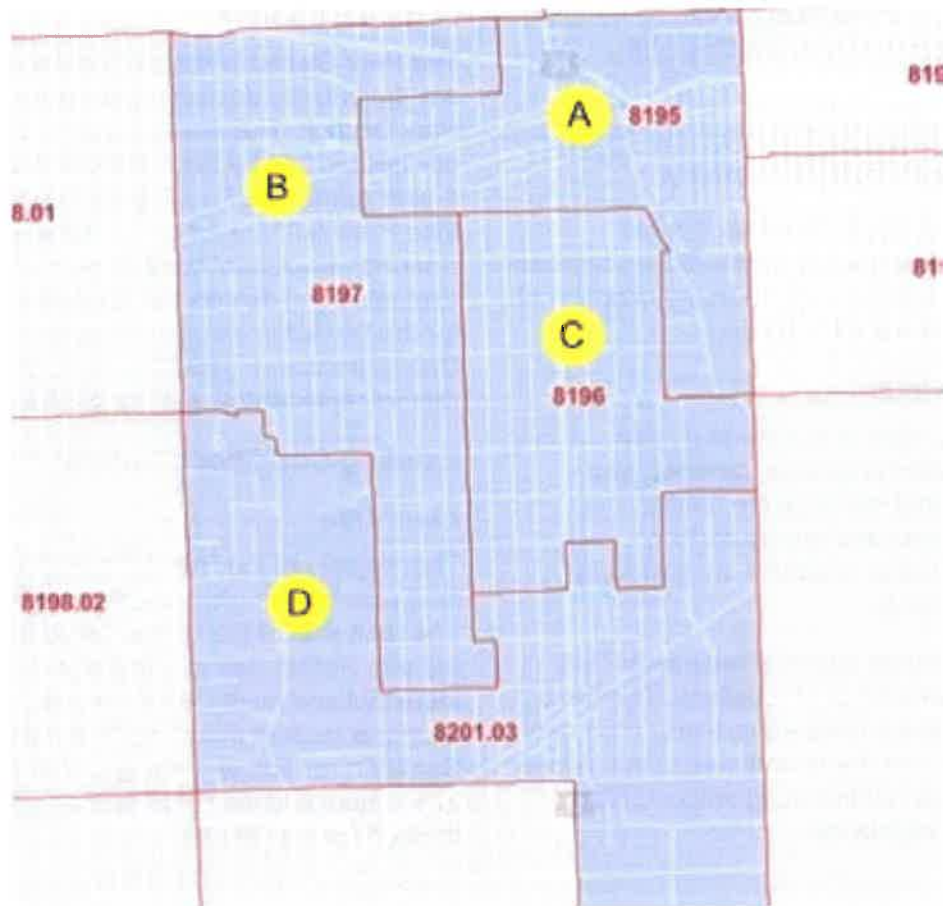
### **Existing Conditions/Natural Features**

#### **Land Use**

The majority of the Park District of La Grange land uses are single or multi-family residential. The east side of the Village along the CSX/ Indiana Harbor Belt railroad includes light industrial and multi-family. The commercial district is located along the Burlington Northern Santa Fe rail line and along La Grange Road. The school and institutional uses are located throughout the District.



## ABOUT... The Park District of La Grange *(continued)*



### ***Public Open Space***

The Park District is one of the main providers of open space in the area. Residents have access to a number of recreational opportunities surrounding La Grange including the Brookfield Zoo, Salt Creek Woods Nature Preserve, Possum Hollow Woods, Bemis Woods, Sundown Meadow, and miles of bike trails through the Forest Preserve District of Cook County.

### **Planning Areas**

Planning areas are used to analyze park distribution, land acquisition and park facility redevelopment needs. The geographic area addressed by the Comprehensive Master Plan includes the municipal boundaries of the Village which is contiguous with the Park District boundaries.

The individual Planning Areas are delineated by the census tracts established by the United States Census Bureau. A census tract is defined as “small statistical subdivisions of a county, with 1,200 to 8,000 residents typically. The boundaries are usually delineated by local committees, and do not cross county or state lines. Tracts are identified by a six-digit code, with an implied decimal between the fourth and fifth digit. Boundary changes and code restructuring are reflected in the Census 2010 release. There are 73,057 tracts in the Census 2010 geography.” (Esri Demographics, 2021)

Planning Areas A, B, C, and D include census tracts 8195, 8197, 8196 and 8201.03.



## Chapter 2

# REDISCOVER THE FUN: THE PLANNING CONTEXT

# REDISCOVER THE FUN: The Planning Context

## Purpose of this Plan

The Park District of La Grange engaged in this effort to create a long-range planning tool for best management practices in maintaining and enhancing the District's parks and public recreation opportunities for the benefit of residents and visitors over a multi-year planning period. The Plan incorporates extensive public input, stakeholder and focus group interaction, detailed inventory, and analysis of existing recreation programs and assets, to create a road map for success.

The Master Plan provides direction on park programs, facility maintenance, general capital improvements, park amenities, parkland redevelopment, budgets, and funding opportunities. The nation-wide "Stay-at-Home" order restricting movement and social gathering, and the closure of entertainment venues, forced PDLG Park Board, staff, and community residents to recognize the positive impact their local parks, open spaces, and recreation services have on the community's quality of life. In La Grange's densely developed "built-out" landscape, the PDLG's parks supply much-needed opportunities for residents to play outdoors; participate in fitness, leisure, and wellness activities; be social; and enjoy a small break from the built environment.

The previous Comprehensive Master Plan was adopted in 2011 and updated by District staff in 2014. Many conditions have changed since the 2011 Plan was developed as well as the 2014 update. The Village of La Grange's demographics have not dramatically changed despite the State's statistics, however, the District's "Active Senior" population is continually increasing. This 2022-2032 Comprehensive Master Plan builds upon, and replaces, the 2011-2021 Plan.

## Key Issues

Key issues were identified using several tools, including a review of existing plans and documents, focus groups, open house

presentations, a community survey, and inventory and level of service analysis. The information gathered was evaluated, and recommendations were developed that address these key issues:

- Continue to maintain and improve existing parks, facilities, and amenities
- Make improvements to or replace some existing facilities and amenities
- Continue to improve programming and service delivery
- Continue to increase marketing, branding, and awareness
- Pursue additional funding sources and opportunities

## Related Planning Efforts and Integration

The following plans were reviewed for relevance, used as background information, and supporting studies to this master planning effort to ensure that all planning efforts are aligned and integrated.

- Park District of La Grange: 2011-2021 Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan
- Park District of La Grange, Illinois Comprehensive Annual Financial Report FY2020
- Capital Budget Replacement Plan 2015 – 2027
- General, Recreation and Special Fund Operation Budget Fiscal Year 2021/2022
- Program Guides
- Village of La Grange's Comprehensive Plan / Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Corridor Plan

## Methodology of this Planning Process

The process guiding the development of this Master Plan included the formation of an integrated project team comprised of staff and Park Board, a review of institutional



history, analysis of existing conditions, and engagement with members of the PDLG community. The development of this plan included the following key tasks:

- Data gathering and review
- Existing Parks, Facilities, and Programs Inventory
- Level of Service analysis with alternative service providers identified
- Community Engagement – Community Interest and Opinion Survey
- Needs assessment
- Park, Facility, Financial, and Program analysis
- Recommendations: Goals, Objectives, and Action Plan

### ***Existing Parks & Facility Inventory***

The Existing Parks & Facility Inventory consisted of a detailed comprehensive assessment of each of the District's services including parks, open space, and recreation facilities to determine current conditions, use patterns, environmental issues, and economic impacts. Included within the assessment is a comparative analysis of local agencies of comparable size and density using nationally accepted standards.

The existing parks and facility inventory included:

- An inventory of parks and facilities using existing mapping, staff interviews, and on-site visits to verify amenities and assess the condition of the facilities and grounds

## The Planning Context *(continued)*

- An inventory, mapping, and analysis of recreation amenities

### **Level of Service Analysis**

The Level of Service Analysis includes the evaluation of the facility's recreation components relative to the size of the facility per 1000 population (capacity analysis). Additionally, the analysis included those services provided by other agencies that may affect the PDLG.

### **Community Engagement**

The Public Involvement Phase of the Plan consisted of an in-depth, efficient, open, and resident-focused community process. Park Board members, staff, user groups, associations, and other stakeholders were assured that their voices were important, and they would be provided an opportunity to participate in the development of this Plan through an appropriate number of community participation meetings. A variety of methods for the PDLG community to participate resulted in valuable data for analysis. The following methods were used:

- "Meet the Planners" informal CMP introduction
- Focus Groups/Stakeholder meetings
- Community-wide Open House/Public Workshop meetings
- Statistically valid community interest and opinion survey
- Open link survey
- Over-the-counter survey

### **Needs Assessment**

A statistically valid survey is crucial to getting reliable information about District facilities, programs, and services from residents of the community to establish a baseline for setting realistic and achievable goals in the Comprehensive Master Plan. The statistically-valid survey is the only method that gives scientifically legitimate information, not only

from the users but from the non-users who are also taxpayers and voters. Based on the population of La Grange of approximately 15,545 according to the US Census projections, a sample of 2000 households was used and provided a cost-effective statistically valid survey.

### **Park, Facility, Financial, and Program analysis**

Analysis included:

- Park and facility analysis included a review of inventory data collected
- Program analysis included a review of the District's recreation programs, events, and practices
- Financial analysis included a review of financial data.

### **Recommendations: Goals, Objectives, and Action Plan**

Goals and recommendations for enhancing PDLG's parks and recreation amenities are rooted in the Key Issues of the master planning process. The goals developed focus on improving recreation amenities the District currently operates and enhancing service delivery. The recommendations describe ways to enhance the level of service and the quality of life through organizational efficiencies, financial opportunities, improved programming, service delivery and maintenance, and improvements to facilities and amenities.

The summary of recommended actions:

- Identified and categorized recommendations into themes with goals, objectives, and an action plan for implementation
- Developed an action plan for capital improvements, including operational impacts, and time frame to support the implementation of the plan



### Chapter 3

## DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS & TRENDS

# DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS & TRENDS

## Summary

The focus of this master plan is to gather both qualitative and quantitative information from which strategies will be developed to guide the future management of the Park District of La Grange's parks and recreation system. A key component of the Comprehensive Master Plan is a demographics and recreational trends analysis which helps provide a thorough understanding of the population and cultural makeup of residents within the District assesses key economic factors, as well as identifies national, regional, and local recreational trends. The primary objective of the demographic analysis (and projections when information is available) is to determine the size and density of the various population groups within the Park District's planning boundary and to estimate the future size and relevant characteristics of the same groups for the purpose of assessing the need for active and passive parks, recreation facilities, programs, and services to support the current and anticipated population for the next ten years.

The demographic analysis describes the population of the Village of La Grange. This assessment is reflective of the Village of La Grange's total population and its key characteristics such as age segments, race, ethnicity, income levels, and gender.

## Methodology

The demographic data used for the analysis was obtained from U.S. Census Bureau and from American Community Survey Data (ACS), an ongoing survey that provides vital information every year about our nation and its people. Data was also obtained from Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI), the largest research and development organization dedicated to Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and

specializing in population projections and market trends. All data was acquired in June 2021 and reflects actual numbers as reported in the 2010 Census as well as estimates for 2015 and 2019 as obtained by ESRI and ACS data. *(It is important to note the COVID-19 pandemic posed numerous challenges to collecting the typical ACS data and census information in 2020 therefore at the time of this writing, the standard census data had not been released and made available to the public for review. Also, it is important to understand that future projects are based on historical patterns and unforeseen circumstances during or after the time of the analysis could have a significant bearing on the validity of the projected figures.)*

## Race and Ethnicity Definitions

The minimum categories for data on race and ethnicity for Federal statistics, program administrative reporting, and civil rights compliance reporting are identified and defined below. The latest (Census 2010) definitions and nomenclature are used within this analysis.

- Native American – This includes a person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment
- Asian – This includes a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam
- Black – This includes a person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa

- **Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander**  
This includes a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands
- **White** – This includes a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa
- **Hispanic or Latino** – This is an ethnic distinction, a subset of a race as defined by the Federal Government; this includes a person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race

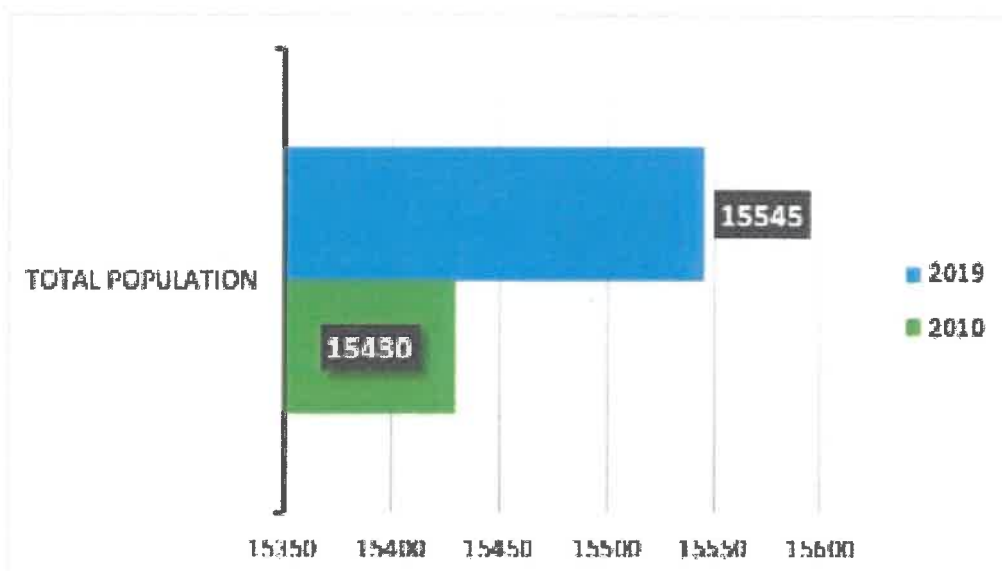
**Population**

In 2020, the state of Illinois lost approximately 80,000 residents according to the U.S. Census Bureau. However, the Chicago region, which encompasses the Village of La Grange, has remained the same. The Village of La Grange has a population of 15,545 according to the 2019 US Census Bureau and includes four census tracts. A county is broken into small planning areas called census tracts, which typically include around 1,000 to 8,000 residents.

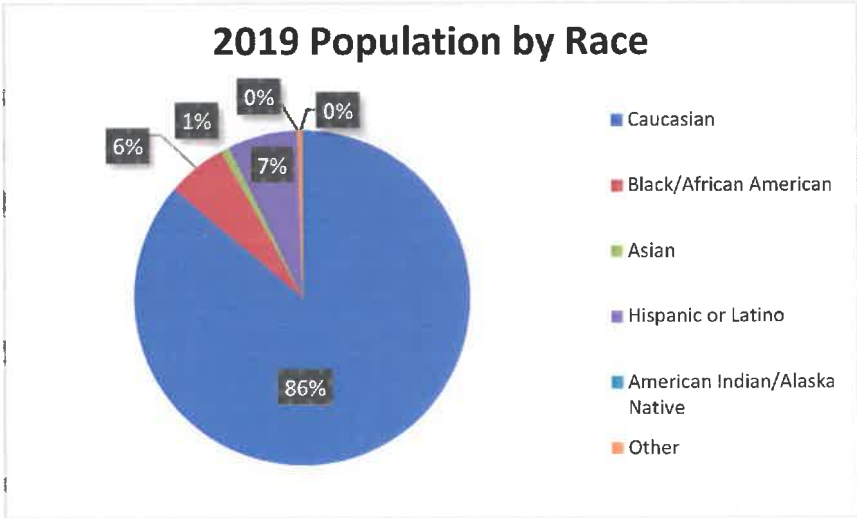
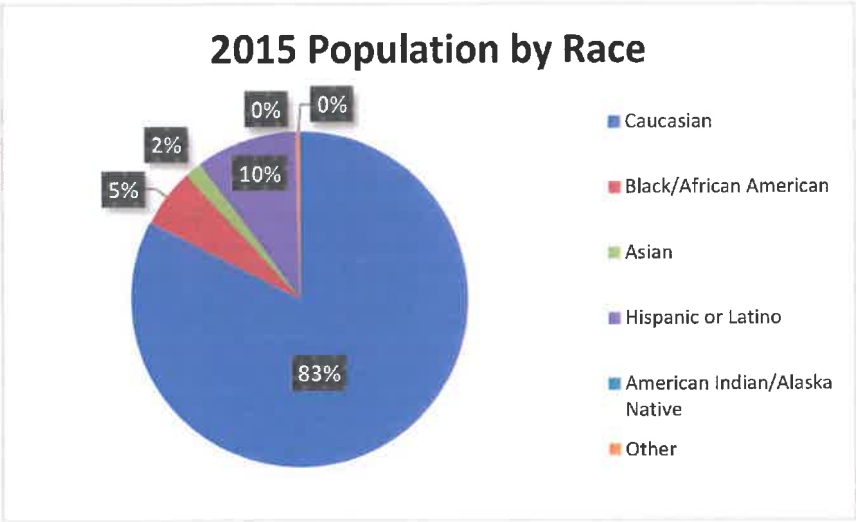
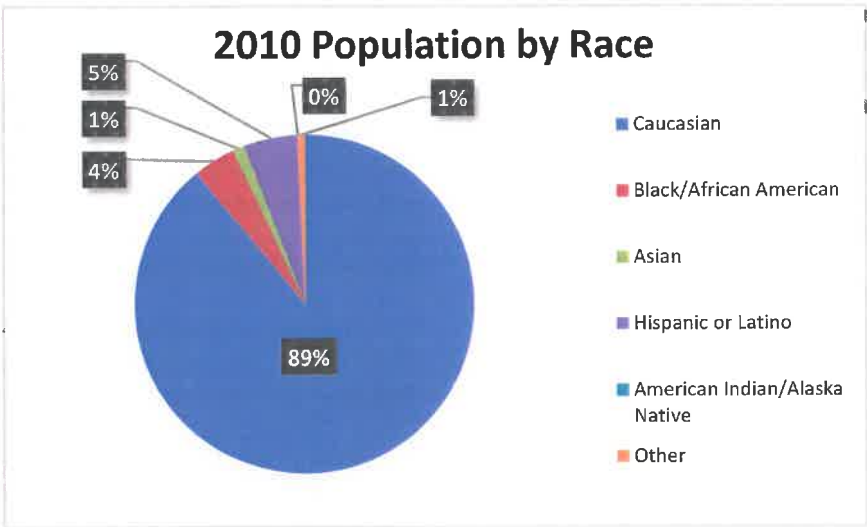
Tracts are identified by a six-digit code and do not cross county or state lines.

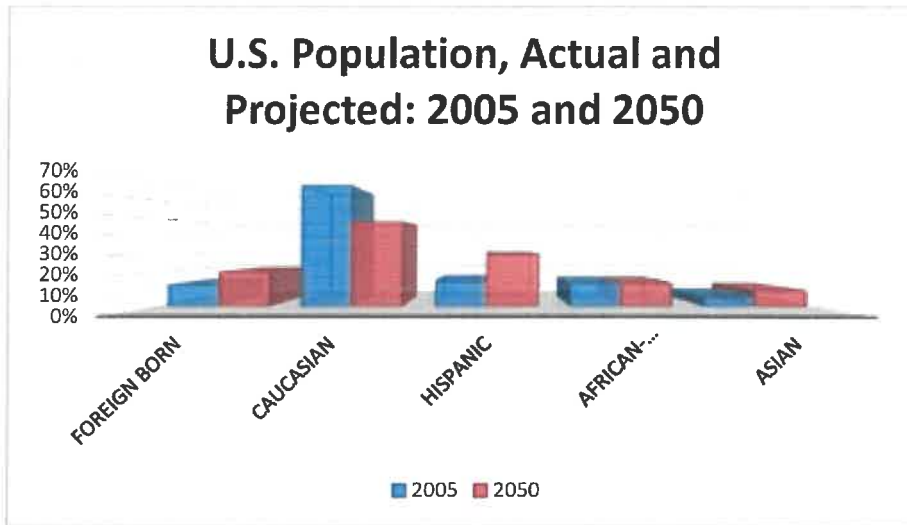
The Village of La Grange has seen a small population increase of 115, from 2010 to 2019. The Village’s population grew at a 0.08% annual rate from 2010 to 2019. Although this number is minimal, this population increase shows the potential for more park users.

The majority of the population is Caucasian (86%), followed by Hispanic or Latino (7%), Black/African American (6%), and Asian (1%). The greatest increase in population and significant growing trend in recent years has been within the Hispanic community while the Caucasian population has seen the greatest decrease. These trends align with the 2050 population projections according to the Pew Research Group. The Village of La Grange is a built-out/landlocked community. However, as the population within the Village continues to grow, the PDLG must be mindful of securing, developing, and redeveloping equitable parkland in under-resourced areas of the community when possible or when opportunities arise.



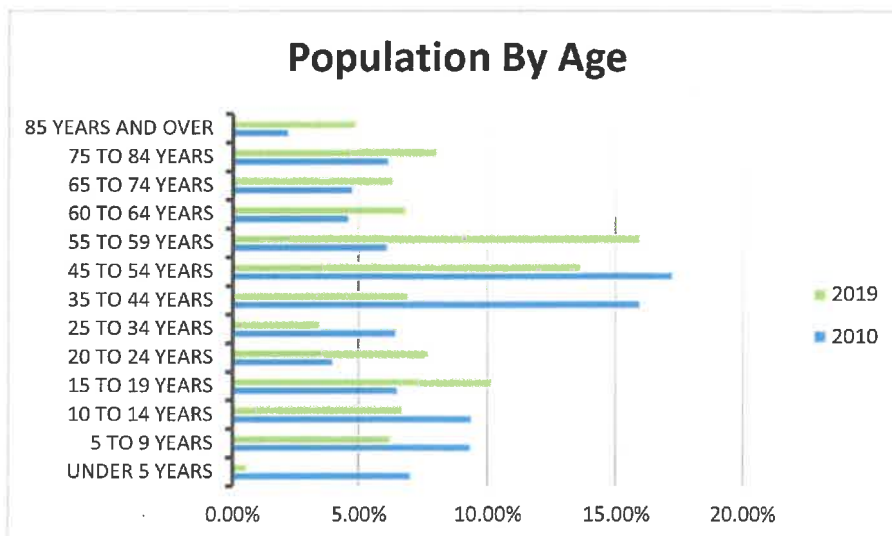
# DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS & TRENDS *(continued)*





### Age Segment

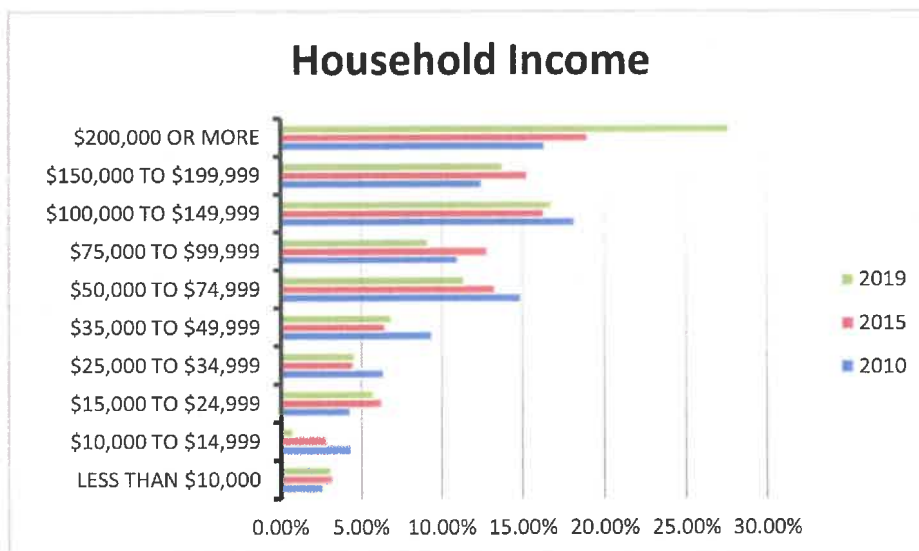
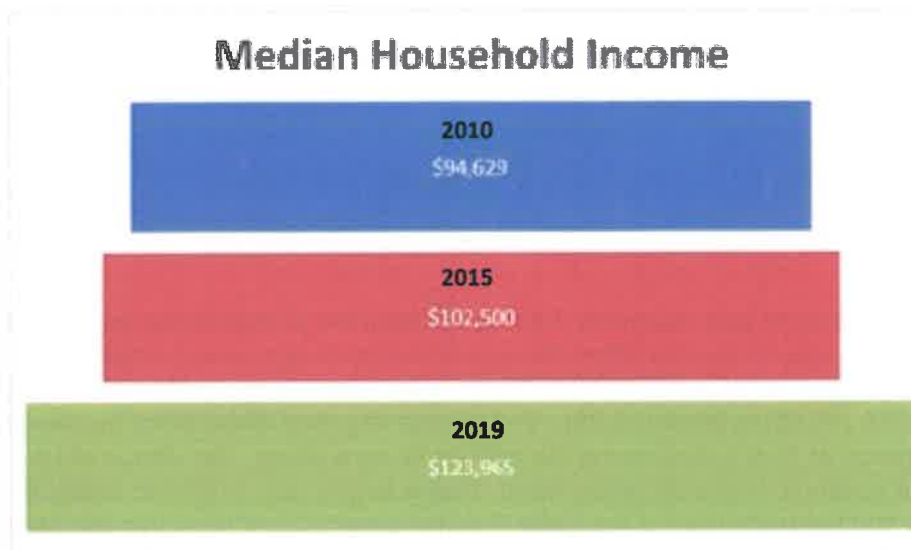
Evaluating the Village by age segments, La Grange includes a large aging population with over 42% of the Village age 55 or older. Even though the 15 to 19 age cohort shows a significant increase from 2010 (6.54%) to 2019 (10.18%) the total cohort from 10-20 stayed relatively stable from 2010 (15.95) to 2019 (16.89). The largest segment of the 2019 population is the 55 to 59 group at 15.9%. Assessing the population as a whole, the Village of La Grange is projected to continue its current aging trend. This is largely due to the increased life expectancies and the remainder of the Baby Boomer generation shifting into the senior age groups. Additionally, La Grange’s senior population is increasing, with more opportunities for residents to “age-in-place” due to the rise of age-restricted and senior living communities such as Windsor Place, Meadowbrook Manor, and Greenwood II, LLC Dover La Grange. The Village’s shifting demographics and evolving response to them is what makes the La Grange community such a remarkable place to call home.



## DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS & TRENDS *(continued)*

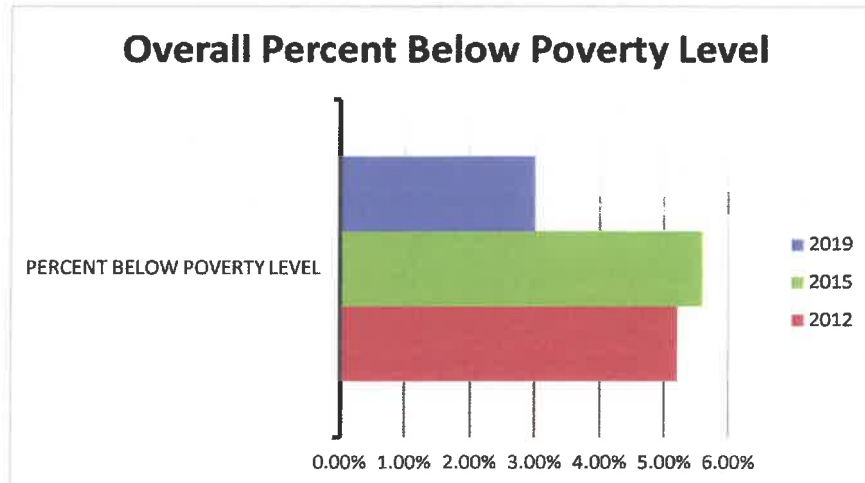
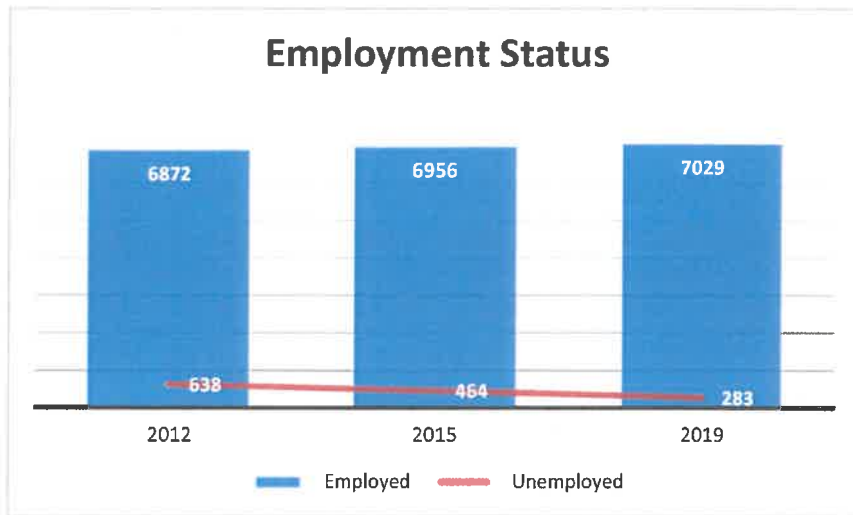
### Households, Income & Employment

The Village of La Grange median household income is trending upward since 2010. There was a large spike in 2019 of households earning more than \$200,000. The median household income of \$123,965 is well above the state median income (\$65,886) and national median income (\$68,703).

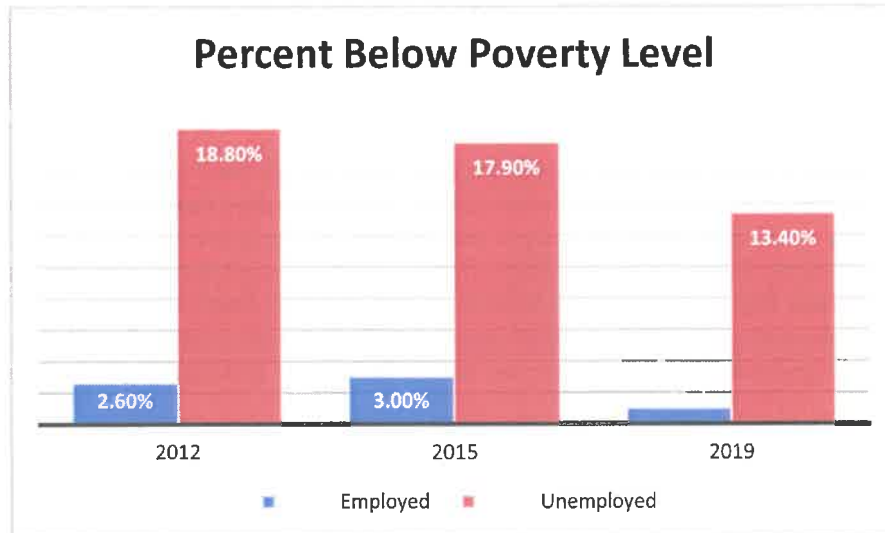


The Village of La Grange has seen an increase in employment and a decrease in unemployment in the last nine years. As the 2020 census data becomes available we may see shifts in household income, employment, and poverty levels as many individuals were affected greatly by the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), the Chicago regions' unemployment rate in April 2020 reached 17.2%. The unemployment rate reflects individuals who are actively looking for work and does not include the approximately 49,000 people who left the workforce entirely since February 2020. Many left the workforce to provide child and family care, forced to take furlough, and others were unable to work because they were high-risk for illness. When reviewing the Chicagoland area's 2007-2009 recession, the Chicagoland region took nearly nine and a half years to recover to pre-recession unemployment levels.

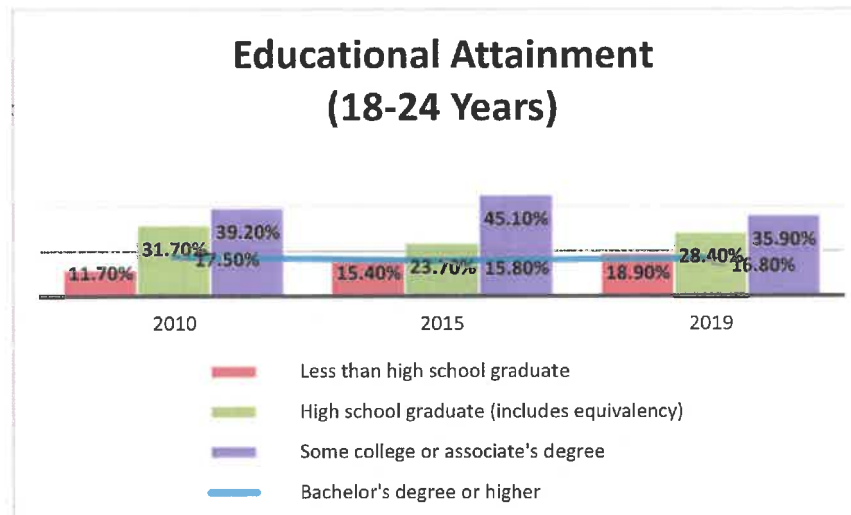


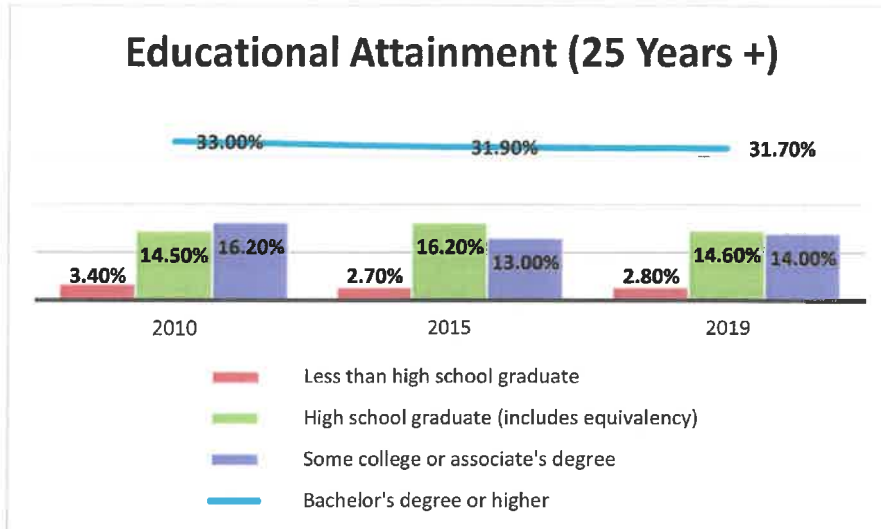
## DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS & TRENDS *(continued)*



### Education

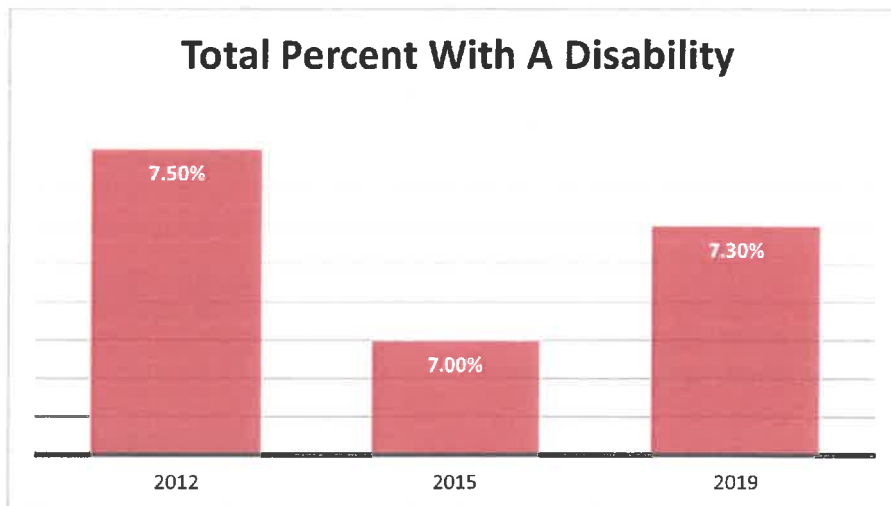
The graphs below depict the level of education within the Village of La Grange. In 2019 approximately 52.7% of residents had a high school diploma or higher. The 25 years of age and older cohort shows a decrease in high school graduates but an increase in a college or associate degrees.



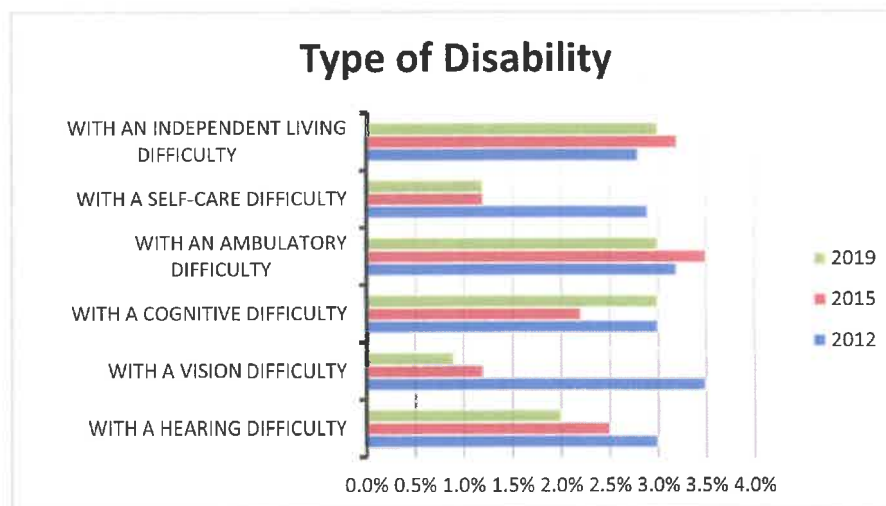
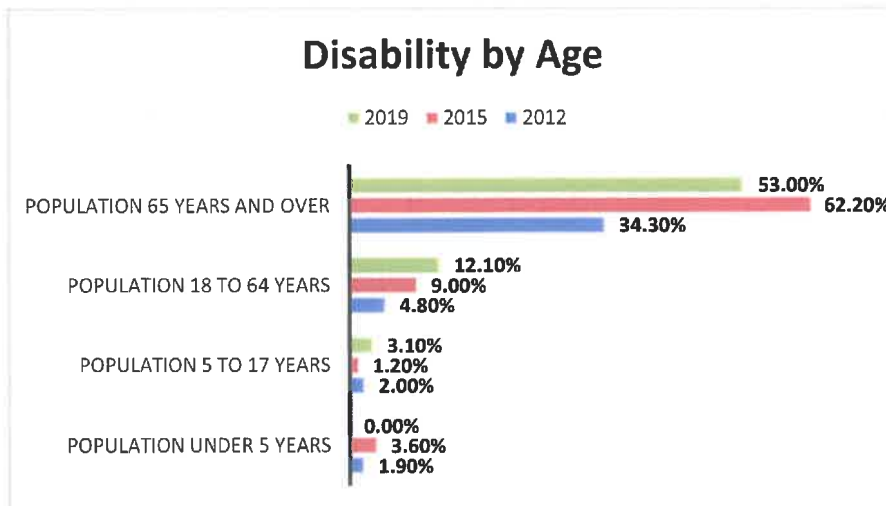


### Disability

The total percentage of the population with a disability has decreased since 2012, but with the aging population, disabilities have increased in the 65 year and over age cohort. The most common types of disabilities seen in the 2019 data include: difficulty with independent living and ambulatory and cognitive disabilities.



## DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS & TRENDS *(continued)*



### Key Findings:

- The Hispanic population had the largest increase which aligns with 2050 projections;
- The age segment, 20 years and younger is growing rapidly;
- The median household income has grown since 2010;
- The unemployment rate has dropped significantly from 2012;
- The percent of people below the poverty level has dropped since 2012
- In the age range of 25 years plus, there has been a decrease in high school graduates but an increase in some college or associates degrees;
- The total percentage of people with a disability has decreased since 2012, and more females than males have a disability;
- As the population ages, disabilities have increased with the 65 year and over group; and
- The most common types of disabilities in 2019 are difficulty with independent living and ambulatory and cognitive difficulties.

## Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2021-2025

The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) is the foundation for Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) in Illinois. It identifies the State's major outdoor recreation priorities and describes how it utilizes funding from the federal, Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). In the OSLAD and LWCF evaluation instruments, SCORP Priorities and Project Need makes up 60% of the evaluation. SCORP outlines six priorities for Illinois through 2025:

- **Health and Wellness** – Provide, encourage, and promote opportunities for people to be physically active in parks, advancing healthy lifestyles, and physical fitness.
- **Access to Outdoor Recreation** – Expand opportunities on new lands and develop/revitalize facilities, including increasing access for people of all abilities and income levels.
- **Natural Resource Stewardship** – Respond to recreational needs and preferences by adapting and re-purposing lands for open space and parks ensuring resource conservation and protection.
- **Conservation Education** – Promote environmental ethics and provide resource education opportunities, engaging youth, and adults in the outdoors.
- **Trails and Greenways** – Protect and/or develop for conservation and recreational purposes linear green spaces in metropolitan and community areas.
- **Cooperative Partnerships** – Coordinate to share costs and leverage additional funds to use grant money most effectively.

## The Emerging Parks and Recreation Industry Trends In 2021 (and beyond)

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) predicts new trends for parks and recreation programming every year. However, due primarily to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) global pandemic, things are much different for the recreation industry – land use patterns in our urban environments have drastically changed creating a renewed interest in parks, trails, and the walkable environment all of which are very positive for park and recreation agencies. While there are a number of trends predicted, only those trends relevant to PDLG and in the realm of possibilities for the District are analyzed below:

- **Utilizing Parks and Recreation Spaces Everywhere** – Innovative locations for public parks are being proposed everywhere. Agencies/authorities are trying to convert every available space in dense urban areas to parks and open spaces. New types are emerging with the expansion of pedestrian spaces i.e., outdoor dining on urban streets, the conversion of streets to bike lanes and trails, and the installation of parklets in parking spaces and travel lanes have opened all kinds of possibilities for new types of urban parks.
- **Health Equity and Social Services** – One of the strongest emerging trends for 2021 is the focus on health and health equity. Parks and recreation will play a greater role in supporting mental health and well-being. This movement toward health and well-being has been magnified by COVID-19, but it will continue well beyond the pandemic, and will intertwine with a greater focus on meeting the social needs of communities.

## DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS & TRENDS *(continued)*

- **Technology in Parks and Recreation** – As cities and towns are becoming smarter, so are parks. Residents and park patrons expect quality Wi-Fi access in parks and appreciate access to charging stations and downloadable content such as augmented-reality walks, games, and exhibits. Likewise, parks and recreation systems are implementing new technologies such as automatic mowing equipment, self-maintained toilets, robotic cleaning systems, and semi-autonomous drones for various tasks.
- **Growth Of E-sports** – As a result of the pandemic, youth team activities came to a halt. E-sports have brought in a welcome shift by playing a larger role in park and recreation establishments. As indoor sports were banned, E-sports were being conducted in parks and webcast live. Now, more agencies are getting ready to conduct E-sports competitions involving teams. Agencies are also on a mission to design facilities with dedicated spaces for E-sports in parks across the country.
- **Re-imagining Parks and Recreation Offerings** – The world is moving, working, and surviving differently since the onset of the pandemic. A detailed report on Park and Recreation Trends for 2021 suggests new additions to park programs that were not common in previous years. According to park respondents, educational programs (62.2%), holiday and other special events (up to 81.6%), adult sports teams (59.1%) are the trends to look out for, and these have replaced day camps and summer camps, arts and crafts programs, and performing arts programs. These additions, however, are not new but more likely to have the edge over others in the coming years.

A list of the ten top-most planned programs within the parks and recreation industry are listed below:

- Group exercise programs
- Teen programming
- Fitness programs
- Mind-body balance programs such as yoga
- Programs for active older adults
- Educational programs
- Environmental education programs
- Holidays and other special events
- Adult sports teams
- Special needs programs

### **Societal, Cultural and Conditional Trends Affecting Recreation and Parks**

**The American Population** - America is a country of constant change and recent trends include becoming an older society with different definitions of what constitutes a family, who works outside the home and when we retire. Understanding these changes in the population creates new challenges for park districts. Societal trends that affect the PDLG include Baby Boomers (those born between 1946 and 1964) were the largest birth generation and are now reaching the golden years, while the middle class is shrinking, with more young people considering themselves lower or lower-middle class. Hispanics are the fastest growing minority, and the Millennials and Generations X and Y (born since the mid-1960s) are the most ethnically diverse in history. They are also less involved in traditional social structures, such as church membership and political affiliation, relying instead on social media to create networks. Park districts and recreation agencies are expanding their reach to include the use of social media for connecting to the general public, and ethnic populations. This includes using methods such as the incorporation of diversity training for staff and cultural materials into programs such as ethnic-targeted music in



fitness classes and bilingual signage.

***The Changing Family*** – Due in part to the economic stresses facing families in America today, children are staying at home longer and the elderly are moving in with their adult children, who are waiting longer to marry. More and more mothers are staying at home, military personnel are returning to civilian life, and pet ownership is increasing. Park and recreation agencies have now begun to focus on developing family membership deals, offering programs geared towards veterans and multi-generational participation, meeting the need for childcare, and considering the addition of off-leash pet areas within park sites.

***Rising Crime*** - People are less likely to visit parks if they do not feel safe while

spending time there. Safety efforts might include ensuring well-lit parks, the presence of uniformed park security, offering transportation, and reviewing the safety of routes to and from parks and facilities.

***Wellness*** – Poorly managed diets, lifestyle choices, and metabolic risk factors, can lead to premature death which the availability and access to parks and recreational programs may help to address. The obvious beneficial impact of parks includes helping to increase physical activity, with the result of improved weight and overall wellness. Park management can also improve individual behaviors such as alcohol use and tobacco smoking by offering substance-free parks and providing educational programs on tobacco and alcohol dependency.

## DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS & TRENDS *(continued)*

**Childhood and Nature** – Preschool and school-age children are spending less time in recess and physical education classes, increasing the need to exercise independently. Therefore, park districts and recreation agencies should continue to focus on strenuous activities for children during after school hours. Video games and other indoor activities have resulted in reduced physical activity and decreased appreciation for nature. This suggests that in addition to athletic programs, children would benefit from programs that introduce nature and elements of our outside world. As a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, park agencies should also consider offering programs to address the recreational needs of the growing number of home-schooled children and those who choose a remote form of education.

**Fitness Equipment and Technology** - New ways to stay fit are being continuously developed and modifications of proven techniques and equipment emerge daily. Office and workplace fitness is being encouraged through wellness programs, which include physical activity, and information on

nutrition and tobacco use. Park district and recreation agencies might consider partnering with local businesses to design and implement professionally lead quality wellness programs. They might also consider installing “free outdoor gyms”, which are clusters of traditional fitness equipment ranging from elliptical machines to leg press apparatuses.

Bicycling continues to be a popular inexpensive outdoor activity, although commuting by bike is often perceived as risky or undesirable because of weather and the lack of bathing and private bathing facilities within the workplace.

Fitness trends are constantly changing, and park organizations should balance offering popular new programs with the continuation of programs that the community enjoys, perhaps by regularly polling community members via Survey Monkey or other methods.

More technology is being incorporated into fitness in many ways: software is available to lead and guide workouts, record results, and monitor heart rate and steps; social media offers support and challenges from fellow participants and provides interactive communication with the community.



**Trends Conclusion** – Park and recreation agencies are continually faced with new challenges in meeting the needs of a changing society, but also have a wide range of research, new techniques, and equipment to address those needs. An understanding of recreation trends as well as patterns of demographic change is important to the continued success of a park and recreation agency. Recreation programming and plans need to be comprehensive enough to address the multi-faceted challenges that communities face, while also focusing on the need to connect with diverse park users to ensure healthy, active communities.

### **Benchmarking Analysis**

The development of a comparative analysis is a benchmarking tool that provides an understanding of how the Park District of La Grange compares to other area park and recreation agencies in meeting the needs of its residents. The Park District of La Grange is located in western Cook County, and its boundaries are not continuous with the Village of La Grange.

Because the La Grange community is at or near its population capacity, and the potential for land acquisition is limited, this type of comparative analysis could be considered less important than it is in communities that continue to grow and develop. This analysis is developed as a localized regional assessment that offers a more accurate comparison of needs and potential District deficiencies as compared to an assessment that considers national or even state averages.

The Park District was benchmarked against five nearby and similar districts.

- Oak Brook Park District
- Westchester Park District
- Community Pk. Dist. of La Grange Park
- Burr Ridge Park District
- Elmhurst Park District

These park districts are comparable in population and/or demographics, as well as being in established communities. It is very challenging to find exact comparable park districts because each has its own unique identity. For this analysis, the key benchmarking data sought included:

- Population
- Median household income
- Total number of parks/facilities
- Total park acres
- Acres per 1,000 residents
- Number of athletic fields
- Number of playgrounds
- Total expenditures
- Capital improvement expenditures
- Equalized assessed value

It should be noted that the information obtained for the other park districts was not always based on the same criteria; efforts were made to make the information provided as analogous as possible and analysis relied only on the data that appeared to be similar in comparison.

### **Population Characteristics**

The five park districts included in this comparison range in population from 8,075 to 46,463 with an average of approximately 18,446. The range of population is within a reasonable range for comparison, with the Village of La Grange's population at 15,545. It should be noted that the reported populations are the municipality populations and not park district boundaries. The difference between municipal and park district populations should not substantially affect the review of population trends or evaluations. Of those park districts included in the comparison, Westchester Park District and Community Park District have population numbers most similar to La Grange, with approximately 15,000 residents in each district.

## DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS & TRENDS *(continued)*

### **Parks and Facilities**

The total acres of land are used for this comparison, including land that is owned and leased by the park districts. The park districts being compared range from 25.6 acres to 458.0 acres. The NRPA standard for park systems relates to acres per 1,000 population, with a guideline of 6.25 to 10.5 acres of developed open space per 1,000 population. The Illinois average statewide is 11.35 acres per 1,000 population per the 2009-2014 Illinois Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. The Park District of La Grange owns 73.5 acres which calculates to 4.74 acres per 1,000 residents. This figure is well below the NRPA and State of Illinois guidelines ratio.

Since the agencies polled vary in size, a comparison of parks and facilities is typically done on a per population basis. When compared to the other cities based on population, Oak Brook Park District had the highest ratio of park acreage with a ratio of 21.52 acres per 1,000 residents. This number is bolstered by one very large community park complex and a relatively small population similar to the Burr Ridge Park District. Elmhurst Park District with 458 acres of open space also has five very large parks in its inventory. The NRPA guidelines should be used for recreation benchmarking but also adjusted locally because of the variation in demographics, available land, and other impacts.

With regards to playgrounds, La Grange exceeds the Illinois Recreation Facility Inventory standards by four parks and is aligned similarly compared to the neighboring communities of Westchester and La Grange Park. The Park District of La Grange has the highest number of athletic fields relevant to its neighbors with a similar population. Elmhurst Park District has the highest number of fields in addition to the largest park acreage.

### **Capital Improvement Expenditures**

Capital improvements are defined as “costs

related to making changes to improve capital assets, increase their useful life, or add to the value of these assets”. The capital expenditures and outlay spanned a range from \$4,817 to \$20,264,130 for 2020. In 2021, the PDLG spent \$829,224 for capital projects. However, it should be noted this was due in part to a unique sale of a piece of property which allowed the District to put more into capital. It should also be noted that the District received grants in years past that are reflected in the capital outlay total. Therefore, the District’s capital output will vary pending operation revenue, grants and special funding, i.e., land sale. Comparing the total expenditures for each agency and the percent of dollars used towards capital improvements, the Park District of La Grange percentage of 13.35% is one of the highest, with the other five park districts averaging 12.44%.

### **Equalized Assessed Value**

The equalized assessed value (EAV) varies from \$385,485 to \$2,558,861. The average EAV for the six park districts is \$994,867,670. The Park District’s current EAV is \$845,961,041, the lowest EAV is the Community Park District of La Grange Park at \$385,485 and the highest in the Elmhurst Park District at \$2,558,861.

### **External Program Providers**

The Park District of La Grange is one of 27 open space and outdoor recreation providers within the community; in addition, the surrounding area plays an important role in determining what programs the Park District offers. The Park District is located amongst many other services providers, including neighboring park districts, fitness centers, libraries, churches, schools, preschools, club sports, and dance studios. Private providers are usually membership-based and are typically found in more populated areas. It is the planning team’s experience that most private providers serve a different user group than public recreation facilities. Public providers tend to be more family orientated



and offer programs that, are not revenue generators for the facility.

External providers such as the school district, neighboring park districts, and municipalities share facilities and programs with the Park District of La Grange through their intergovernmental agreements as mentioned previously. The Park District is also utilizing the facilities of the Western Springs Recreation Department, Community Park District of La Grange Park, and the City of Countryside's schools and parks. These alternate service providers are competition for the Park District and offer similar activities and programming, such as chair yoga, Harmony Music Program, Noah's Ark Preschool, Math Club, and a variety of athletic programs. The Forest Preserve District of Cook County also provides regional active and passive recreation

opportunities while preserving significant open space assets.

According to the 2021 Agency Performance Review, 32% of agencies with a population of 20,000 residents or less provide a recreation center, 31% provide a community center and 20% are providing a senior center to their community. The Park District of La Grange provides both a recreation and community center. "Programming is a key method of engagement that drives the use of park and recreation facilities. When associated with registration fees, it is also the largest source of non-tax revenue for most agencies," states the 2021 Agency Performance Review.

Agencies with a population of 20,000 or less, on average, provide thirty-two fee-based programs per year. The Park District of La Grange is well above this metric.

## DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS & TRENDS *(continued)*



Below is a list showing the private local providers.

- Other Facilities the Park District Uses to Run Programming:
- Western Springs Rec Center
- Grand Avenue Community Center, Western Springs
- La Grange Park Recreation Center
- Hanesworth Park, La Grange Park
- Ideal School, Countryside
- Yena Park, La Grange Park
- Countryside Park, Countryside
- City Park, Countryside

- The LeaderShop, La Grange

### **External Providers:**

#### **Fitness**

- The Local Workout, La Grange
- iLoveKickboxing, La Grange
- Orange Theory, La Grange
- Get In Shape for Women, La Grange
- Absolution CrossFit, Functional Fitness & Strength Academy, La Grange
- CrossFit Posted, Brookfield
- Base, La Grange
- Club Pilates, La Grange
- Strive, La Grange Park
- Charter Fitness, Countryside



- LA Fitness, Countryside
- La Grange Field Club
- Flying High Sports & Rec Center, Countryside
- Gemini Gymnastics, La Grange

**Libraries – All offer a reading program**

- La Grange Public Library
- La Grange Park Public Library District
- Brookfield Public Library
- Lyons Public Library
- Riverside Public Library
- Thomas Ford Mem. Lib., Western Springs

**Churches**

- Second Baptist Church, La Grange
- Davis Memorial A.M.E. Church, La Grange
- First Congregational Church of La Grange
- La Grange Bible Church
- First United Methodist Church, La Grange
- First Presbyterian Church, La Grange
  - Noah’s Ark Preschool
  - Harmony Music Program
- Emmanuel Episcopal Church of La Grange
- St. John’s Lutheran Church, La Grange
  - School – Preschool through 8th Grade
  - Athletics – Volleyball, Basketball, Cheerleading, Track

## DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS & TRENDS *(continued)*

- Sewing Club
- Chess Club
- St. Cletus Parish, La Grange
  - School – Preschool through 8th Grade
  - Athletics – Basketball, Cheerleading, Cross Country, Football, Soccer, Track, Volleyball
  - Ecology Club
  - Girls on the Run
  - Girl Scouts/Boy Scouts
  - Math Club
  - Mission Propelle Yoga
  - National Junior Honor Society
  - Student Council
  - Rainbows Program
  - Technology Club
  - Choir
- Blood of Christ Prophetic, Countryside
- St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church, La Grange

### School Districts

- School District 102
- School District 105
- School District 204

### Preschools

- Ready Teddy Preschool, La Grange Park
- Bright Ideas Preschool, Brookfield
- Little People’s County Preschool, La Grange
- Methodist Preschool of La Grange
- Creative World Montessori School, La Grange
- Grand Avenue Preschool and Daycare, Western Springs
- Sunflower Montessori, Western Springs

### Club Sports

- La Grange Celtics Soccer Club
- La Grange Field Club
- Newton Health Soccer Club
- Region 300 AYSO Youth Soccer – La Grange, Western Springs, Brookfield, La Grange Park
- La Grange Baseball/Softball All-Stars
- La Grange Little League
- Lyons Township Soccer Club

### Dance Studios

- Dance Center of La Grange
- Lively Arts Dance Academy, Countryside
- Elite Dance School, Brookfield
- Impact Dance, La Grange





## Chapter 4

# WHAT WE HAVE NOW - INVENTORY & LEVEL OF SERVICE ANALYSIS

# ASSET INVENTORY

## Overview

It is important to assess the current inventory of parks and amenities within the Park District and analyze their Levels of Service (LOS) within the community. Many amenities within park and recreation agencies are measured by levels of service, certain acres of open space, or the number of amenities per 1,000 people, to determine the quality and quantity of facilities and parks based on guidelines to meet the community's needs and wants. When park and recreation agencies establish service area criteria, this improves their ability to develop quality park developments, implement essential park facilities and recreation amenities, while at the same time, increasing their chances for grant funding.

The NRPA established the "Recreation, Park, and Open Space Standards and Guidelines" in the 1990's for agencies to reference and ensure they were meeting the needs and demands of the community. In recent years, the NRPA established a new program called Park Metrics (formerly PRORAGIS). This is an on-line database for park and recreation agencies to enter their organization's park and recreation data, budget, staffing, etc., to easily benchmark with other park agencies in the same region, state, and/or across the country; this data will replace the 1995 Levels of Service Guidelines as participation grows and data becomes refined. For this plan, this report will utilize the former NRPA Guidelines.

NRPA Guidelines recommend creating a park classification system to serve as a guide for organizing an agency's parks. Mini Park, Neighborhood Park, School-Park, Community Park, and Large Urban Park are the five classifications for parks recognized by the NRPA. Commonly, School-Parks are included in the Neighborhood Park category and Large Urban Parks are included in the Community Park category. Other open space categories recognized by the NRPA are Natural Resource Areas, Greenways, Sports Complexes, Special Use, and Private Park / Recreation Facility. NRPA also identifies

a Level of Service (LOS) analysis as part of the classification system which is a "systems approach" to facility planning. The NRPA guidelines and LOS together with input received from the community provide for an ongoing, dynamic planning process. However, NRPA recognizes that these numbers do not take into account the unique qualities and needs of all communities across the country. Local trends, demographics, climate, and the popularity of certain activities over others often dictate a greater need for certain facilities.

## Classification of Parks

NRPA states "A park system, at a minimum, should be composed of a 'core' system of parklands, with a total of 6.25 to 10.5 acres of developed open space per 1,000 population." In addition, as a means of organizing the 68.2 acres (12 total park sites) open space facilities found in the Park District of La Grange, the park sites are classified according to an NRPA hierarchy that provides for a comprehensive system of interrelated parks. These NRPA guidelines and definitions serve as a good baseline for determining a minimum standard for park districts; however, they are refined to address the needs of the users of the Park District of La Grange.

The PDLG has a variety of parks and recreation areas including Mini Parks, Neighborhood Parks, and Community Parks.

### MINI PARK

*(1/4 Mile "Walk-to" Service Area; 2,500 sq. ft.- 2.0 Acres)*

The smallest type of park, mini parks are mainly designed to serve a concentrated population or a specific age group or function, but they can serve persons of all ages located in the immediate area. Mini Parks meet the need for a walkable, stop-in recreation experience. The amenities provided can center on play apparatus for young children; however, some include passive activities for adults and seniors depending on the needs of the surrounding neighborhood.

Other amenities typically include gazebos, benches, scenic overlooks, picnic tables, and ornamental landscaping. These parks usually do not provide on-site parking. Another term “mini-park” has also been used to identify pocket parks in recent years.

Successful mini parks have four key qualities: they are accessible, allow people to engage in activities, are comfortable spaces that are inviting, and are sociable places. In general, mini parks offer minimal amenities on-site and are not designed to support organized recreation services. The service area for mini-parks is usually less than a quarter-mile and is 2.0 acres or less in size. Mini parks are intended for users within close walking distance of the park. Their primary purpose is to provide recreation to residents where major roads do not have to be crossed.

Currently, PDLG contains six mini-parks (50.0% of total parks) totaling 3.80 acres (5.6% of all park acreage):

- Community Center Park – 1.0 acre
- Elm Park – 2.0 acres
- Stone Park – 0.5 acres
- Spring Avenue Park – 0.85 acres
- Rotary Centennial Park – 0.3 acres.
- Meadowbrook Manor Park – 0.15 acres

Mini Park Development Guidelines:

- Size of park: Mini Parks/Pocket Parks are between 2,500 sq. ft. and 2.0 acres in size. Anything larger would typically be considered a neighborhood park
- Service radius: Five city blocks or less than 1/4 mile in a residential setting
- Site selection: Servicing a specific recreation need, ease of access from the surrounding area, and linkage to a community pathway system are key concerns when selecting a site. Ideally, it will have adjacency to other park system components, most notably greenways, and

the trail system. Location is determined by the needs of the neighborhood, partnership opportunities, and the availability and accessibility of land

- Length of stay: One-hour experience or less
- Site features: Community input through the public meeting process needs to be the primary determinant of the development program for this type of park. Mini Parks are not designed to accommodate more than very limited recreation use. They are typically able to provide recreation use for one user group such as a playground or splash pad for youth, benches for walkers, landscape and trails for the enjoyment of the natural environment, or display of artwork for the local neighborhood. Amenities are ADA compliant. Although demographics and population density play a role in location, the justification for a Pocket Park/Mini Park lies more in servicing a specific recreation need or taking advantage of a unique opportunity. Given the potential variety of Mini Park activities and locations, services can vary
- Landscape design: Appropriate design to enhance the park theme/use/experience •
- Revenue facilities: None
- Land usage: 90% active and 10% passive. The character may be one of intensive use or aesthetic enjoyment. Area businesses and residents should be encouraged to assist in policing and the day-to-day maintenance of this type of park, as they are located in residential/downtown retail areas. The primary function of such a park is to provide recreation space to those areas of the community where population densities limit the available open space
- User experiences: Predominately self-directed, but a signature amenity may be included which provides opportunities for leader-directed programs. Depending on the size and location, special events could

## ASSET INVENTORY *(continued)*



be activated.

- **Maintenance standards:** Dependent on-site features, landscape design, and park visitation
- **Signage:** Directional signage and facility/amenity regulations to enhance user experience
- **Parking:** Parking is typically not required
- **Lighting:** Site lighting is typically used for security and safety
- **Naming:** Consistent with the Park District's naming policy for naming of parks, such as being named after a prominent or historic person, event, or natural landmark

### NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

*(1/4 to 1/2 Mile "Walk-to" Service Area; 2.0 – 10.0 Acres)*

Neighborhood parks form the foundation of the park district and serve as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood and contribute to the identity of that neighborhood. Neighborhood parks should have safe pedestrian access for surrounding residents; parking may or may not be included but if included accounts for less than ten cars and provides for ADA access. They generally range in size from 5 to 10 acres; however, due to the available land within the park district, as well as the amenities provided, sites as small as two acres in size can be appropriate for a neighborhood park. Neighborhood parks are designed for a ¼ to ½ mile radius of service. Concentrated intense informal recreation activities are common in these parks and

they are usually designed within a limited amount of space. These parks serve residents in a variety of age groups. The park should be easily accessible, and access should be uninterrupted by major roads or other barriers.

These parks preserve the unique landscape and often serve the community as gathering places and general athletics. Neighborhood park features include aesthetically designed play areas, picnic areas, splash pads, ball fields, skating, open space for field games, shelters, and walking paths. Neighborhood parks should serve between 10,000 to 20,000 residents or 1.0 to 2.0 acres per thousand people.

Currently, PDLG contains three neighborhood parks (33.3% of total parks) totaling 22.4 acres (32.8% of all park acreage):

- Waiola Park – 3.5 acres
- Denning Park – 10.0 acres
- Gilbert Park – 6.0 acres
- 610 East Avenue Property – 2.9 acres

Neighborhood Park Development Guidelines:

- Size of park: 2 to 12 acres (usable area measured). The preferred size is eight acres
  - Service radius: 0.5-mile radius
  - Site selection: On a local or collector street. If near an arterial street, provide a natural or artificial barrier. Where possible, next to a school. Encourage location to link subdivisions and linked by trails to other parks
  - Length of stay: One-hour experience or less
  - Site features: One signature amenity (e.g., playground, splash pad, sport court, gazebo); no restrooms unless necessary for a signature amenity; may include one non-programmed sports field; playgrounds for ages 2-5 and 5-12 with some shaded elements; no reservable shelters; loop trails; one type of sports court; no non-producing/unused amenities; benches, small picnic shelter(s) next to play areas. Amenities are ADA compliant
- Landscape design: Appropriate design to enhance the park theme/use/experience. Customized to demographics of the neighborhood; safety design meets established Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) standards; integrated color scheme throughout
  - Revenue facilities: None
  - Land usage: 85% active and 15% passive
  - User experiences: Typically, self-directed, but a signature amenity may be included which provides opportunities for leader-directed programs
  - Maintenance standards: Dependent on-site features, landscape design, and park visitation
  - Signage: Directional signage and facility/amenity regulations to enhance user experience
  - Parking: Design should include widened on-street parking area adjacent to the park, when feasible. The goal is to maximize usable park space. As necessary, provide 5-10 spaces within the park including accessible parking spaces. Traffic calming devices encouraged next to the park
  - Lighting: Security only. Lighting on all night for security
  - Naming: Consistent with the agency's naming policy for naming of parks, such as being named after a prominent or historic person, event, or natural landmark

## ASSET INVENTORY *(continued)*

### COMMUNITY PARK

*(1 Mile "Drive-to" Service Area; 10 - 50 acres)*

Community parks are diverse, serving a broader purpose than the neighborhood or mini-parks. Community Parks focus on meeting community-wide recreation needs. These include active and passive recreation, as well as self-directed and organized recreation opportunities for individuals, families, and small groups. Community Parks are intended to serve several neighborhoods. Community parks usually have both day and evening activities which can result in lighted fields and amenities. Community parks include a mix of active and passive activities and attract users of all ages. Large play structures, baseball fields, football fields, soccer fields, hiking trails, sled hills, and swimming pools can all be part of a community park. These sites also include natural areas, emphasizing public access to important natural features. Since community parks may attract people from a wide geographic area, support facilities are required, such as parking and restrooms. Self-directed recreation activities such as meditation, quiet reflection, and wildlife watching also take place at community parks.

Community parks generally range in size from 15 to 50 acres. However, due to available land area, sites over ten acres in size can be appropriate to accommodate such activities. Community Parks are viewed as destinations and typically require travel by automobile for programmed recreation. These parks generally include adequate parking. Community Parks have a 1 to 3-mile service area and 5 – 8 acres of Community Park open space is preferred per every 1,000 people

Currently, PDLG contains two community parks (16.6% of total parks) totaling 42 acres (61.6% of all park acreage):

- Sedgwick Park – 25.0 acres
- Gordon Park – 17.0 acres

Community Park Recommended Development Guidelines:

- Size of park: 10 to 100 acres, but ideally 20 to 40 acres
- Service radius: One to three-mile radius
- Site selection: On two collector streets minimum and preferably one arterial street. If near arterial street, provide a natural or artificial barrier. A minimal number of residences abutting the site. Preference for adjacent or nearby proximity with school or other municipal use. Encourage trail linkage to other parks
- Length of stay: Two to three hours experience
- Site features: Four signature amenities at a minimum: (e.g., trails, sports fields, large shelters/ pavilions, community playground for ages 2-5 and 5-12 with some shaded elements, recreation center, pool or family aquatic center, sports courts, water feature); public restrooms with drinking fountains, ample parking, and security lighting. Amenities are ADA compliant. Multi-purpose fields are appropriate in this type of park
- Landscape design: Appropriate design to enhance the park theme/use/experience. Enhanced landscaping at park entrances and throughout the park
- Revenue facilities: One or more (e.g., picnic shelters, program pavilion, dog park)
- Land usage: 65% active and 35% passive
- User experiences: Mostly self-directed experiences but may have opportunities for leader directed programs based on available site features and community demand
- Maintenance standards: Dependent on-site features, landscape design, and park visitation

- **Signage:** Directional signage and facility/amenity regulations to enhance user experience. May include kiosks in easily identified areas of the facility
- **Parking:** Sufficient to support the amenities; occupies no more than 10% of the park. Design should include widened on-street parking area adjacent to the park. The goal is to maximize usable park space. Traffic calming devices encouraged within and next to the park.
- **Lighting:** Security lighting and lighting appropriate for signature amenities
- **Naming:** Consistent with the agency's naming policy for naming of parks, such as being named after a prominent or historic person, event, or natural landmark
- **Other:** Strong appeal to surrounding neighborhoods; integrated color scheme throughout the park; partnerships developed with support groups, schools, and other organizations; loop trail connectivity; linked to trail or recreation facility; safety design meets established CPTED standards

### *SPECIAL USE PARK*

Special use parks are those spaces that do not fall within a typical park classification. A major difference between a special use park and other parks is that they usually serve a single purpose, whereas other park classifications are designed to offer multiple recreation opportunities. A special use facility can be located inside another park.

Special use parks generally contain one facility or amenity that falls into the following categories:

**Historic/Cultural/Social Sites** – Unique local resources offering historical, educational, and cultural opportunities. Examples include memorials, historic downtown areas, commercial zones, arboretums, display gardens, and amphitheaters. Frequently these are located in a community or regional parks

**Golf Courses** – 9- and 18-hole complexes with ancillary facilities such as clubhouses, driving ranges, program space, and learning centers. These facilities are highly maintained and support a wide age level of males and females. Programs are targeted for daily



## ASSET INVENTORY *(continued)*

use play, tournaments, leagues, clinics, and special events. Operational costs come from daily play, season pass holders, concessions, driving range fees, earned income opportunities, and the sale of pro shop items.

Indoor Recreation Facilities – Specialized or single-purpose facilities. Examples include community centers, senior centers, performing arts facilities, and community theaters. Frequently these are located in a community or regional parks

Outdoor Recreation Facilities – Examples include aquatic parks, disk golf, skateboard, BMX, and dog parks, which may be located in a park

While the PDLG does not classify any of its facilities as “special use” sites within its current inventory, the Park District’s inventory includes:

- Recreation Center
- Gordon Park Concession Building

Additionally, the PDLG has 3 Activity Centers that serve as single-purpose facilities –

- Sedgwick Park Activity Building
- Gilbert Park Activity Building
- Denning Park Activity Building

Special Use Park Recommended Guidelines:

- Size of park: Depends upon facilities and activities included. The diverse character of these parks makes it difficult to apply acreage standards
- Service radius: Depends upon facilities and activities included. Typically serves special user groups while a few serve the entire population
- Site selection: Given the variety of potential uses, no specific standards are defined for site selection. As with all park types, the site itself should be located where it is appropriate for its use

- Length of stay: Varies by facility
- Site Features: Varies by facility
- Revenue facilities: Due to the nature of certain facilities, revenue may be required for construction and/or annual maintenance. This should be determined at a policy level before the facility is planned and constructed
- Land usage: Varies by facility
- User experiences: Varies by facility
- Maintenance standards: Dependent on-site features, landscape design, and park visitation
- Signage: Directional signage and facility/amenity regulations to enhance user experience
- Parking: On-street or off-street parking is provided as appropriate for the facility
- Lighting: Security lighting and lighting appropriate for the facility
- Landscape design: Appropriate design to enhance the park theme/use/experience
- Naming: Consistent with the agency's naming policy for naming of parks, such as being named after a prominent or historic person, event, or natural landmark
- Other: Integrated color scheme throughout the park; safety design meets established CPTED standards

### SCHOOL GROUNDS

By combining public agency resources, such as PDLG and School District 102, permitted use of school facilities expands the District’s recreation, social, and educational opportunities available to the community efficiently and cost-effectively. Through a partnership agreement with School District 102, PDLG uses elementary schools to provide its District led indoor before and after school program (BASE) to the community. The



## ASSET INVENTORY *(continued)*

important outcome in the joint-use relationship is that the school district and the park district benefit from shared use of facilities and land area. Depending on circumstances, school grounds often complement other community open lands. As an example, an elementary school can serve as a neighborhood park providing a playground and open space to the surrounding community during non-school hours. Similarly, a middle school or high school may serve in a number of capacities that could include athletic fields, basketball courts, etc.

Size: Variable as it depends on the function

Location: Determined by location of school district property

Site features: May include playgrounds, tennis courts, basketball courts, athletic fields, and trails

Recreation services: Mainly self-directed recreation activities. Where feasible, if athletic fields are developed on school grounds, they are oriented to youth programming. Establishing a joint-use agreement is recommended to make school ground designations work for both agencies. This is particularly important to the maintenance, liability, use, and programming of the facilities

### *FOREST PRESERVES/NATURE PRESERVES/OPEN SPACE*

Nature preserves/open spaces are undeveloped but may include natural or paved trails. Grasslands under power line corridors are one example and creek areas are another. Nature preserves/open spaces contain natural resources that can be managed for recreation and natural resource conservation values such as a desire to protect wildlife habitat, water quality, and endangered species. Nature preserves/open spaces also can provide opportunities for nature-based, self-directed, low-impact recreational opportunities such as walking and nature viewing.

These lands consist of:

- Individual sites exhibiting natural resources
- Lands that are unsuitable for development but offer natural resource potential
- Parcels with steep slopes and natural vegetation, drainage ways and ravines, man-made ponding areas, and utility easements
- Protected lands, such as wetlands/lowlands and shorelines along waterways, lakes, and ponds
- The intent of nature preserves/open space is to enhance the livability and character of a community by preserving as many of its natural amenities as possible. Integration of the human element with that of the natural environment that surrounds them enhances the overall experience.

Residents of La Grange enjoy the benefits of being able to access more than 400 acres of Cook County Forest Preserves that are in the vicinity of the Village. CCFP offers many unique nature preserves and open space parks specifically:

- Salt Creek Woods Nature Preserve,
- La Grange Park Woods,
- Possum Hollow Woods
- Twenty-Sixth Street Woods,
- Brookfield Woods, and
- Arie Crown Forest

La Grange residents enjoy the passive recreational and scenic amenities provided by the CCFP including paved or natural trails, wildlife viewing areas, mountain biking, disc golf, nature interpretation, and education facilities.

Based on the 2021 inventory, the park matrix reflects the current inventory of parks as shown on the following page.

Recreation Area Features Matrix

Parks	Acreage	Activity Meeting Room	Administrative Office	Park Maintenance Garage	Preschool	Playground	Picnic Shelter	Basketball Court	Softball Field	Baseball Field	T-Ball Field	Tennis Court	Walking Path	Sand Volleyball Court	Handball Court	Open Play Area	Ice Rink	Soccer Field	Parking Lot
Denning Park	10		x			x	x						x			x		1	1
Elm Park	2					x		3(1/2)								x			
Gilbert Park	6	x			x	x		(1/2)			2	4	x			x		1	1
Gordon Park	17					x	x		2		x		x		3	x		2	1
Waiola Park	3.5					x		1			2		x			x		1	
Sedgwick Park	25	x			x	x		2		4		4	x	3		x		3	3
Community Center	1	x				x		2								x			
Stone Park	0.5					x		(1/2)								x			
Rotary Centennial	0.5					x	x												
Spring Park	1					x	x									x			
Recreation Center	6	x	x	x	x	x													1
Meadowbrook Manor Pk.	0.45					x							x						
Park District Totals	73	4	2	1	3	12	4	9.5	2	4	5	8	6	3	3	10	0	8	7

Park District of La Grange

Park District of La Grange Amenities								
Amenity	NRPA Guidelines				Illinois Recreation Facilities Inventory (IRFI)			
	Recommended Level of Service (1 per X residents)	PDLG Existing # of Facilities	Required # of Facilities	Surplus/ (Deficit)	IRFI (state average per 1,000 pop.)	PDLG Existing # of Facilities	Required # of Facilities	Surplus/(Deficit)
<b>Outdoor Basketball</b>	1 per 5,000	7.5	3	4.5	0.2500	7.5	4	1.5
<b>Tennis</b>	1 per 2,000	8	8	0	Not available	8		
<b>Volleyball</b>	1 per 5,000	3	3	(-1)	Not available	2		
<b>Ball Fields</b>	1 per 5,000	10	3	7	0.2552	10	4	4
<b>Spray Park</b>	Not available	1			0.0292	1	1	0
<b>Football</b>	1 per 20,000	0	1	(-1)	0.0546	0	1	(-1)
<b>Soccer</b>	1 per 4,000	8	4	3	0.1779	7	3	4
<b>Swimming Pool</b>	1 per 20,000	0	1	(-1)	0.0282	0	1	1
<b>Running Track</b>	1 per 20,000	0	1	(-1)	Not available	0		
<b>Playground</b>		11			0.4035	11		
<b>Recreation Center</b>	1 per 100,000	1	0	1	Not available	1		
<b>Picnic Shelters</b>	1 per 2,000	4	8	(-4)	0.2060	4	7	(-3)
<b>Skate Park</b>	1 per 100,000	1	0	1	0.0163	1		
<b>Community Garden</b>	Not available	1	0	1	Not available	1		
<b>Trail System (miles)</b>	1 mile per 2,000	0.0	8	(-8.0)	0.163	0.0	2.6	(-2.6)

## PARK INVENTORY & ASSESSMENT

### Park District of La Grange - Parks and Facilities

An inventory of the entire PDLG parks and recreation system was completed to analyze existing parks and facilities throughout the community. The park inventory and assessments also aim to obtain a comprehensive and accurate picture of the available recreation opportunities and community connections to the residents. The system includes twelve parks and facilities comprising 78.5 acres of parkland. This on-site inventory assessed the existing conditions of each park facility as well as the overall design and ambiance.

The aerial photographs for each park are from Google Earth 2021 and the photographs prepared for each individual park inventory were taken of each site.

#### Park Evaluation Criteria

To determine an appraisal score of each park, an assessment matrix has been developed including the 20 rated factors: Curb Appeal, Pedestrian Access, Internal Access, Park Sign, Parking, Site Furnishings, Sitting Area, Shelter/Stage, Restroom, Playground, Sand Play, Ball & Play Fields, Court Play/Hard Courts, Winter Sports, Athletic Turf, Lawns, Landscaping, Paths/Trails, Natural Area, Maintenance. Each factor has been weighted with scores ranging from 1 to 3 based on its condition of below average, average, or above average. After summing up the scores and dividing by eleven, each park would have an appraisal score identifying its condition. The criteria used for evaluating parks' elements are in the matrix illustrated below.

- **Curb Appeal**

The curb appeal of a park is mainly measured by its character, such as a first impression of whether the park looks inviting and is aesthetically delightful.

- **Pedestrian Access**

Pedestrian accessibility is reviewed by the functional ability to access the park from

the surrounding neighborhoods. Generally, the Village sidewalks, crosswalks, and regional biking trails provide accessibility while single-family backyard fences reduce and control access.

- **Internal Access**

Internal accessibility is reviewed and evaluated by the functional ability to access each amenity and park facility, and if the amenity meets the latest edition of the Federal ADA guidelines.

- **Park Signs**

Park signs are assessed by their visibility, location, condition, landscaping, and whether it is consistent with the Park District of La Grange standard signage.

- **Parking**

Parking is reviewed and evaluated by on-street and off-street parking availability, quantity, existing surface and striping condition, and ADA stalls availability.

- **Site Furnishings**

Site furnishings include benches, picnic table, bike racks, trash receptacles, drinking fountains, and other similar elements, which are appraised by quality, quantity, existing condition, and use of consistent style and brand.

- **Sitting Areas**

Sitting areas are evaluated according to the existing condition, quantity of benches and picnic tables relative to the park size and classification, shade availability, accessibility, locations related to other amenities.

- **Shelters/Pavilions**

Shelters or pavilions are assessed based on the existing condition, quantity related to the park size and classification, and accessibility to park paths and other amenities.

- **Restrooms**  
Both portable and permanent restrooms are reviewed by their condition, quantity relative to the park size and classification, accessibility, and location to other amenities.
  - **Playgrounds**  
Playgrounds are evaluated based on a variety of components including the overall condition, appearance, and diversity of equipment, surfacing condition, type and quality of play area border, shade availability, and whether the playground meets ADA accessibility guidelines. The playground evaluation also considers the design/composition of the play area and its contextual surrounding.
  - **Sand Play**  
Sand play areas are reviewed by the condition, quality, accessibility, and shade availability.
  - **Ball & Play Fields**  
Ball & play fields include baseball/softball, soccer, and football fields, which are evaluated by quantity, field condition, infield erosion, fencing/backstops material and condition, team bench condition, spectator seating condition and accessibility, shade availability, quality of weed control, overall turf condition, irrigation, and lighting.
  - **Court Play / Hard Courts**  
Hard Courts include basketball, tennis, pickleball, volleyball, bocci, and shuffleboard courts, as well as a skate park and in-line skate/rollerblade areas, which are assessed by quantity, surface condition, fencing condition, equipment quality, seating availability, and accessibility to the courts. The tennis court evaluation also looks at such things as net adjustability, play backdrop, and lighting, when available.
  - **Winter Sports**  
Winter sports areas include free outdoor skating, hockey, toboggan, and sledding areas, which are reviewed by quantity, surface, and facing condition, accessibility, and lighting.
  - **Athletic Turf**  
Athletic turf is reviewed by type and condition.
  - **Lawns**  
Lawns are evaluated by weed control, maintenance, general condition considering barren areas, and irrigation. This evaluation covers only the non-athletic field areas of the parks and facilities where lawns provide open space for active or passive recreation.
  - **Landscaping**  
Landscaping reviews are based on the quality, quantity, and diversity of plants, seasonal interest, shade provided, and appropriate scale to the surroundings.
  - **Paths/Trails**  
Path or trails include pedestrian, bicycle, and regional trails which are reviewed by condition, connection, signage, and accessibility.
  - **Natural Areas/Conservation Areas**  
Natural areas/conservation areas are reviewed by plant materials, quality, quantity, and variety.
  - **Maintenance**  
The general maintenance of the park facility is evaluated by the standard maintenance practices used within the park impacting the park's aesthetic and physical health condition.
- The ratings developed during the inventory and assessment of each park and facility serve as the basis for the capital improvement recommendations presented later in this report.

# 1. Gilbert Park

Site Address: N Gilbert Ave & 41<sup>st</sup> St.

Total Area: 6.0 Acres

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Acquired/Built:

Playground Installed: 1997

2.2



## CONDITION ASSESSMENT:

	3 Above Average	2 Average	1 Below Average
Curb Appeal	•		
Pedestrian Access		•	
Internal Access	•		
Park Sign	•		
Parking		•	
Site Furnishings		•	
Sitting Area		•	
Shelter / Stage			•
Restroom		•	
Playground		•	
Sand Play			
Ball & Play Fields		•	
Court Play/Hard Courts			•
Winter Sports		•	
Athletic Turf	•		
Lawns	•		
Landscaping	•		
Paths/Trails		•	
Natural Area			
Maintenance		•	

## GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- Park offers diverse recreation amenities to the community.
- Park is bordered by single family homes that face the park on the west side of Gilbert Ave. and partially bordered by residences of similar housing stock along eastern perimeter of the park at Elder Lane and W. 41st Street to the north.
- The park site is highly popular, and well-used.
- Pedestrian access to the park is very good. There are Village sidewalks that link with the internal asphalt path to provide continuous circulation to and internally within the park.
- Park is very well maintained – great curb appeal
- The park consists of a variety of mature deciduous shade trees and evergreen trees that provide good shade canopy for many of the recreation amenities within the park.
- Playground area is centrally located within the park. Given the park site's size and shape, the playground area is a good walking distance from the parking lot and the District Activity/Preschool Building
- Lacks play equipment that will stimulate the varied senses of the children and park patrons.

- Lacks sufficient site furniture and quality furnishings for care givers.

### ON-SITE PARKING LOTS

- Off-street dedicated parking lot – 1 total ADA parking total – 9 standard parking stalls total located at north end of park site.
- Parking lot located in close proximity to the District Activity/Preschool Building
- Vehicular lot paving needs to be re-sealed and restriped.
- Needs ADA parking striping repainted on pavement.
- Needs to have updated ADA signage with appropriate fine amount.
- Wooden perimeter bollards serve as car stops. All of the existing bollards appear to have been hit and damaged by parked cars leaving an unsightly appearance to the parking lot – vertical inconsistencies from vehicular damage.



### HARDCOURT PAVING AREA

- Hopscotch and other paving graphics have faded and appear to reflect years of neglect.
- Wooden benches appear to have moss/mold growing on them, serving as a visual deterrent to park users.
- Wooden benches located in turf area make it difficult to maintain turf/weeds at the base of the benches. Additionally, there is one bench that is impacted by an overgrown shrub making it impossible to access the bench.
- Hardcourt paving area consists of 2 shuffleboard courts



### TENNIS COURTS

- Surfacing has severe cracks.
- Sports lighting at courts activated by push button.
- Courts show areas of standing water –
- Courts do not meet current ADA Accessibility Guidelines. Access from 2 opposite sides of the courts is required.
- Surfacing displays signs of mildew on the surface at the court's perimeter
- Practice wall appears to be in good condition.



### WALKING PATH (Internal/External Circulation)

- Lighted asphalt path makes a complete loop around the park connecting the various park amenities such as the basketball court, playground



- area, tennis courts, etc.
- 5' wide trails - good surface condition.
- Asphalt paving – good condition.

### PARK SIGN

- Good condition.

### SITE FURNISHINGS

- Preformed concrete checkerboard table with seats do not have an accessible route leading to them.
- Shelter Structure
  - Brick Columns appear massive in size compared to roof structure
  - Very narrow under roof area making it challenging to support picnic tables and bench seating.
- District Activity/Preschool Building – good proximity to parking lot.



### BASKETBALL COURT

- Single court – small half-court (approx. 27' x 30')
- Surface needs to be re-sealed. No color coated surfacing
- No accessible path/walkway to basketball court
- Location in close proximity to playground – needs physical, visual, and noise buffer to the playground south of basketball court.
- Basketball standard oriented west resulting in all overshoots to impact the walking path. Consider relocating/reorienting basketball standard to alleviate this problem.



### BALLFIELDS

- Includes 2 Little League ballfields (Yelnick Field & Burson Field)
  - 3 panel backstop – painted supports with black vinyl fabric
  - No accessible route to playing fields
  - No protective ballfield fencing or player areas
  - No spectator seating areas
- Ballfield mix – mix/well maintained.



### SOCCER FIELDS

- 1 large field with 2 goal posts (north-south direction). When necessary, the field is converted into 2 small soccer fields.
- Excellent turf structure.
- Field is very well maintained and in good condition.



### APPARATUS AREA

- 2 separate areas.
- Apparatus composite structure Ages 2-5 and 5-12 – Manufacturer: Landscape Structures have



exceeded their useful life and needs replacement. Installed in or around 1997. The apparatus equipment needs to be replaced.

- Independent play pieces.
- EWF Safety Surfacing – weeds were evident within the safety surfacing.
- No permanent play surface barrier/containment curb – Recycled plastic tuff timber.
- Lacks caregiver/park patron bench seating areas.
- Lacks design and cohesiveness.

### LANDSCAPING

- Includes a variety of well-established deciduous shade trees, ornamental trees, and evergreen trees within the park.
- The existing mature deciduous trees provide heavy tree cover offering good shade during the summer months to the various recreation amenities in the park.
- Damaged and unhealthy trees need to be removed.
- Additional understory trees should be installed to benefit the aesthetics of the park while at the same time as the older trees become more vulnerable and die, the younger trees have already taken hold and established themselves within the environment.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Consider developing a master plan that reconfigures the parking lot area by removing the wooden perimeter bollards and providing an identifiable safe drop-off location for preschool attendees. A brick paved drop-off area could be provided using permeable pavers to provide a more inviting environment and sense of arrival to the preschool. This sustainable solution would also provide an educational opportunity, introducing best management practices to preschool age park patrons.

- The reconfigured parking lot would be designed with a concrete curb perimeter that consists of curb openings that allow for surface runoff to a designated stormwater structure.
- Provide ADA accessible paths to basketball court, apparatus area and ballfield backstop areas.
- Repair, resurface, and color coat existing tennis court surface. Modify existing fencing to include ADA required double access.
- Consider partnering with “Kid’s Around the World” or other like organizations that take playground equipment set to be removed, refurbish the equipment, and reinstall in communities with impoverished, vulnerable, and/or orphaned populations. Replace with play equipment that stimulates the varied senses of the children and playground users.
- Consider developing a master plan for the apparatus area that takes into account the location of the existing mature trees in the area and provides a central gathering space with quality furnishings such as picnic tables, benches etc. for care givers and playground users.
- Consider locating a porta-potty in the vicinity of the playground enclosed by a permanent screen constructed of materials that complement the aesthetics of the park.
- Reorient the basketball standard to eliminate overshoots impacting the walking path. Create landforms with shrubs and ornamental vegetation to act as a visual and noise buffer from the basketball court to the playground.

## 2. Elm Park

Site Address: 100 S Brainard Ave

Total Area: 2.0 Acres

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Acquired/Built: 1994/2004

Playground Installed: 1998/2013

# 2.2



### CONDITION ASSESSMENT:

	3 Above Average	2 Average	1 Below Average
Curb Appeal	•		
Pedestrian Access		•	
Internal Access		•	
Park Sign	•		
Parking		•	
Site Furnishings		•	
Sitting Area			
Shelter / Stage			
Restroom			
Playground		•	
Sand Play			
Ball & Play Fields			
Court Play/Hard Courts			•
Winter Sports			
Athletic Turf			
Lawns		•	
Landscaping	•		
Paths/Trails	•		
Natural Area			
Maintenance		•	

### GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- The park is well integrated within the surrounding neighborhood
- Appears to have been professionally designed
- Park is very well maintained and has great curb appeal
- Playground has two traditional structures in fair condition – Evidence of wear and tear from high use.
- Playground area is centrally located within the park.
- Lacks play equipment that stimulates the varied senses of the children and park patrons (color, activity panels, etc.)
- Lacks sufficient accessible site furniture and quality furnishings i.e., bike racks, benches, kiosk, etc. for park patrons
- The park has a secondary access off Brainard Ave.

### PARKING

- On street parking - permissible but viewed as a true “neighborhood park” seeking park patrons living within walking distance of the facility.

## WALKING PATH/INTERNAL CIRCULATION

- Concrete walking path creating a strong axis through the playground area.
- Leading into and through the park consists of uneven surfaces and exemplifying cracks throughout indicating that since this path was installed in 1990, there has been some settlement in the base and should be replaced to better accommodate general park access and park patrons with disabilities.

## APPARATUS AREAS

- Playground area (2-5 yrs. and 5-12 yrs.)
  - Play surface is engineered wood fiber
  - Play area has one inaccessible entrance
  - Play value of park in general is good.
  - Includes concrete border edge to define the play area and contain the safety surface.
  - Play area has two accessible entry points from barrier curb into play area.
  - Play surface is EWF – weeds evident in a couple locations within the play area.
- Play Equipment – Manufacturer: Landscape Structures
  - Traditional style apparatus equipment nearing the end of its useful life. Play equipment installed in 2006
  - 3 bay single post swing set – 4belts/2buckets.
  - 3 independent play spring toys – evidence of ultraviolet (UV) environmental weathering.
  - Ruts evident beneath swing area

## BASKETBALL COURT

- Shoot-around court – the court surface is in poor condition showing a couple of cracks and paint chipping on the court surface.
- Standing water stain evidence of court surface low spots in need of repair
- Inaccessible bench seating provided for park patrons waiting their turn to access the court or observe court play.

## SITE FURNISHINGS

- Recycled plastic benches placed in and around the play area on paved surface.
- 1 Bench dedicated as memorial bench to local resident.





### PARK SIGN

- No landscape plantings surrounding the park sign: Landscape plantings at the base of the park sign would better ground the sign.
- Park entry on Elm Street is signified by wooden bollard and chain rope on one side of the access path.

### SLED HILL

- Unique park amenity
- Highly used area shows signs of wear and tear – cow path and rutting evidence amenity’s popularity



### TURF & VEGETATION

- Nadine Troy Memorial Garden area - well designed garden space in need of attention and maintenance.
- Site appears to be well landscaped – however, landscape plantings appear to be overgrown and need to be trimmed or replaced with lower material.
- Open lawn area appears to be well maintained.
- Dense arborvitae hedge provides good screen of playground area from adjacent residences.
- Overall curb appeal is decent.
- Site appears to drain well



### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Update playground equipment and include “themed” play layout. Replace, expand, and diversify “themed” playground equipment to meet the needs of the young neighborhood demographic
- Add deciduous low growing shrubs, groundcovers or perennial plantings at the park sign and Elm Avenue entrance for better visibility and seasonal interest.
- Repair and repave circular basketball court. Include accessible walkway at court’s perimeter with bench seating.
- Unify bench seating throughout the park
- Pave accessible path and aprons to all benches
- Improve turf conditions on sled hill





### 3. Stone Park

Site Address: 10 N. Stone Ave

Total Area: 0.5 Acre

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Acquired/Built: 1994/2004

Playground Installed: 1995

2.0



#### CONDITION ASSESSMENT:

	3 Above Average	2 Average	1 Below Average
Curb Appeal		•	
Pedestrian Access		•	
Internal Access			•
Park Sign	•		
Parking		•	
Site Furnishings		•	
Sitting Area		•	
Shelter / Stage			
Restroom			
Playground		•	
Sand Play			
Ball & Play Fields			
Court Play/Hard Courts			•
Winter Sports			
Athletic Turf			
Lawns		•	
Landscaping	•		
Paths/Trails			
Natural Area			
Maintenance	•		

#### GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- The park is well integrated within the neighborhood located at the end of a cul-de-sac
- Contextual observation – neighboring houses overlook the park
- Park is well maintained
- Playground has one traditional structure in Fair condition – does not meet current ADA accessible standards
- Playground area is centrally located within the park
- Lacks play equipment that stimulates the varied senses of the children and park patrons (color, activity panels, etc.)
- Lacks sufficient accessible site furniture and quality furnishings i.e., bike racks, benches, kiosk, etc. for park patrons
- In need of landscaping at entrance to provide color and texture for greater curb appeal
- Site lighting consists of a precast concrete tapered pole with a cobra head light fixture attached which is not in-scale with the park site

## PARKING

- On street parking - permissible but viewed as a true “neighborhood pocket park” catering to neighboring park patrons living within walking distance of the facility.

## WALKING PATH/INTERNAL CIRCULATION

- No paved access path leading into and through the park to accommodate general park access and park patrons with disabilities.

## APPARATUS AREA

- Playground area (5-12 area) composite structure
  - Includes recycled plastic border curb (plastic border is in good condition)
  - Play surface is EWF- EWF allowed to spill out into turf area to signify entrance to the apparatus area resulting in questionable safety surface depth.
  - Play area does not have a paved accessible route to it – playground only accessible by walking through the turfgrass.
  - Play value of park in general – moderate
  - No apparatus play equipment designed for play area users 2-5 years of age
- Play Equipment – Manufacturer: Gametime
  - Traditional style apparatus equipment has far exceeded its useful life. Play equipment installed in 1995
  - 2 bay single post swing set – 2belts/1bucket and 1 accessible tot seat
  - Ruts evident beneath swing area

## SITE FURNISHINGS

- Benches are set just outside the perimeter barrier curb of the apparatus area and are only accessible by walking through the apparatus area on the EWF play surface.
- Bench supports are located in turf area just outside the perimeter barrier curb making regular maintenance and mowing challenging – benches in good condition.
- Litter receptacles are located within turf areas making maintenance difficult. Litter receptacles in good condition
- Picnic tables not located in shade and do not have a paved accessible route to them.





#### BASKETBALL PAD

- Pad is approximately 18 ft. x 30 ft. and has a non-color coated surface
- Pad is not accessible by a paved walking surface
- Basketball standards footing has leaning heaved/standard posts and should be repositioned
- Surface condition consists of cracks and needs resurfacing

#### PARK SIGN

- The existing sign is void of landscaping creating an unsightly "bare" area for park patrons. Landscape plantings should be installed at the base of the sign to better ground the sign while enhancing the curb appeal of the park.

#### TURF & VEGETATION

- Site consists of mature trees in place before the park's existence as well as recent infill trees installed over time.
- Overall curb appeal is decent.
- Site appears to drain well

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Consider developing a master plan for the apparatus area that takes into account the location of the existing mature trees and provides a central gathering space with quality furnishings such as picnic tables, benches etc. for care givers and playground users.
- Consider locating a porta-potty in the vicinity of



the playground enclosed by a permanent screen constructed of materials that complement the aesthetics of the park.

- Update playground equipment and include “themed” play layout. Replace, expand, and diversify with “themed” playground equipment to meet the needs of the young neighborhood demographic
- New playground area to be contained by a more aesthetic permanent material - concrete barrier curb
- Consider providing a drinking fountain near the playground
- Consider installing an ornamental gazebo style pavilion with asphalt shingles to provide covered shade seating for caregivers as well as enhance the character of the park
- Add deciduous low growing shrubs, groundcover, and perennial landscaping at the park sign for visual and seasonal interest.
- Add perimeter landscaping to control views from within the park looking south onto the adjacent parking lot.
- Reset basketball standard and resurface and color coat basketball court
- Replace the cobra head light fixtures/pole with a couple lower profile ornamental poles with decorative controlled light fixtures.



# 4. Community Center Park

Site Address: 200 South Washington Avenue

Total Area: 1.0 Acre

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Acquired/Built: 1994/2004

Playground Installed: 2018

1.7



### CONDITION ASSESSMENT:

	3 Above Average	2 Average	1 Below Average
Curb Appeal			•
Pedestrian Access		•	
Internal Access			•
Park Sign		•	
Parking		•	
Site Furnishings		•	
Sitting Area		•	
Shelter / Stage			
Restroom			
Playground		•	
Sand Play			
Ball & Play Fields			
Court Play/Hard Courts			•
Winter Sports			
Athletic Turf			
Lawns		•	
Landscaping		•	
Paths/Trails			
Natural Area			
Maintenance		•	

### GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- The park is well integrated within the neighborhood.
- Contextual observation – neighboring houses overlook the park on Washington Ave.
- The park contains 2 full court basketball courts, picnic table and playground equipment.
- Park appears to get significant neighborhood use.
- Park needs upgrading to enhance the curb appeal and play value of the park
- Playground has one traditional structure in good condition – recently installed and upgraded in 2018-2019.
- Playground area is located adjacent to the Community Center Activity Building.
- Lacks sufficient accessible site furniture and quality furnishings i.e., bike racks, benches, kiosk, etc. for park patrons
- In need of landscaping at entrance to provide color and texture for greater curb appeal.
- Site lighting consists of a precast concrete tapered pole with a cobra head light fixture attached which is not in-scale with the park site.

## PARKING

- On street parking - permissible but viewed as a true “neighborhood mini park” catering to the immediate local community living within walking distance of the facility.
- No ADA parking stall is provided at Washington Ave. although an ADA access walk exists at the paved entrance to the basketball courts.

## WALKING PATH/INTERNAL CIRCULATION

- Playground access through use of existing asphalt activity area – asphalt surface in need of replacement to better accommodate general park access and park patrons with disabilities.

## APPARATUS AREA

- Playground area (2-12 yrs. area) composite Game Time structure recently installed
  - Includes recycled plastic border curb (plastic border is in good condition) Plastic border curb meets the Village R.O.W. walk. There is no buffer zone or set back area from the property line to the activity area.
  - Play surface is EWF- EWF allowed to spill out into turf area to signify entrance to the apparatus area resulting in questionable safety surface depth.
  - Play area does not have a paved accessible route from adjacent basketball courts. Playground only accessible from the courts by walking through the turfgrass.
  - Play value of park in general – moderate
  - Three bay swing set – 4belts/1bucket and 1 accessible tot seat.
  - Ruts evident beneath swing area
  - Fairly good shade covers the playground area due to the size and age of surrounding trees.

## SITE FURNISHINGS

- Picnic table is set just inside the perimeter barrier curb of the apparatus area only accessible by walking through the apparatus area on the EWF play surface.





### BASKETBALL COURT

- Two full-court lighted basketball courts exist within the park
- Court surfacing needs replacing. Surface condition consists of cracks throughout the court and needs resurfacing
- Perimeter fencing surrounding the 3 sides of the basketball courts is in decent condition
- The courts have an eastern access entrance within the perimeter fence line off the adjacent alleyway. Access from this alleyway needs to be reconsidered. The Park District should consider closing this access to eliminate neighborhood trespass/cut through issues.
- The existing 5-row bleachers overlooking the basketball court do not have the required protective barrier fence post and fabric.

### PARK SIGN

- No traditional park identity sign consistent with the other District parks exists.

### TURF & VEGETATION

- Site consists of mature trees providing good shade opportunities within the site.
- Overall curb appeal is low.
- The turf areas of the site exhibit moderate amount of weeds and clover.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Consider developing a master plan for the apparatus area to provide a more permanent border containment curb (concrete) while taking into account the location of the existing mature trees in the area as well as provide a paved accessible play area entrance for care givers and playground users (*This may require regrading and the building up of the earth surrounding the playground as well as the removal of some asphalt paving south of the playground*).
- Consider developing a secondary accessible entrance from the playground to the basketball courts. This access route could meander around or through an earthen berm(s) within the open turf area to add 3-dimensional interest within the park and/or access by way of a simulated bridge crossing over a depressed rain garden that could also be used as an educational interpretive demonstration area.
- Consider installing a park sign that matches other



District park facilities to promote District branding. Add deciduous low growing shrubs, groundcover, and perennial landscaping at the park sign for visual and seasonal interest.

- Consider saw cutting and removing approx. 5' of basketball surface at the courts along Washington Ave. Add low perimeter landscaping to control views from within the park and into the park while enhancing curb appeal for the neighborhood.
- Replace existing basketball standards and resurface and color coat 2 new basketball courts – provide park benches for patrons/park users adjacent to the courts.
- Consider replacing the 5 ft. black chain link fence along Washington Ave. (west side of park) with a lower profile ornamental fence – 4 ft. black ornamental fence flanked by low profile landscaping.
- Consider replacing the existing 6 ft. chain link fencing along the north and east side of the park with 6 ft. height board-on-board fence to control views from within the park.
- Coordinate with the Village to provide designated and striped ADA parking stalls at two locations along Washington Ave. – north at the basketball courts and south for access to the playground area and the Community Center Activity Building.
- Replace the cobra head light fixtures/pole with a couple lower profile ornamental poles with decorative controlled light fixtures.



# 5. Denning Park

Site Address: 4903 S. Gilbert Avenue

Total Area: 12.0 Acres

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Acquired/Built: 1994/2004

Playground Installed: 2011

2.4



### CONDITION ASSESSMENT:

	3 Above Average	2 Average	1 Below Average
Curb Appeal	•		
Pedestrian Access		•	
Internal Access	•		
Park Sign		•	
Parking		•	
Site Furnishings		•	
Sitting Area	•		
Shelter / Stage		•	
Restroom		•	
Playground	•		
Sand Play			
Ball & Play Fields			
Court Play/Hard Courts		•	
Winter Sports			
Athletic Turf			
Lawns		•	
Landscaping		•	
Paths/Trails	•		
Natural Area			
Maintenance	•		

### GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- Site once served as home to the Park District administrative offices. Presently, the existing building is leased to the LeaderShop a local non-profit organization which empowers youth to become community-minded individuals through diverse programs that foster confidence, knowledge, and leadership.
- Park is very well maintained
- Playground area is located in close proximity to the onsite parking lot and the large reservable shelter pavilion.

### ON-SITE PARKING LOT

- Off-street dedicated parking lot – 59 parking stalls with 3 ADA accessible parking stalls.
- Parking lot includes a vehicular drop off for patrons using the building facility.
- Parking lot located parallel to the west property line and with two entrances onto and off Gilbert Ave.
- 2 ADA parking stalls adjacent to the vehicular drop off need compliant curb cuts with ADA ramps along the east curb line for immediate access to the walkway. The addition of 2 ADA compliant curb cuts with ADA ramps would eliminate the need to walk down a non-striped parking aisle into the

vehicular drop off to access the only ADA ramp along the east curb.

- The concrete paving surrounding the vehicular drop off area including the double access concrete pathway that leads to what was the former Park Administration building appears to be too much. Concrete in this area should be reduced and softened with landscaped planting areas and a realigned walkway that directs visitors to Denning Park toward the apparatus area or the other recreation elements south of the park.
- In need of pavement re-seal and restriping
- Needs ADA parking striping repainted on pavement.
- Needs to have updated ADA signage with appropriate fine amount.

### PLAYGROUND / APPARATUS AREA

- Recently replaced in 2011. The apparatus is manufactured by Gametime and is in very good condition
- The playground features a tree-house themed modular structure for ages 2-12 years, a boulder independent play piece, chain net climber, cantilevered tot swing structure, 2 belt swing options, and more
- The playground offers physical, social, and sensory play elements for visitors.
- Colorful Cast-in-Place (CIP) Safety Surfacing makes the entire play area ADA accessible. The CIP surface not only provides resiliency, but also becomes part of the play experience. The CIP surfacing makes the playground one of two most inclusive, accessible playground in the district.
- Play area needs more covered bench seating areas.

### WALKING PATH (INTERNAL/EXTERNAL CIRCULATION)

- Lighted concrete path makes a complete loop around the park connecting the various park amenities such as the basketball court, playground area, etc.
- 5' wide trails - good surface condition
- Concrete paving - good condition.

### PARK SIGN

- Good condition





### SITE FURNISHINGS

- Inconsistent site furnishing styles and materials
  - Mix of metal and plastic trash barrels, and period style metal benches
- Shelter Structure/Pavilion
  - The park also features a large pavilion structure to allow the District to host special events, rentals, and other family-friendly inter-generational opportunities for residents to enjoy the facilities

### BASKETBALL COURT

- Full court – double-standard hardcourt beginning to show wear after 10 years
- Court surfacing needs to be power washed
- Courts need covered seating areas for spectators or patrons waiting their turn

### SOCCER FIELD

- One small micro soccer field (north-south direction)
- Turf appears to be very well maintained and in good condition.



### COMMUNITY GARDEN

- Unique to the district is an unfenced community garden for residents or groups who wish to become involved in the practice of community gardening.

### DRAINAGE DITCH (South end of park)

- Recently regraded and mostly turfed.
- The ditch feeds water from Gilbert Avenue into a detention pond.



### LANDSCAPING

- Includes well-established deciduous shade trees, ornamental trees and evergreen trees around the park.
- The existing mature deciduous trees provide heavy tree cover offering good shade during the summer months
- As these mature trees stress and die, park staff to assess condition and health and remove dead trees when required.
- Additional understory trees benefit the aesthetics of the park. As the older trees become more vulnerable and die, the younger trees have already taken hold and established themselves within the environment.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Repair and reseal parking lot. Redesign and reconfigure the existing concrete area at the vehicular drop off in the parking lot to redirect park traffic and accommodate two new ADA ramps.
- Move DA porta-potty away from park entrance. Consider relocating the porta-potty north in the vicinity of the playground and the shelter pavilion taking into account maintenance and servicing from the parking lot. Construct a permanent screen enclosure using materials that complement the aesthetics of the park.
- Consider the addition of native plants within the drainage ditch creating a “pollinator prairie” and rain garden in and around the ditch to address resident focus on green sustainable elements in the community and the site’s conservation efforts. The development of a pollinator prairie area and rain garden area within the park area will reduce the District’s grounds maintenance costs while at the same time yield significant environmental benefits to the residents.
- Remove dead trees and add more understory deciduous trees throughout the site and specifically in the vicinity of the existing large canopy trees
- Consider developing a master plan for the community garden area that considers such factors as age-appropriate design, ADA accessibility, protection from vandalism and animals, storage of tools, water service, and a paved gathering space at the north end of the parking lot creating a sense of place and arrival for the garden. The plan should also incorporate sustainable gardening techniques such as using native plants, composting, mulching, applying an integrated pest management approach, creating a habitat for wildlife. Add trash receptacles at appropriate locations where they will not conflict with the aesthetic of the garden.



# 6. Gordon Park

Site Address: Tilden Ave & Ogden Ave

Total Area: 17 Acres

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Acquired/Built: 1994/2004

Playground Installed: 2014

2.2



### CONDITION ASSESSMENT:

	3 Above Average	2 Average	1 Below Average
Curb Appeal		•	
Pedestrian Access		•	
Internal Access	•		
Park Sign			
Parking		•	
Site Furnishings		•	
Sitting Area		•	
Shelter / Stage	•		
Restroom			
Playground	•		
Sand Play			
Ball & Play Fields		•	
Court Play/Hard Courts			
Winter Sports	•		
Athletic Turf			•
Lawns		•	
Landscaping		•	
Paths/Trails	•		
Natural Area		•	
Maintenance		•	

### GENERAL OBSERVATION

- Park offers diverse recreation amenities to the community.
- One of two “sports parks” within the park system
- The park site is highly popular with many unique park features including concrete hand-ball courts.
- Park is very well maintained – great curb appeal
- Site features new and high-end amenities including shelter pavilion, a splash pad, skate spot, multi-use path, fitness stations, community performance area, a butterfly garden, and interpretive signs.
- The park appears to be void of mature trees to offer shade to the park amenities.
- Park has unfinished feel even though the park fills the need of the community.

### ON-SITE PARKING LOT

- Off-street dedicated parking lot – Owned by the Village of La Grange and adjacent to Uptown La Grange residential apartment community. Additionally, the park site has a secondary off-street parking area at east side of park used primarily by ballfield patrons.
- Parking lot in close proximity to the reservable shelter pavilion and washroom/storage building.

- Maintenance access cantilever gate unhinged from its structural support post.

### WALKING PATH (INTERNAL/EXTERNAL CIRCULATION)

- Lighted asphalt path makes a complete loop internally in the park connecting the various park amenities such as the playground area, splash pad, ballfields, soccer fields fitness stations, etc.
- 8' wide asphalt walking path - good surface condition

### SITE FURNISHINGS

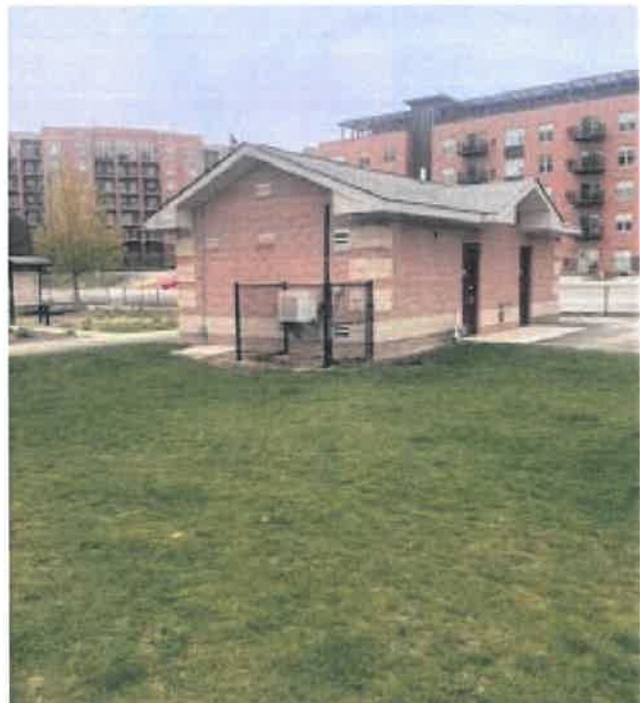
- Shelter Pavilion
  - Reservable shelter with picnic tables newly installed
  - Includes electrical
  - Close proximity to parking lot and washroom facility
- Amphitheater Performance Band Stand
  - Newly installed - excellent condition
  - Located near Tilden Ave – potential to distract and affect audio performances.
- Bench Seating
  - More accessible bench seating needed throughout the park

### BALLFIELDS

- Includes 2 ballfields generally in good condition
- Well defined fields
- Fencing – Ballfield fencing and backstops are in fair to decent condition. The fence is a black vinyl coated chain link fence and the fabric is mostly level and strait. However, there are areas showing abuse by park patrons including areas where the fence posts have heaved.
- Ballfield mix – The skinned infield mix is generally well maintained. There are a few areas where loose soil from the skinned areas has begun to build up at the circled edge creating a “lip” which will need to be addressed so these areas will not hold water.
- Spectator bleachers are structurally good, but are old, dated, and need to be replaced. They are not inviting and are inaccessible.

### SOCCER FIELDS

- Two large fields with 2 goal posts (north-south direction). When required, the field can be converted into 2 small soccer fields.
- One micro field with 2 goal posts (east-west direction)





- Field turf condition needs to be improved

### PLAY AREA, SPLASH PAD & SKATE SPOT

- Play equipment, splash pad, skate spot and fitness equipment funded in part by IDNR's OSLAD grant program
- Playground
  - Professionally designed play area
  - Brightly colored apparatus handicap accessible composite structure for ages 2-12 ---Manufacturer: Gametime. Recently updated and installed on cast-in-place rubber surfacing.
  - 3 bay swing set – 4 belt/1 bucket/ 1 accessible seat
  - Very well maintained - good condition
- Splash Pad
  - Gated (controlled) entry with black ornamental fence surrounding the splash pad.
  - Ornamental fence surrounding splash pad consists of vertical members that presents a potential clothing entanglement hazard. Install flexible tubing to act as fence cap or replace fence with ornamental style that has solid horizontal fence frame top.
  - Consists of in-ground sprays, one hand activation tower, and 4 above ground spraying features
  - Splash pad concrete surface in good condition, displays little if any interest when spray feature is not in use.
  - Brightly colored metal framed tensile canopy provides shade to many splash pad user and care givers
- Skate Spot
  - Consists of 2 quarter ramps, grind box and flat rail grind bar
  - Not designed for the aggressive inline skater
- Fitness Stations
  - Five newly installed accessible fitness stations set on concrete – good condition

### BUTTERFLY GARDEN & LANDSCAPING

- Garden funded in part by IDNR's OSLAD grant program
- Needs regular weeding and attention

- Garden needs more nectar source plants. Butterflies prefer to feed on open, tube-shape flowers such as coneflowers and milkweed plants.
- Not many shade trees present on the site. Site could benefit from the addition of large deciduous shade trees and ornamental vegetation to provide shade to park users as well as improve the aesthetics of the park.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Consider planting additional shade trees throughout the park in the vicinity of the playground area and in appropriate places along the walking path and creating a small gateway off the primary parking lot entry to collectively give the park a more finished feel.
- Address maintenance issues in soccer field turf areas. Continue to maintain the soccer fields and monitor turf quality and drainage to ensure continued use of these fields for both practices and games. To overcome the issue of “wear and tear” on the soccer fields, the Park District should consider exploring an artificial turf option. There are currently 3 full size soccer fields at Lyons Township High School (limited public access). The District should explore an intergovernmental agreement with Lyons Township to extend and accommodate the District’s growing soccer program.
- The site consists of several bare areas in need of shrub plantings and evergreen trees to provide buffer or screen surface grade utilities or infrastructure on the site in the vicinity of the splash pad.
- Repair maintenance access cantilever gate that has come unhinged from its structural support post.
- Consider the addition of coneflower, milkweed, and other open, tube-shape flowers within the butterfly garden. Develop a regular fertilizing regiment to produce maximum growth and flower production



# 7. Meadowbrook Manor Park

Site Address: 339 9th Ave

Total Area: 0.45 Acres

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Acquired/Built: 1994/2004

Playground Installed: 2017

2.5



## CONDITION ASSESSMENT:

	3 Above Average	2 Average	1 Below Average
Curb Appeal	•		
Pedestrian Access			•
Internal Access	•		
Park Sign			
Parking		•	
Site Furnishings	•		
Sitting Area		•	
Shelter / Stage			
Restroom			
Playground	•		
Sand Play			
Ball & Play Fields			
Court Play/Hard Courts			
Winter Sports			
Athletic Turf			
Lawns		•	
Landscaping	•		
Paths/Trails			
Natural Area			
Maintenance	•		

## GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- Park is unique mini park in PDLG system that provides active recreation in the form of a playground and open space but has a feel of a passive park with seating.
- Located on the Meadowbrook Manor Senior Living & Rehabilitation facility's property.
- Contextual observation – Park provides an active and passive place that can be enjoyed by facility residents, its workers, as well as neighboring residents.
- Park is very well maintained
- Playground has a traditional play structure in good condition
- Playground area is centrally located within the park in conjunction with the Meadowbrook Manor facility's main entrance.

## PARKING

- Parking is available only on the residential neighboring streets and through an agreement for the use of the facility's parking lot south of the property.
- On street parking - permissible but viewed as a Senior Living & Rehabilitation facility site with a recreation component.

## WALKING PATH/INTERNAL CIRCULATION

- Concrete paved Village walk path leading up to and along the side of the park consists of uneven surfaces and undermining - areas of erosion affecting the curb appeal and image of the park site.
- Primary access to the park area of the property is achieved via concrete stairs
- The internal serpentine concrete walk adjacent to the playground area is in great condition. *(a plastic border containment curb parallels and abuts the serpentine walk serving as the playground border)*



## APPARATUS AREAS

- Playground area (2-12 area)
  - Includes recycled plastic border curb (plastic border is in good condition)
  - Play surface is EWF
  - Play area has one inaccessible entrance
  - Play value of park in general is good.
- Play Equipment – Manufacturer: Landscape Structures
  - Traditional style apparatus equipment installed in 2017.
  - Single arched accessible contemporary-style “Oodle” swing set – 1 accessible seat.
  - Ruts evident beneath swing area



## SITE FURNISHINGS

- Bench set outside playground area in turf – good condition.



## PARK SIGN

- Signage identifying the Ppark site and agency is needed for visitors driving down the street looking for the park.

## TURF & VEGETATION

- Site appears to be well landscaped with mature trees in place before the park's existence.
- A perimeter deciduous shrub hedge exists around the site providing a green screen to the playground area.
- Overall curb appeal is good.
- Site appears to drain well



## RECOMMENDATIONS

- No repairs or improvements are needed within the playground area at this time. Note: The PDLG is responsible for the playground area and apparatus components only.

# 8. Rotary Centennial Park

Site Address: 114 Sawyer Ave

Total Area: 0.3 Acre

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Acquired/Built: 1994/2004

Playground Installed: 2006

1.9



## CONDITION ASSESSMENT:

	3 Above Average	2 Average	1 Below Average
Curb Appeal		•	
Pedestrian Access			•
Internal Access		•	
Park Sign		•	
Parking		•	
Site Furnishings		•	
Sitting Area		•	
Shelter / Stage		•	
Restroom			
Playground		•	
Sand Play			
Ball & Play Fields			
Court Play/Hard Courts			
Winter Sports			
Athletic Turf			
Lawns		•	
Landscaping	•		
Paths/Trails			
Natural Area			
Maintenance	•		

## GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- The park is well integrated within the surrounding neighborhood, as it is bordered on two sides by single-family homes.
- Contextual observation – neighboring houses overlook the park
- Park is very well maintained
- Playground has two traditional structures in fair condition – does not meet current ADA accessible standards.
- Playground area is centrally located within the park.
- Lacks play equipment that stimulates the varied senses of the children and park patrons (color, activity panels, etc.)
- Lacks sufficient accessible site furniture and quality furnishings i.e., bike racks, benches, kiosk, etc. for park patrons
- Landscaping at entrance needs to be enhanced with color and texture diversity for greater curb appeal.
- The chain link fence has begun to show its age and its ability to withstand the elements. Park patron's entering from the Sawyer entrance are greeted with peeling paint on the vertical and horizontal members of the chain link fence.

- The park has a secondary access off the local alley that is not ADA accessible. Likewise, the chain link fence and maintenance access gates are unsightly and have heaved in areas resulting in an uneven appearance from inside the park.
- Site Lighting consist of a precast concrete tapered pole with two cobra head light fixtures attached which are not in-scale with the park site.

### PARKING

- On street parking - permissible but viewed as a true “neighborhood mini park” catering to neighboring park patrons living within walking distance of the facility.

### WALKING PATH/INTERNAL CIRCULATION

- Paved access path leading into and through the park consists of uneven surfaces and exemplifying cracks throughout indicating that since this path was installed in 1990, there has been some settlement in the base and should be replaced to better accommodate general park access and park patrons with disabilities.
- The secondary access is located off a village alleyway requiring park patrons to potentially come in conflict with vehicular traffic.
- The paved walking surface stops short of the secondary access point rendering this entrance inaccessible.

### APPARATUS AREAS

- Playground area (2-5 area)
  - Includes recycled plastic border curb (plastic border is in good condition)
  - Play surface is EWF
  - Play area has one inaccessible entrance
  - Play value of park in general – pretty good.
- Playground area (5-12 area)
  - Includes recycled plastic border curb (plastic border appears to be in good condition)
  - Play area has two accessible entry points from barrier curb into play area.
  - Play surface is EWF





- Play Equipment – Manufacturer: Landscape Structures
  - Traditional style apparatus equipment nearing the end of its useful life. Play equipment installed in 2006
  - Two bay single post swing set – 2 belts/ 1 bucket and one accessible tot seat.
  - Ruts evident beneath swing area

### SHELTER STRUCTURE

- Reservable shelter – The shelter is original to the park and appears to show its age. The structure is dated, and painting of metal surfaces is needed.
- No electrical beneath shelter pavilion.
- Concrete pad beneath shelter has severe cracks in and around the footings



### SITE FURNISHINGS

- Benches set in EWF play surface – good condition.
- Picnic table – one total beneath shelter structure. Could use several more tables for park patrons and care givers



### PARK SIGN

- Additional signage or relocation of existing signage would accommodate visitors driving down the street looking for the park.
- Landscape area surrounding sign needs additional plants to better ground the sign.

### TURF & VEGETATION

- Site appears to be well landscaped with mature trees in place before the park's existence.
- Overall curb appeal is decent.
- Site appears to drain well



### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop a new park master plan for the park site that eliminates the alleyway access and creates two access points off Sawyer Ave.
- Improve spatial definition between the park and adjacent residences.
- Update playground equipment and include “themed” play layout. Replace, expand, and diversify “themed” playground equipment to meet the needs of the young neighborhood demographic
- New playground area to be contained by a more aesthetic permanent material - concrete barrier curb
- Consider providing a drinking fountain near the playground





- Consider a more ornamental gazebo style pavilion located closer to Sawyer Ave with asphalt shingles to enhance the character of the park
- Add deciduous low growing shrubs, groundcover and perennial landscaping at the park sign for visual and seasonal interest.
- Add perimeter landscaping to control views from within the park while remaining a good neighbor to the adjacent residences.
- Remove the chain link fence along Sawyer Ave to present a more inviting message to the community.
- Replace the painted chain link fence along the remaining three sides of the park and replace with new black vinyl coated chain link fence material.



# 9. Sedgwick Park

Site Address: 48th St & 10th Ave

Total Area: 25 Acres

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Acquired/Built: 1994/2004

Playground Installed: 2014

2.0



## CONDITION ASSESSMENT:

	3 Above Average	2 Average	1 Below Average
Curb Appeal		•	
Pedestrian Access		•	
Internal Access		•	
Park Sign	•		
Parking		•	
Site Furnishings		•	
Sitting Area		•	
Shelter / Stage			
Restroom			
Playground		•	
Sand Play			•
Ball & Play Fields		•	
Court Play/Hard Courts	•		
Winter Sports			
Athletic Turf			
Lawns		•	
Landscaping		•	
Paths/Trails		•	
Natural Area			
Maintenance		•	

## GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- Most popular community park providing athletic facilities to meet the growing sports needs of the community.
- One of two “sports parks” within the park system
- Park offers diverse recreation amenities to the community.
- Park is bordered by single family homes that back up to the park on the west property line and bordered by residences of similar housing stock along 49th Street that face the southern end of the park.
- The park site is highly popular among athletes and affiliate groups and is also well-used by community residents.
- Lacks sufficient site furniture and quality furnishings for care givers

## ON-SITE PARKING LOT

- Four off-street dedicated parking lots exist within the confines of the park site. 1 paved parking lot at the north end of the park (47th St. Lot accommodating approx. 68 cars), one paved centrally located parking lot accessed via 48th Street (48th St. Lot) to accommodate District's Activity/Preschool Building patrons and general

neighborhood access. The site also consists of a paved lot on the extreme south and southeast end of the park (East Ave. Lot approx. 56 car parking lot) with access from East Ave. and 49th Street. Additionally, angled street parking accommodating approx. 58 cars is provided along the southern park border at 49th Street.

- The 47th Street lot and 48th Street parking lots were recently repaved and striped and in good condition. Both lots could benefit from the installation of landscape planting islands to reduce the urban heat island affect generated by the existing sea of asphalt. Additionally, the 48th Street lots planting islands could assist in creating a safer environment by directing and controlling the flow of traffic to and from the District Activity/ Preschool building.
- The East Ave. lot including the 49th Street angled parking lot are in need of repair and replacement.
- The combination of these four parking areas appears sufficient to accommodate multi-game use and turnover when all fields are in use.

#### SAND VOLLEYBALL COURT

- The sand volleyball court is in poor condition and in need of repair in the near future as various debris and small rocks are present.

#### TENNIS COURTS

- The four tennis courts at the extreme north end of the park were redone in 2019.
- The court area and the vinyl coated chain link fencing appear to be in very good condition.
- Sports lighting at Courts activated by push button.
- Practice wall appears to be in good condition.
- Two courts are also striped to accommodate pickleball patrons accommodating 4 pickleball courts total.

#### WALKING PATH (INTERNAL/EXTERNAL CIRCULATION)

- Aggregate walking path makes two complete loops around the park connecting the various park amenities such as the ballfield areas, tennis courts, basketball court, playground area, etc.
- On average, 8'-10 wide aggregate trail – fair to poor surface condition. Aggregate trails throughout the park tend to have undefined edges, with widths varying due to the migration of the aggregate surface.

#### PARK SIGN

- Good condition

#### SITE FURNISHINGS

- Picnic tables are outdated and show signs of abuse and need to be replaced with Park District standard.
- Site furnishings are consisting of a variety of styles – benches are inaccessible and should be placed on hard surfaces with a paved accessible route leading to them.

#### BASKETBALL COURT/HARD COURT AREA

- One full court with two basketball hoops that appear to be in good condition, the asphalt playing court is in poor condition.
- The court surface is in need of replacement and its surface area restriped.
- Location in close proximity to parking lot and backyards of properties near the 48th Ave. entry – needs physical, visual, and noise buffer to the nearby homes and from the parking lot

#### BALLFIELDS

- Includes 2 Little League ballfields and 2 Babe Ruth size baseball fields
- Multiple fields in one location allows for better group coordination and focused maintenance.
- Provides venue for hosting tournament events
- Fields used by a variety of affiliated athletic groups
- Ballfields overall are in good condition and appear to be configured in the optimal orientation.
- The ballfield fencing is in fair condition. The fencing appears to be structurally sound with minor fabric warping, some rust is evident, and some post footings have heaved.
- The infield skin and margin are in very good condition. The ballfield mix in the infield appears to be level with no major wear or erosion, though there are places where the material has migrated into the turf area.
- The outfield turf is in good with minor evidence of wear and is relatively weed free.
- Ballfield furnishings consist of aged and dated player benches, painted aluminum bleachers and equipment boxes. The bleachers are moveable, but not in good condition. The bleachers have succumbed to environmental conditions. The player benches are embedded into the ballfield mix surface with concrete foundations. The covered



player areas (dugouts) are made of metal. Lean to makeshift roof structures attached to the ballfield fence.

- Access to the ballfields is by an 8-10' aggregate pathway

### SOCCER FIELDS

- One large full-size field with 2 goal post (north-south direction).
- One mid-size field
- Fields in poor condition – poor turf quality and drainage
- Exhibits signs of “wear and tear”

### APPARATUS AREA

- Apparatus composite structure Ages 5-12 – Manufacturer: Gametime. Installed in or around 2014.
- No age-appropriate apparatus to accommodate children ages 2-5 years, however, 2-5 year olds were observed utilizing the apparatus with their parents.
- Play apparatus gets heavy use given its proximity to the District Activity/Preschool Building and central location within the sports park.
- The apparatus equipment needs to be replaced.
- EWF Safety Surfacing – The surface level is good though the material is degraded in areas and weeds were evident within the safety surfacing
- No permanent play surface barrier/containment curb – Recycled plastic tuff timber There is no edge containment for the surfacing at the handicap entrance.
- Benches installed too low – Lacks sufficient caregiver/park patron bench seating areas.
- Area lacks design and cohesiveness.

### LANDSCAPING

- The existing mature deciduous trees provide heavy tree cover offering good shade during the summer months to the various recreation amenities in the park.
- Damaged and unhealthy trees need to be removed.
- Additional understory trees should be installed to benefit the aesthetics of the park. As the older trees become more vulnerable and die, the younger trees have already taken hold and established themselves within the environment.
- The Park lacks lower ground level plant material that could soften and enhance the various park elements.



- The existing turf throughout the park including the large open areas are well drained and appear to be regularly maintained.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Rebuild/pave trails and walkways throughout the park – incorporate specialty paving, brick, or other at seating areas along the trail/walking paths. *(Paving the aggregate trails/walkways within the park should reduce the extensive maintenance burden on the Park District.)*
- Replace picnic tables with updated standard.
- Consider the addition of concrete curbed landscape planting islands located within the 47th Street Lot and 48th Street Lots to reduce the urban heat island affect generated by the existing sea of asphalt. Consider developing a master plan that delineates planting islands to create a safer environment by directing and controlling the flow of traffic to and from the District Activity/Preschool building.
- Repair and replace the East Ave. Lot and the 49th Street Angled Parking Lot with new asphalt paving and striping.
- Consider developing a master plan for the apparatus area before the equipment’s scheduled replacement date that includes apparatus for 2-5 yr. old’s and takes into account the location of the existing mature trees in the area as well as

provides a central gathering space with quality furnishings such as picnic tables, benches etc. for care givers and playground users.

- Address maintenance issues in soccer field turf areas. Continue to maintain the soccer fields and monitor turf quality and drainage to ensure continued use of these fields for both practices and games. To overcome the issue of “wear and tear” on the soccer fields, the park district should consider turning to, or exploring an artificial turf option. There are currently 3 full size soccer fields at Lyons Township High School (Limited public access) – the district should consider working on an intergovernmental agreement with Lyons Township to extend and accommodate the district’s growing soccer program.

# 10. Spring Park

Site Address: 1100 S Spring Ave

Total Area: 0.85 Acre

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Acquired/Built: 1994/2004

Playground Installed: 1995

2.2



### CONDITION ASSESSMENT:

	3 Above Average	2 Average	1 Below Average
Curb Appeal		•	
Pedestrian Access		•	
Internal Access		•	
Park Sign	•		
Parking		•	
Site Furnishings		•	
Sitting Area		•	
Shelter / Stage		•	
Restroom			
Playground		•	
Sand Play			
Ball & Play Fields			
Court Play/Hard Courts			
Winter Sports			
Athletic Turf			
Lawns		•	
Landscaping	•		
Paths/Trails			
Natural Area			
Maintenance	•		

### GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- Park has street frontage on both Spring Avenue and 53rd St.
- Contextual observation – neighboring houses overlook the park
- Park is very well maintained
- Playground has two traditional structures in fair condition which do not meet current ADA accessible standards.
- Playground area is centrally located within the park.
- Lacks play equipment that stimulates the varied senses of the children and park patrons (color, activity panels, etc.)
- Lacks sufficient accessible site furniture and quality furnishings i.e., bike racks, benches, kiosk, etc. for park patrons
- Landscaping at entrance needs to be enhanced with color and texture diversity for greater curb appeal.
- The chain link fence has begun to show its age and wear from the elements. Park patrons entering the park are greeted with peeling paint on the vertical and horizontal members of the chain link fence.
- Site Lighting consists of a precast concrete tapered

pole with a cobra head light fixture attached which is not in-scale with the park site.

### PARKING

- On street parking only - permissible but viewed as a true "neighborhood mini park" catering to neighboring park patrons living within walking distance of the facility

### WALKING PATH/INTERNAL CIRCULATION

- Paved access path leading into and through the park consists of uneven surfaces and exemplifying cracks throughout indicating that since this path was installed in 1990, there has been some settlement in the base and should be replaced to better accommodate general park access and park patrons with disabilities.
- Unique Feature: arched garden bridge structure on main park pathway.
- The paved walking surface stops short of the secondary access point rendering this entrance inaccessible.



### APPARATUS AREAS

- Playground area (2-5 area)
- Playground Containment - combination of segmental retaining wall (missing capstones in places) and recycled plastic lumber which has heaved in places
  - Play surface is EWF
  - Play area has one accessible entrance
  - Play value of park in general – pretty good
- Playground area (5-12 area)
  - Includes recycled plastic border curb (plastic border appears to be in decent condition)
  - Play area has two accessible entry points from barrier curb into play area – transfer module located on the structure opposite the accessible concrete walking path
  - Play surface is EWF
- Play Equipment – Manufacturer: Landscape Structures
  - Traditional style apparatus equipment has gone well beyond the end of its useful life. Play equipment installed in 1995
  - Two bay single post swing set – 2 belts / 1 bucket and 1 accessible tot seat.
  - Ruts evident beneath swing area





### SHELTER STRUCTURE

- Reservable shelter – The shelter is original to the park and appears to show its age. The structure is dated, and painting of metal surfaces is needed.
- No electrical beneath shelter pavilion.
- Concrete pad beneath shelter has severe cracks in and around the post footings

### SITE FURNISHINGS

- Benches set in EWF play surface – good condition.
- Picnic table – one total beneath shelter structure. Could use additional tables for park patrons and care givers
- Flagpole foundation has heaved and creates a trip hazard for park users in the vicinity of the drinking fountain.
- Litter receptacles are located within turf areas making maintenance difficult.

### PARK SIGN

- Additional signage or relocation of existing signage would accommodate visitors driving down the street looking for the park.
- Landscape area surrounding sign needs additional plants to better ground the sign.



### TURF & VEGETATION

- Site appears to be well landscaped with mature trees in place before the park's existence.
- The existing mature deciduous trees provide heavy tree cover offering good shade during the summer months to the various recreation amenities in the park.
- Existing Evergreen (Pine) showing signs of stress.
- Overall curb appeal is decent.
- Site appears to drain well

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Update playground equipment and include "themed" play layout. Replace, expand, and diversify "themed" playground equipment to meet the needs of the young neighborhood demographic
- New playground area to be contained by a more aesthetic permanent material - concrete barrier curb
- Consider a more ornamental gazebo style pavilion with asphalt shingles to enhance the character of the park
- Add deciduous low growing shrubs, groundcover, and perennial landscaping at the park sign for visual and seasonal interest.





- Add perimeter landscaping to control views from within the park while remaining a good neighbor to the adjacent residences.
- Remove the chain link fence along Spring Ave. and 53rd Street to present a more inviting message to the community.
- Replace the painted chain link fence along the remaining two sides of the park and replace with new black vinyl coated chain link fencing.
- Replace the cobra head light fixtures/pole with a couple lower profile ornamental poles with decorative controlled light fixtures.



# 11. Waiola Park

Site Address: 545 S Stone Ave

Total Area: 3.50 Acres

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Acquired/Built: 1994/2004

Playground Installed: 1996

2.2



## CONDITION ASSESSMENT:

	3 Above Average	2 Average	1 Below Average
Curb Appeal	•		
Pedestrian Access	•		
Internal Access		•	
Park Sign		•	
Parking		•	
Site Furnishings		•	
Sitting Area		•	
Shelter / Stage			
Restroom			
Playground		•	
Sand Play			
Ball & Play Fields			
Court Play/Hard Courts			
Winter Sports			
Athletic Turf			
Lawns		•	
Landscaping	•		
Paths/Trails		•	
Natural Area			
Maintenance		•	

## GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- The Park is well integrated within the neighborhood and totally surrounded by local arteries – Waiola Ave, (East), 47th Street (North), Stone Ave (West) and 48th Street (South).
- Contextual observation – neighboring houses overlook the park
- Turf is well maintained
- Playground has one traditional structure in fair condition – structure exceeds its useful life of 20 years and does not appear to meet current ADA accessible standards.
- Playground area is located in the south and east corner of the park near the intersection of Waiola Ave and 48th Street.
- Lacks play equipment that stimulates the varied senses of the children and park patrons (color, activity panels, etc.)
- Lacks sufficient accessible site furniture and quality furnishings i.e., bike racks, benches, kiosk, etc. for park patrons
- Site lighting consists of new black tapered poles with LED gas lantern fixtures.

## PARKING

- On street parking - permissible on Waiola Ave and 48th Street but viewed as a true "neighborhood park" catering to the immediate neighboring park patrons living within walking distance of the facility.

## WALKING PATH/INTERNAL CIRCULATION

- Newly paved access path located around the entire perimeter of the park accommodating park patrons with disabilities.

## APPARATUS AREAS

- Play Equipment – Manufacturer: Landscape Structures
  - Traditional style apparatus equipment has far exceeded its useful life. Play equipment installed in 1996
  - 2 bay single post swing set – 2belts/1bucket and 1 accessible tot seat.
  - Ruts evident beneath swing area
- Playground area (2-12 area) composite structure
  - Includes recycled plastic border curb (plastic border is in good condition)
  - Play surface is EWF- EWF allowed to spill out into turf area to signify entrance to the apparatus area resulting in questionable safety surface depth.
  - Play area does not have a paved accessible route to it – playground only accessible by walking through the turfgrass.
  - Play value of park in general – moderate
  - No apparatus play equipment designed for play area users 2-5 years of age

## SITE FURNISHINGS

- Benches are set just outside the perimeter barrier curb of the apparatus area only accessible by walking through the apparatus area on the EWF play surface.
- Bench supports located in turf area just outside the perimeter barrier curb making regular maintenance and mowing challenging – benches in good condition.
- Litter receptacles are located within turf areas making maintenance difficult. Litter receptacles in good condition
- Picnic tables not located in shade and do not have a paved accessible route to them.
- Bike rack needs to be located on an accessible surface with a paved route connecting it to the interior pathway



## BASKETBALL COURT

- Court is not accessible by a paved walking surface
- Basketball standards footing has heaved/standard posts needs to be replaced
- Surface condition consists of cracks needs resurfacing.

## PARK SIGN

- The existing sign is void of landscaping creating an unsightly "bare" area for park patrons. Landscape plantings should be installed at the base of the sign to better ground the sign while enhancing the curb appeal of the park.

## TURF & VEGETATION

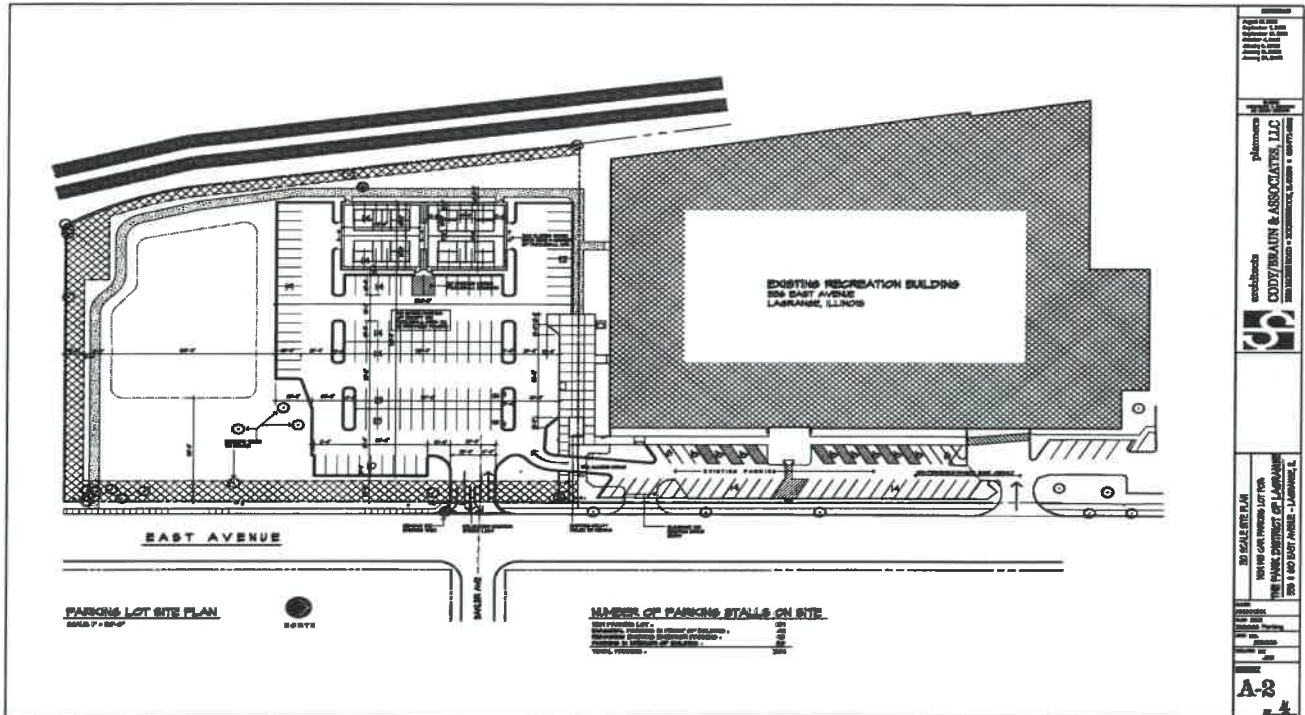
- Site consists of mature trees as well as some infill trees installed over time.
- Overall curb appeal is very good.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Consider developing a master plan for the apparatus area that provides a central gathering space with quality furnishings such as picnic tables, benches etc. for care givers and playground users.
- Consider locating providing a permanent screen for the porta-potty constructed of materials that complement the aesthetics of the park.
- Update playground equipment and include "themed" play layout. Replace, expand and diversify with "themed" playground equipment to meet the needs of the young neighborhood demographic
- New playground area to be contained by a more aesthetic permanent material - concrete barrier curb
- Consider installing an ornamental gazebo style pavilion with asphalt shingles to provide covered shade seating for caregivers as well as enhance the character of the park
- Install new basketball standard and new half court basketball surface and color coat

# 610 East Avenue Property

Site Address: 610 East Avenue  
 Total Area: 2.9 Acres  
 Classification: Mini-Park  
 Acquired/Built:



## Planned Development:

The Park District of La Grange desires to redevelop 610 East Ave., a +/- 2.9-acre parcel of land immediately adjacent to, and south of the Park District's Recreation Center Building, 610 East Ave. **Property into a community recreation resource.** The site was formerly owned by NICOR Gas. The Park District's vision is to convert this brownfield property into a recreational green space and functional parking facility to support the adjacent Recreation Center.

The PDLG is currently working with local citizens and the Cody Braun Architecture design team to develop a community-based plan for the site. When complete, the site will consist of a 137 car parking lot, 4 non-dedicated fenced pickle ball courts with sliding gates, recreational green space, and a stormwater detention and interpretation area. This green space will be a welcomed addition as a recreational resource within the La Grange community.

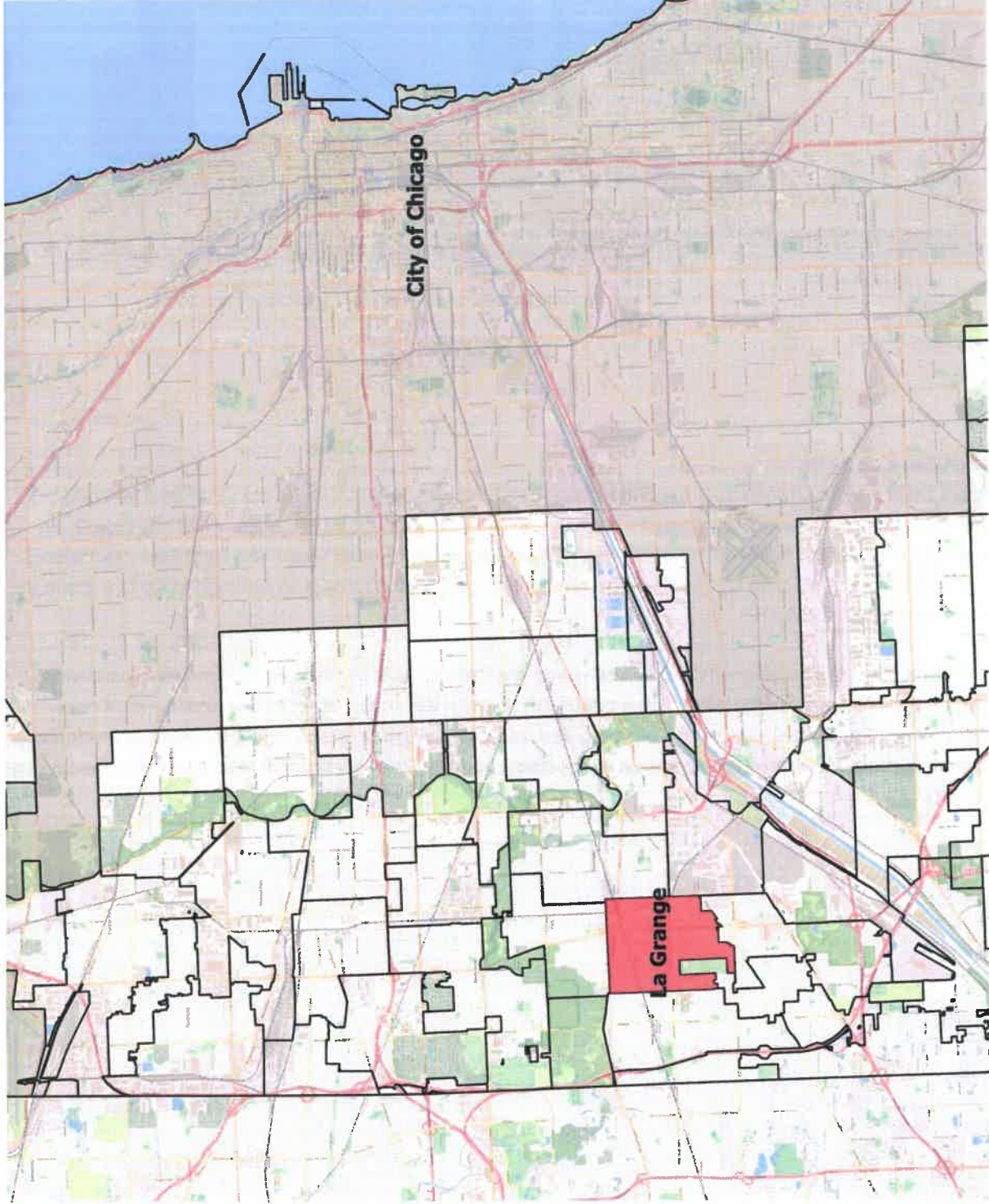


# PARK DISTRICT OF LA GRANGE COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN

## 1. Location Map

### Legend

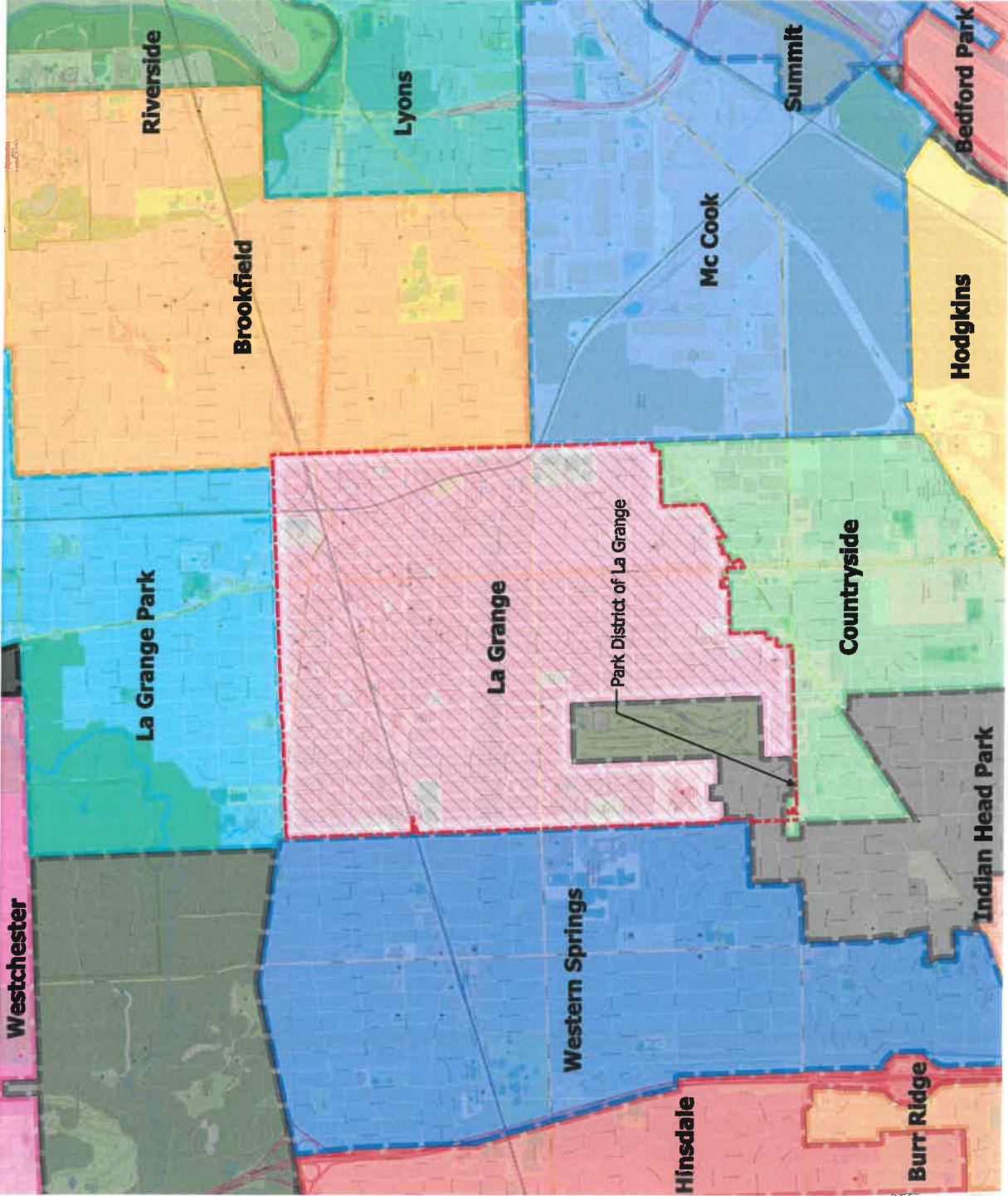
- La Grange Municipal Boundary
  - Municipality
  - City of Chicago
- OpenStreetMap





**PARK DISTRICT OF LA GRANGE  
COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN**

**2.1. Municipal Boundary**



**Legend**

Park District of La Grange

**Municipality**

- Bedford Park
- Brookfield
- Burr Ridge
- Countryside
- Hinsdale
- Hodgkins
- Indian Head Park
- La Grange
- La Grange Park
- Lyons
- Mc Cook
- Riverside
- Summit
- Westchester
- Western Springs
- Unincorporated area

OpenStreetMap



0 2,500 5,000 ft

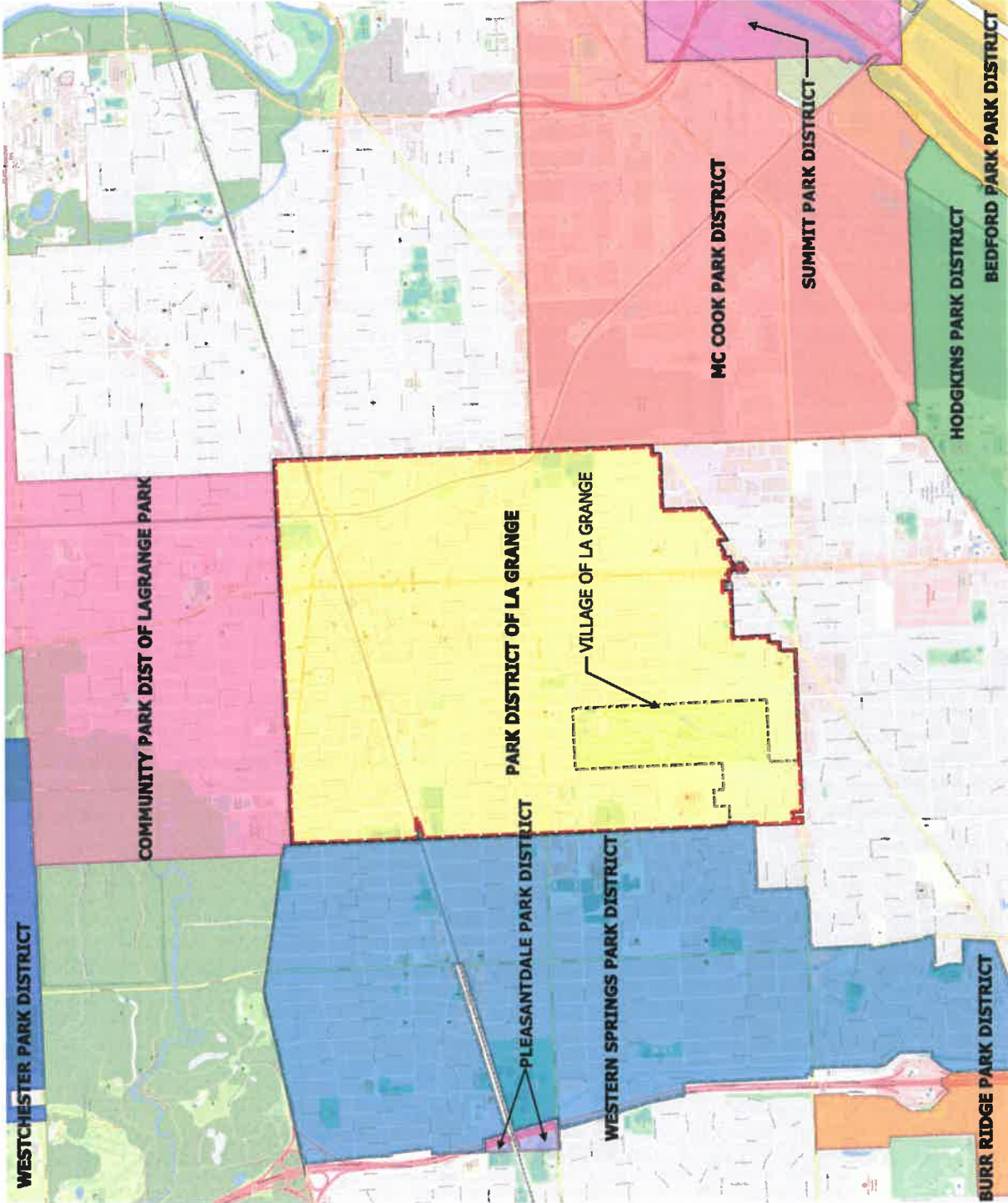


# PARK DISTRICT OF LA GRANGE COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN

## 2.2 Park District Boundary

### Legend

- La Grange Municipal Boundary
  - Park District Boundary**
  - BEDFORD PARK PARK DISTRICT
  - BURR RIDGE PARK DISTRICT
  - COMMUNITY PARK DIST OF LAGRANGE PARK
  - HODGKINS PARK DISTRICT
  - MC COOK PARK DISTRICT
  - PARK DISTRICT OF LA GRANGE
  - PLEASANTDALE PARK DISTRICT
  - SUMMIT PARK DISTRICT
  - WESTCHESTER PARK DISTRICT
  - WESTERN SPRINGS PARK DISTRICT
- OpenStreetMap



0 2,500 5,000 ft



# PARK DISTRICT OF LA GRANGE COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN

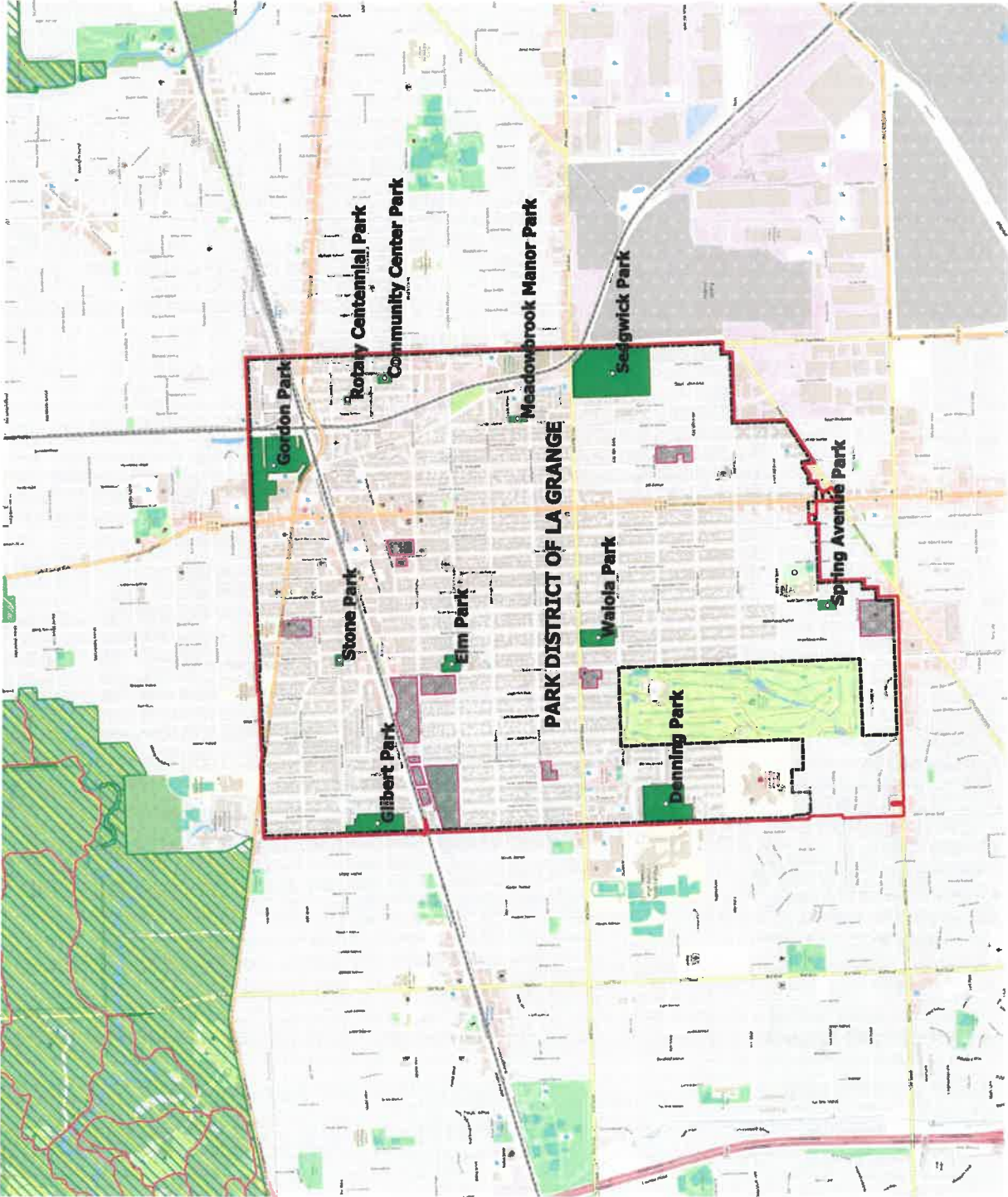
## 3. Parks

### Legend

- Park District of La Grange
- La Grange Municipal Boundary
- Forest Preserve Trail
- Forest Preserve
- Parks
- School

### OpenStreetMap

- Community Park
- Community Center Park
- Gordon Park
- Sedgwick Park
- Neighborhood Park
- Denning Park
- Gilbert Park
- Walola Park
- Rocket Park
- Elm Park
- Stone Park
- Rotary Centennial Park
- Spring Avenue Park
- Meadowbrook Manor Park










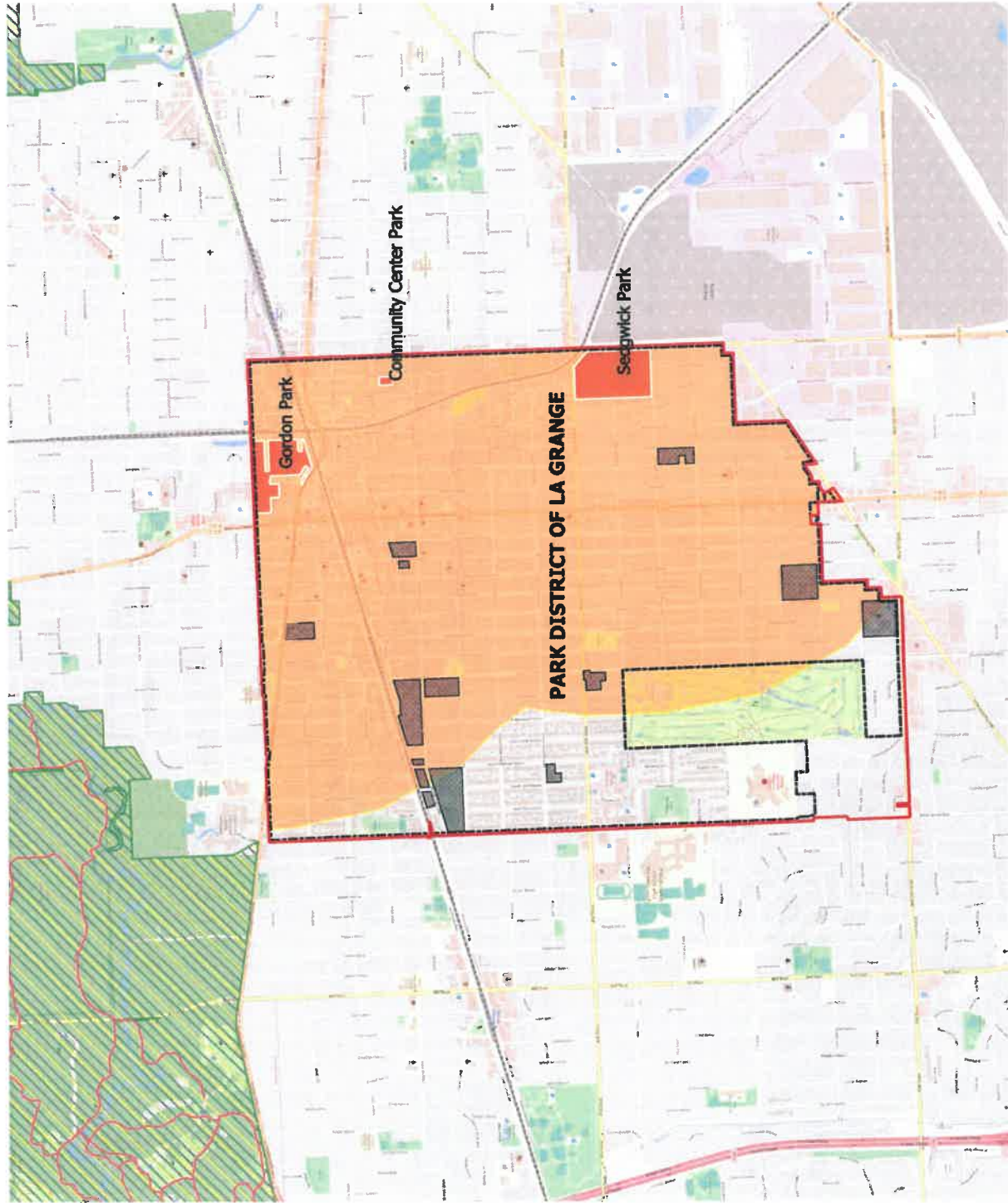


**PARK DISTRICT OF LA GRANGE  
COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN**

**4. Community Park Service Area**

**Legend**

-  Park District of La Grange Boundary
  -  La Grange Municipal Boundary
  -  Forest Preserve Trail
  -  Forest Preserve
  -  School
  -  Community Parks
  -  Community Park 1 Mile Service Area
- OpenStreetMap**



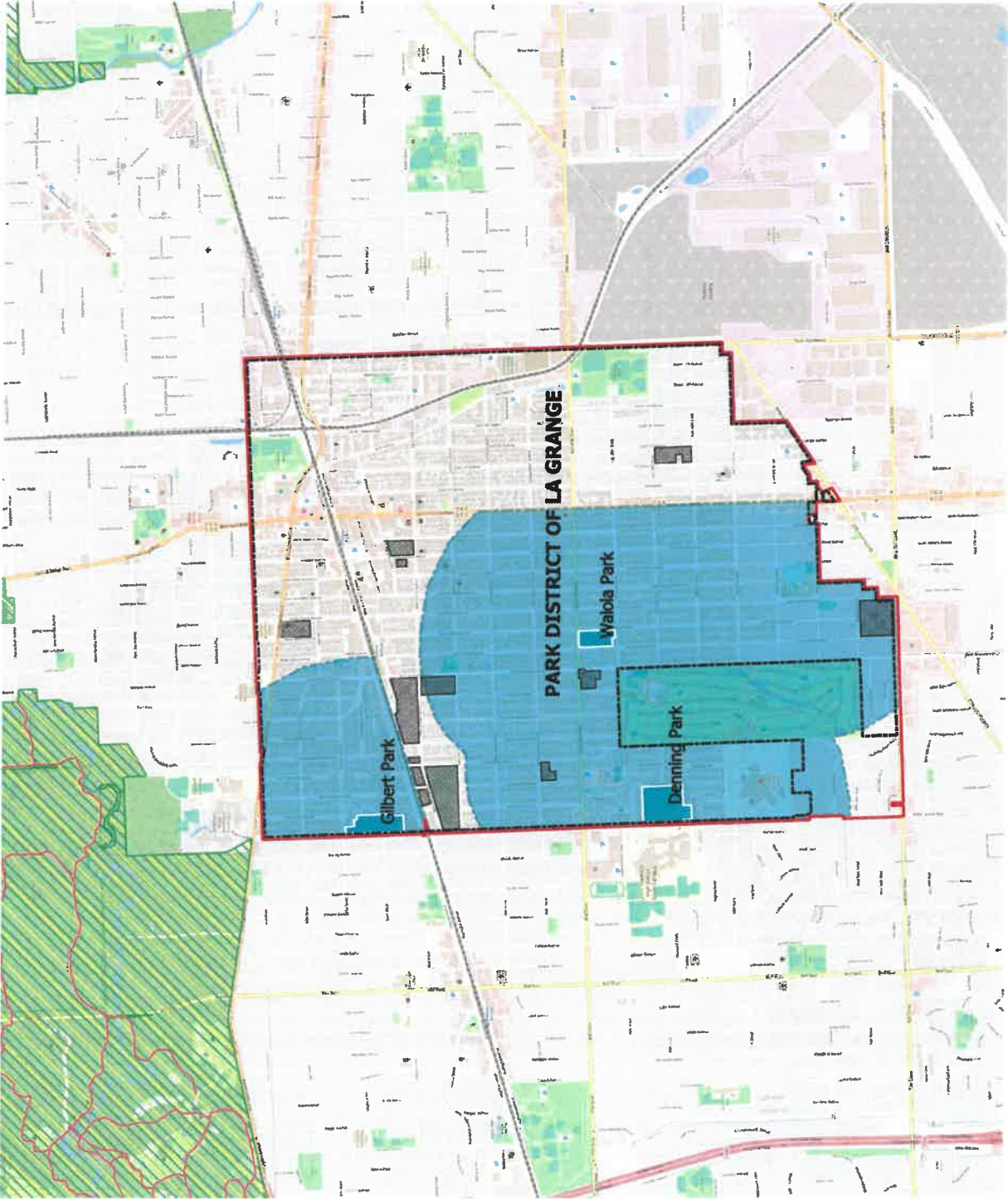


# PARK DISTRICT OF LA GRANGE COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN

## 5. Neighborhood Park Service Area

### Legend

- La Grange Municipal Boundary
- Park District of La Grange
- Forest Preserve Trail
- Forest Preserve
- School
- Neighborhood Parks
- Neighborhood Parks 0.5 Mile Service Area
- OpenStreetMap



0 1,000 2,000 3,000 4,000 ft








100



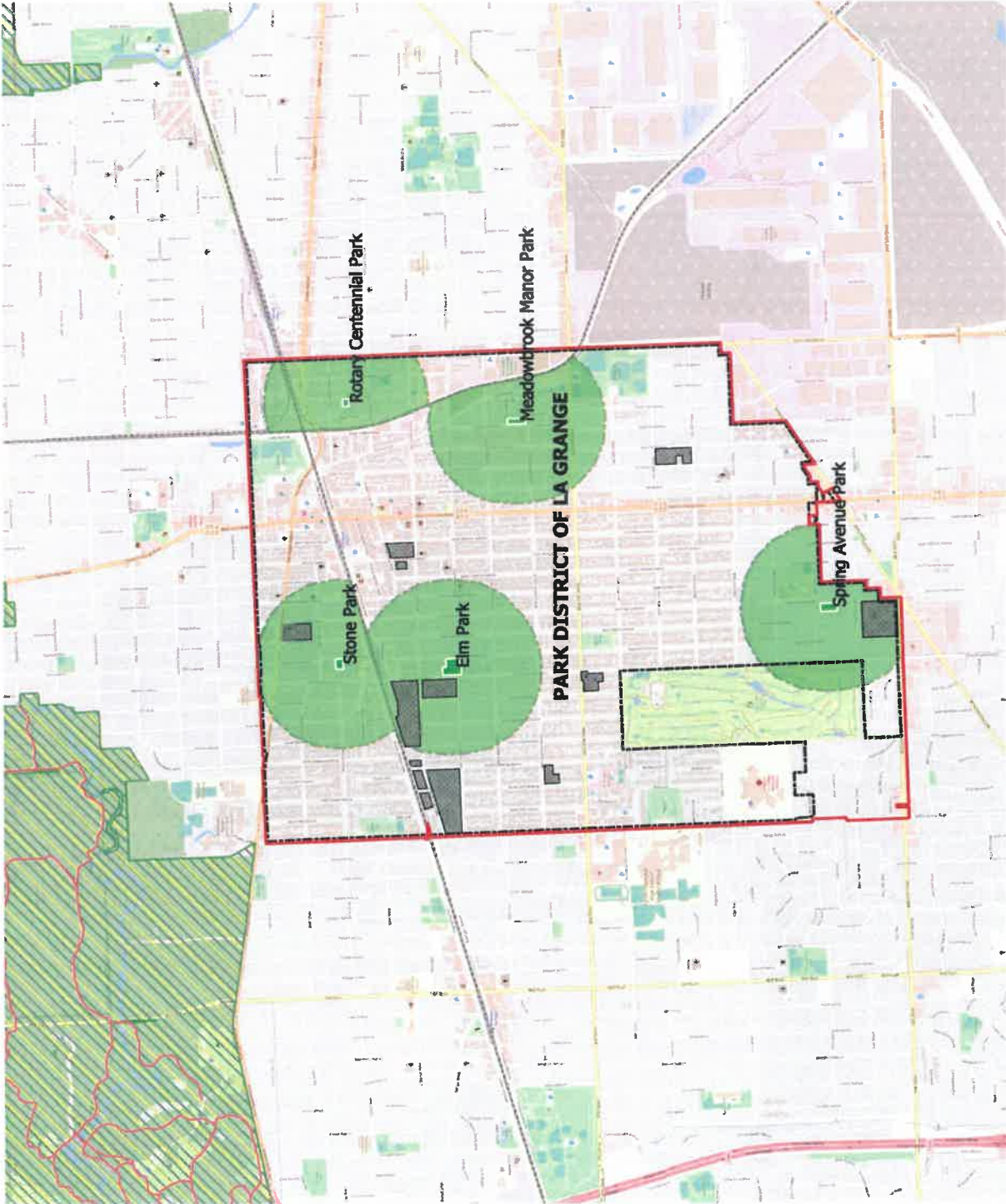
**PARK DISTRICT OF LA GRANGE  
COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN**

**6. Pocket Park Service Area**

**Legend**

-  Forest Preserve Trail
-  Forest Preserve
-  La Grange Municipal Boundary
-  Park District of La Grange Boundary
-  School
-  Pocket Parks
-  Pocket Parks 0.25 Mile Service Area

OpenStreetMap



0 1,000 2,000 3,000 4,000 ft



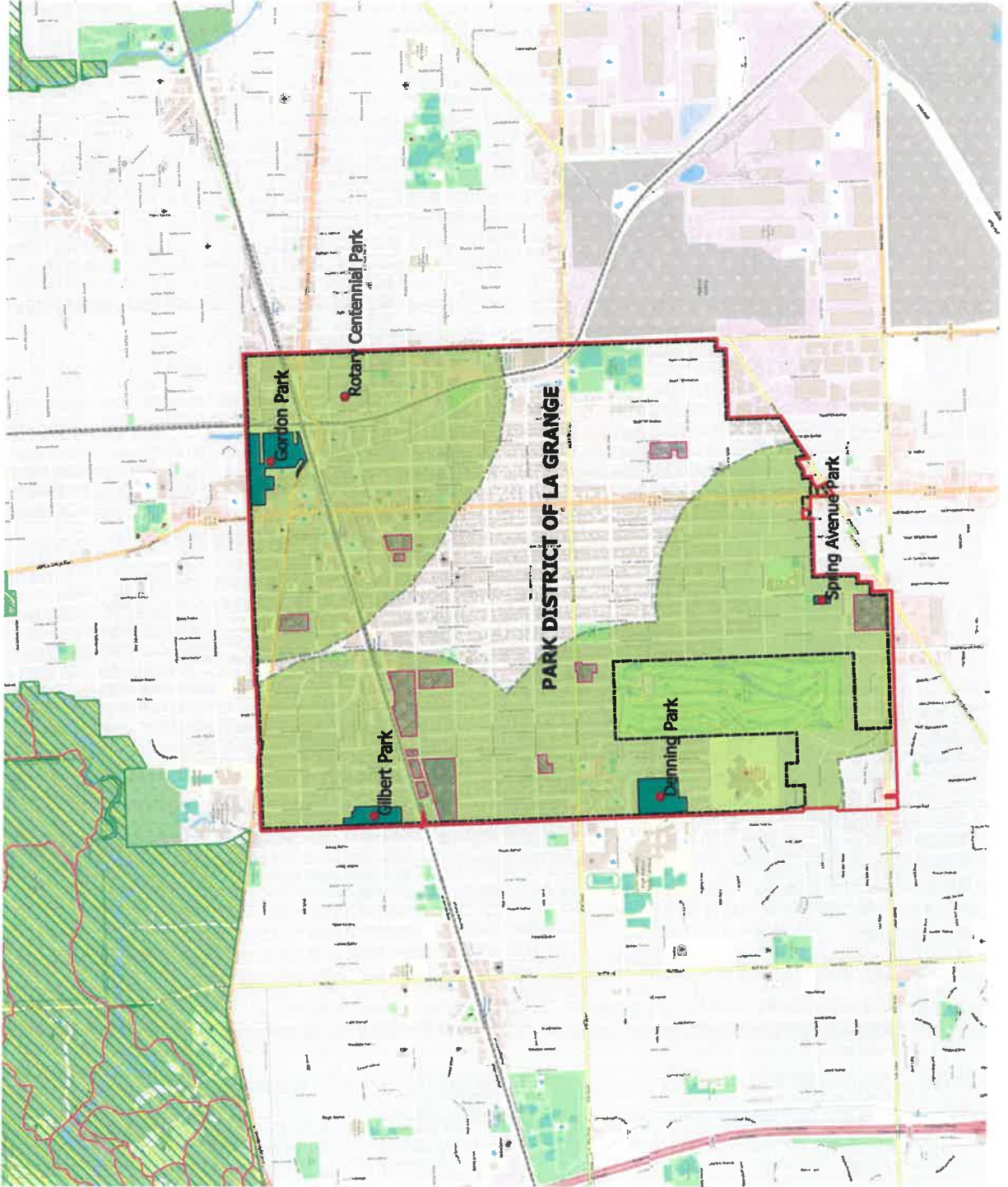
**PARK DISTRICT OF LA GRANGE  
COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN**

**7. Shelter Service Area**

**Legend**

- Park District of La Grange
  - La Grange Municipal Boundary
  - Forest Preserve Trail
  - Forest Preserve
  - School
  - Shelter
  - Shelter Service Area
- OpenStreetMap**

**Level of Service**  
 No Required NRPA Guidelines  
 PDLG Population: 15,545  
 Service Area for Shelter: 5





**PARK DISTRICT OF LA GRANGE  
COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN**

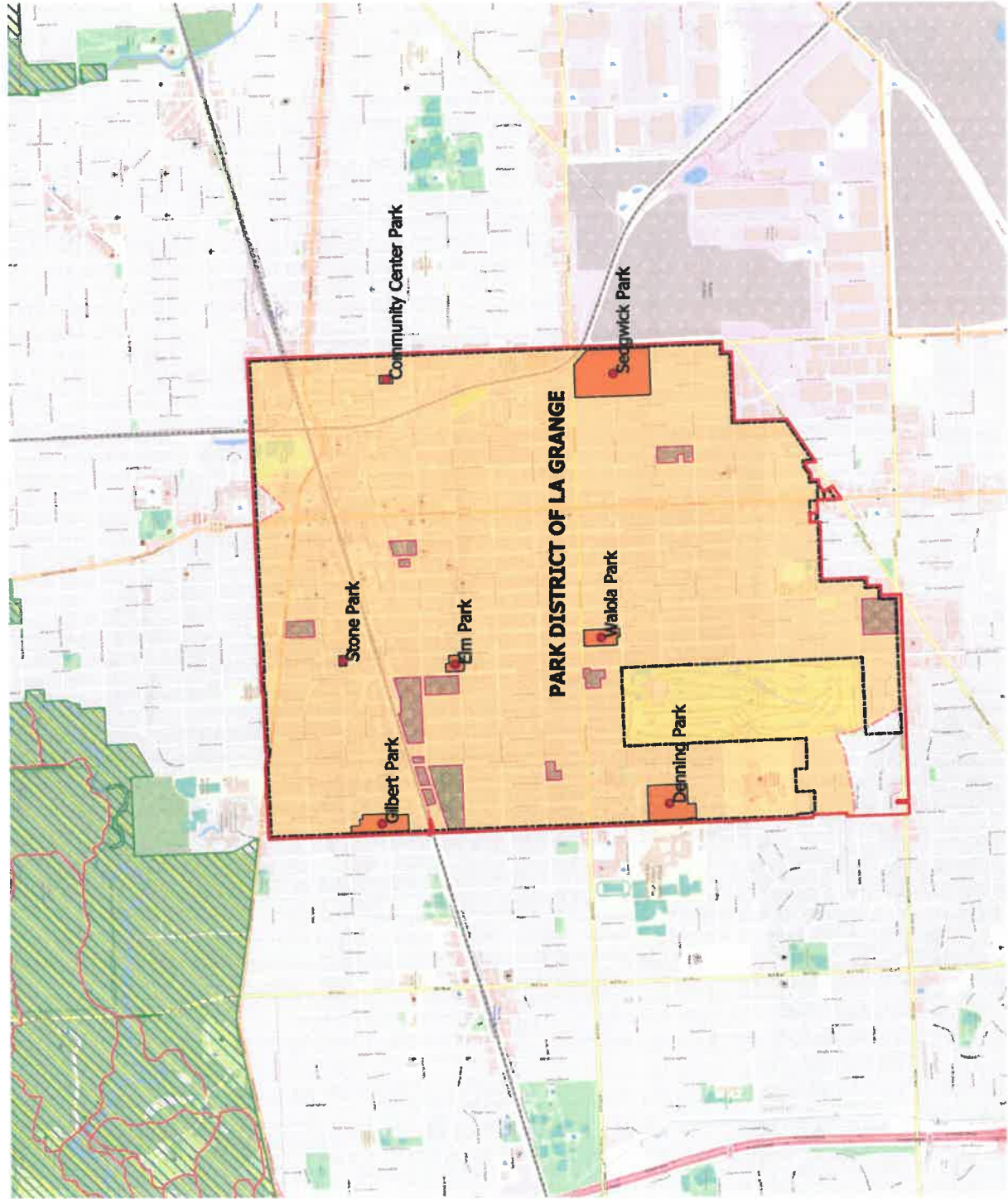
**8. Basketball Court Service Area**

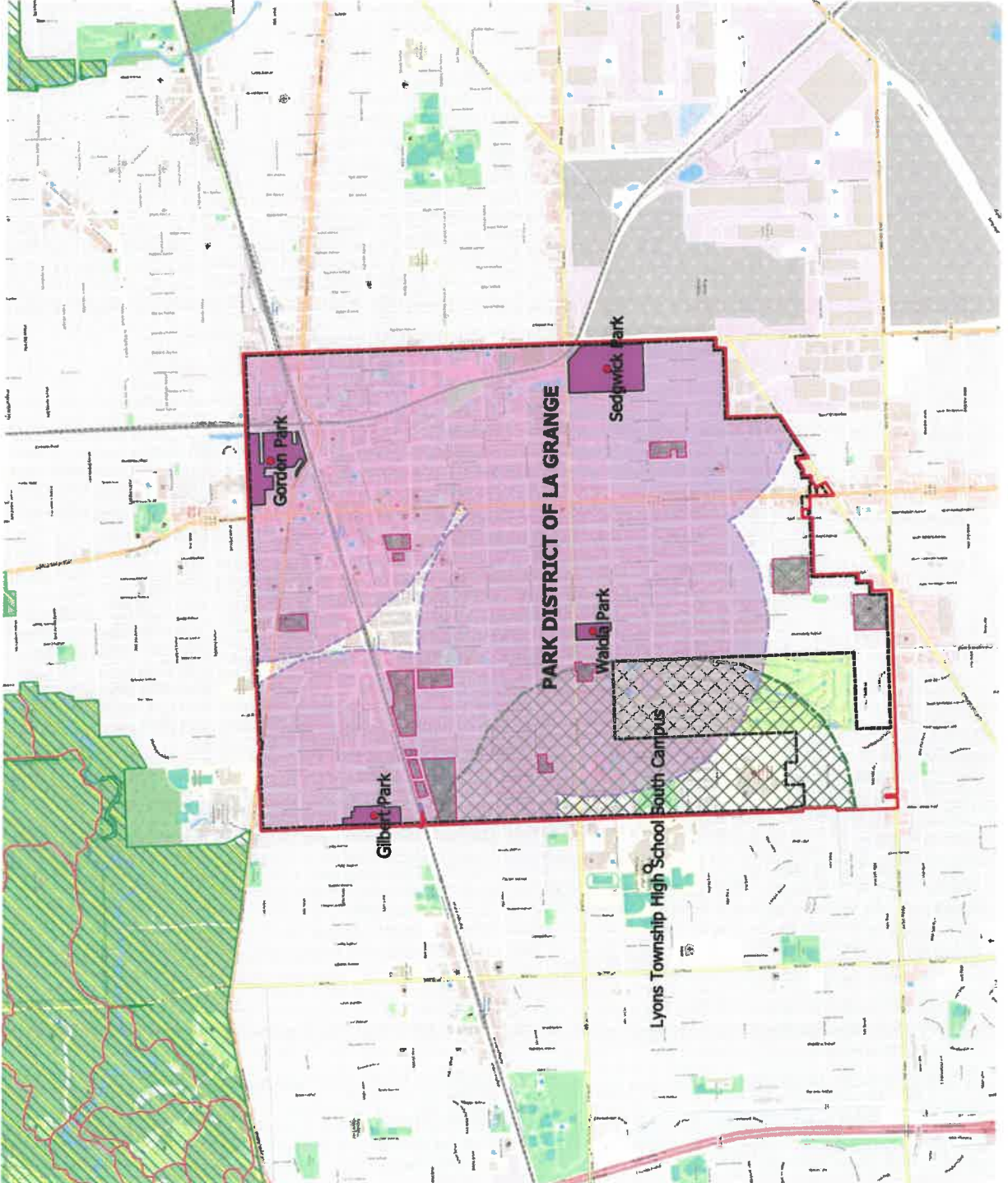
**Legend**

- Park District of La Grange
  - Forest Preserve Trail
  - Forest Preserve
  - La Grange Municipal Boundary
  - School
  - Basketball Court
  - Basketball Court Service Area
- OpenStreetMap**

**Level of Service**

- NRPA Guidelines: 1 Court Per 5,000 Residents
- PDLG Population: 15,545
- Service Area for Basketball Court: 9
- 1 Basketball Court Per 1,727 Residents





**PARK DISTRICT OF LA GRANGE  
COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN**

**9. Baseball Field Service Area**

**Legend**

- Park District of La Grange
- La Grange Municipal Boundary
- Forest Preserve Trail
- Forest Preserve
- School
- Baseball Field Service Area
- Not PDLG Owned Baseball Field
- Not PDLG Owned Baseball Field Service Area

**OpenStreetMap**

**Level of Service**

NRPA Guidelines: 1 Field Per 2,000 Residents  
 PDLG Population: 15,545  
 Service Area for Baseball Field: 5  
 Baseball Field Per 3,109 Residents





# PARK DISTRICT OF LA GRANGE COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN

## 10. Soccer Field Service Area

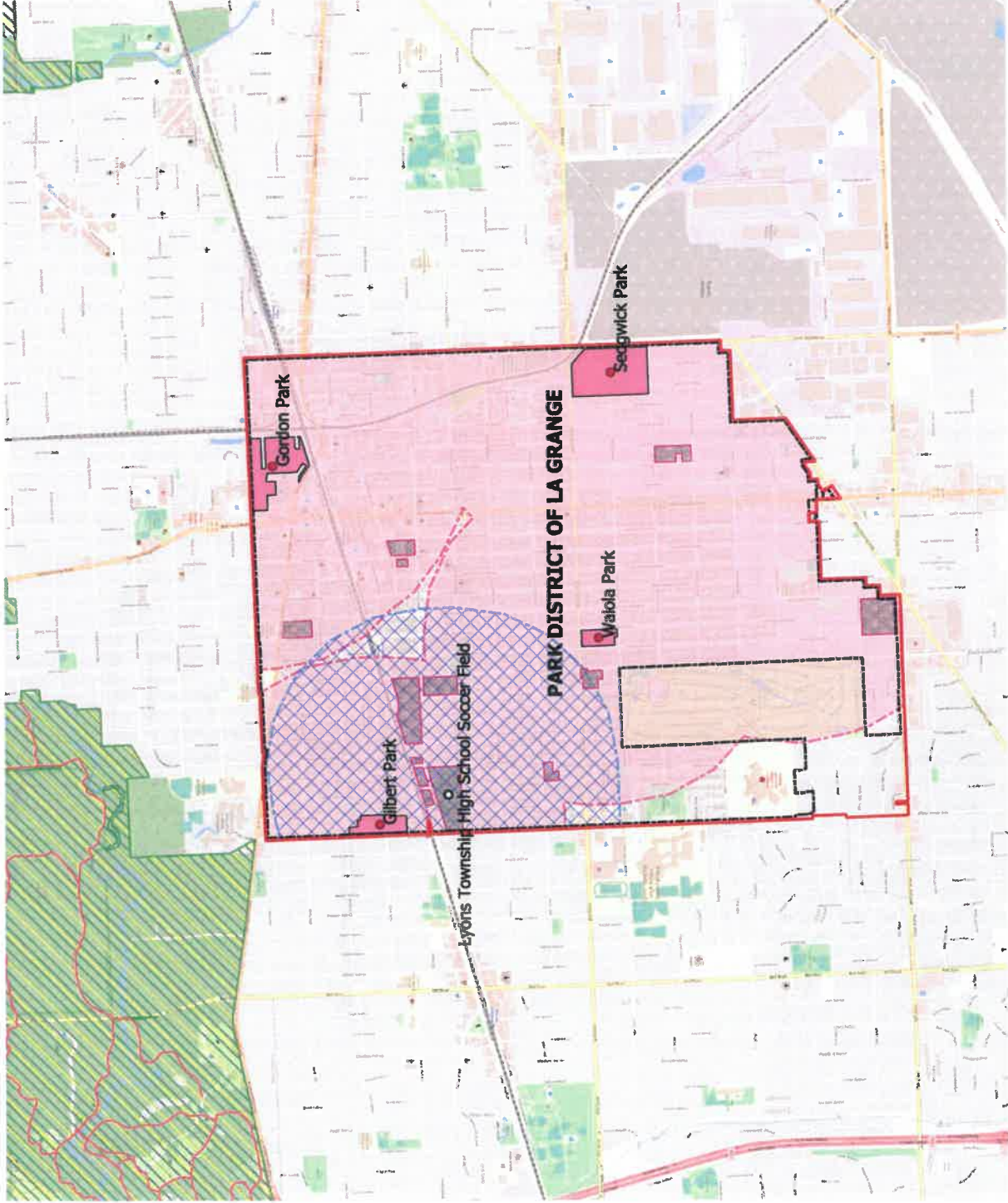
### Legend

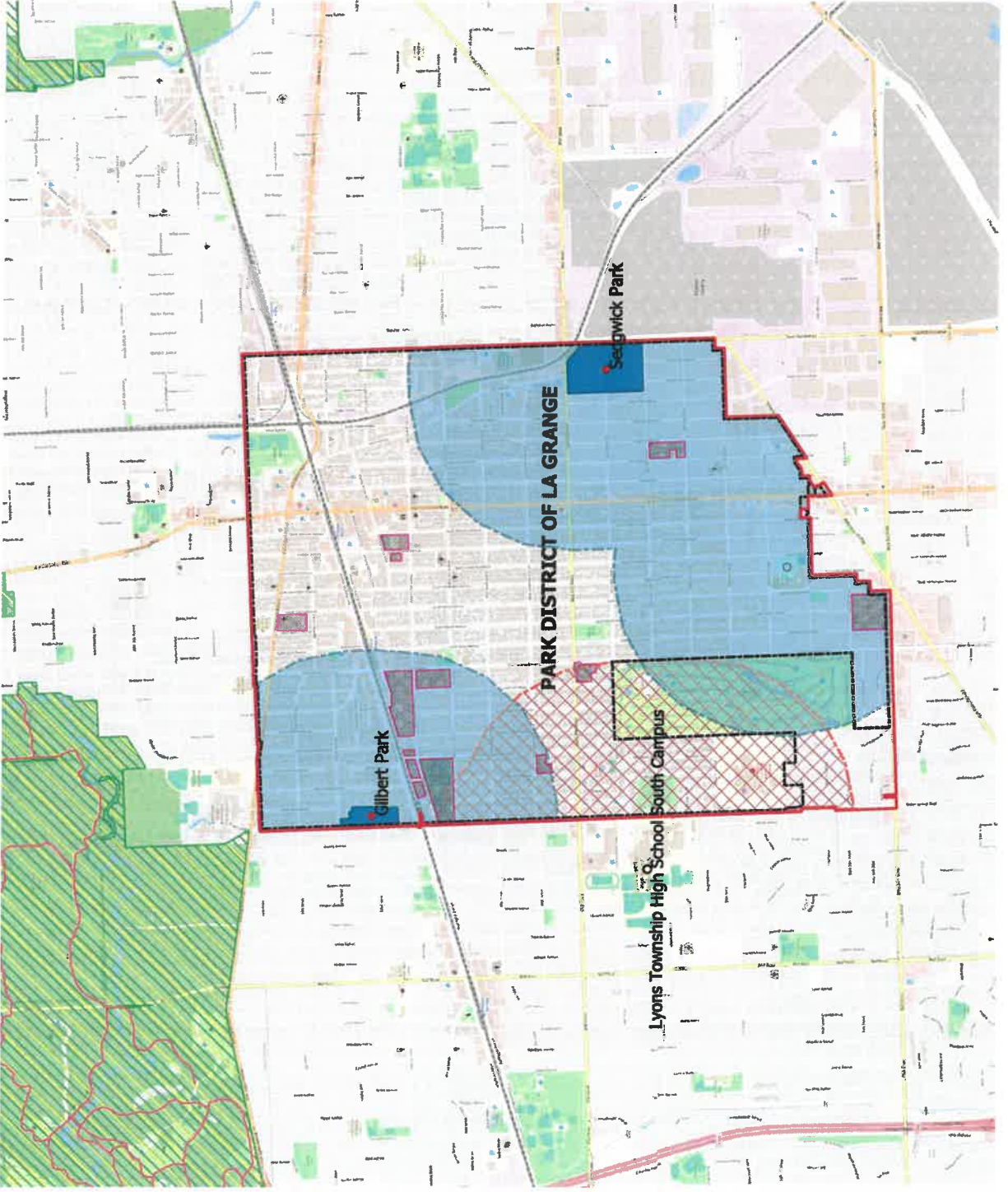
-  Park District of La Grange
-  La Grange Municipal Boundary
-  Forest Preserve Trail
-  Forest Preserve
-  School
-  Soccer Field
-  Soccer Field Service Area
-  Not PDLG Owned Soccer Field
-  Not PDLG Owned Soccer Field Service Area

### OpenStreetMap

### Level of Service

- NRPA Guidelines: 1 Field Per 2,000 Residents
- PDLG Population: 15,545
- Service Area for Sports Field: 5
- 1 Sports Field Per 2,590 Residents





**PARK DISTRICT OF LA GRANGE  
COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN**

**11. Tennis Court Service Area**

**Legend**

- Park District of La Grange
  - La Grange Municipal Boundary
  - Forest Preserve Trail
  - Forest Preserve
  - School
  - Tennis Court
  - Tennis Court Service Area
  - Not PDLG Owned Tennis Court
  - Not PDLG Owned Tennis Court Service Area
- OpenStreetMap**

**Level of Service**

- NRPA Guidelines: 1 Court Per 2,000 Residents
- PDLG Population: 15,545
- Service Area for Tennis Court: 12
- 1 Tennis Court Per 1,036 Residents





**PARK DISTRICT OF LA GRANGE  
COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN**

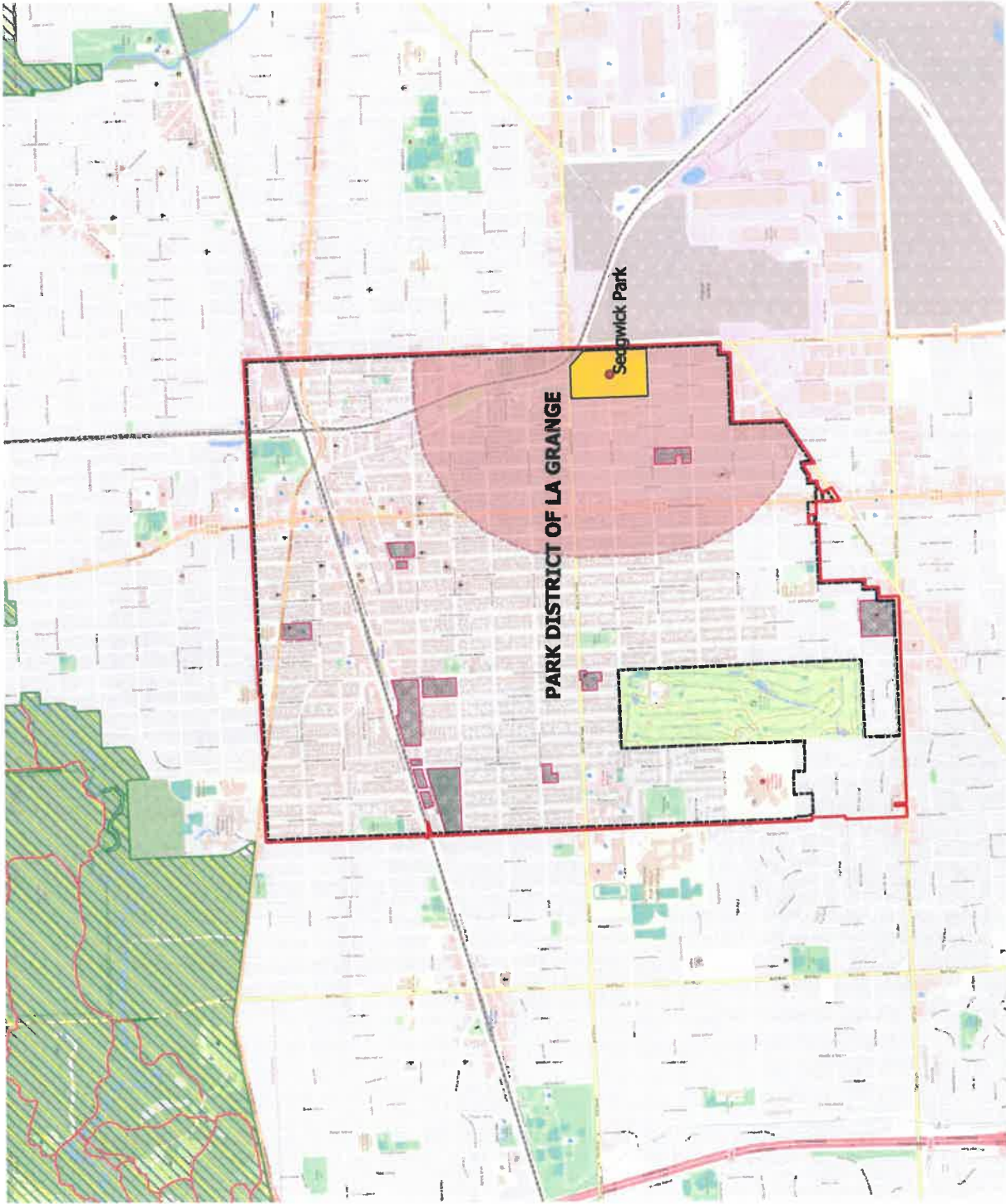
**12. Volleyball Court Service Area**

**Legend**

-  Park District of La Grange
  -  La Grange Municipal Boundary
  -  Forest Preserve Trail
  -  Forest Preserve
  -  School
  -  Volleyball Court
  -  Volleyball Court Service Area
- OpenStreetMap**

**Level of Service**

No Required NRPA Guidelines  
 PDLG Population: 15,545  
 Service Area for Volleyball Court: 3



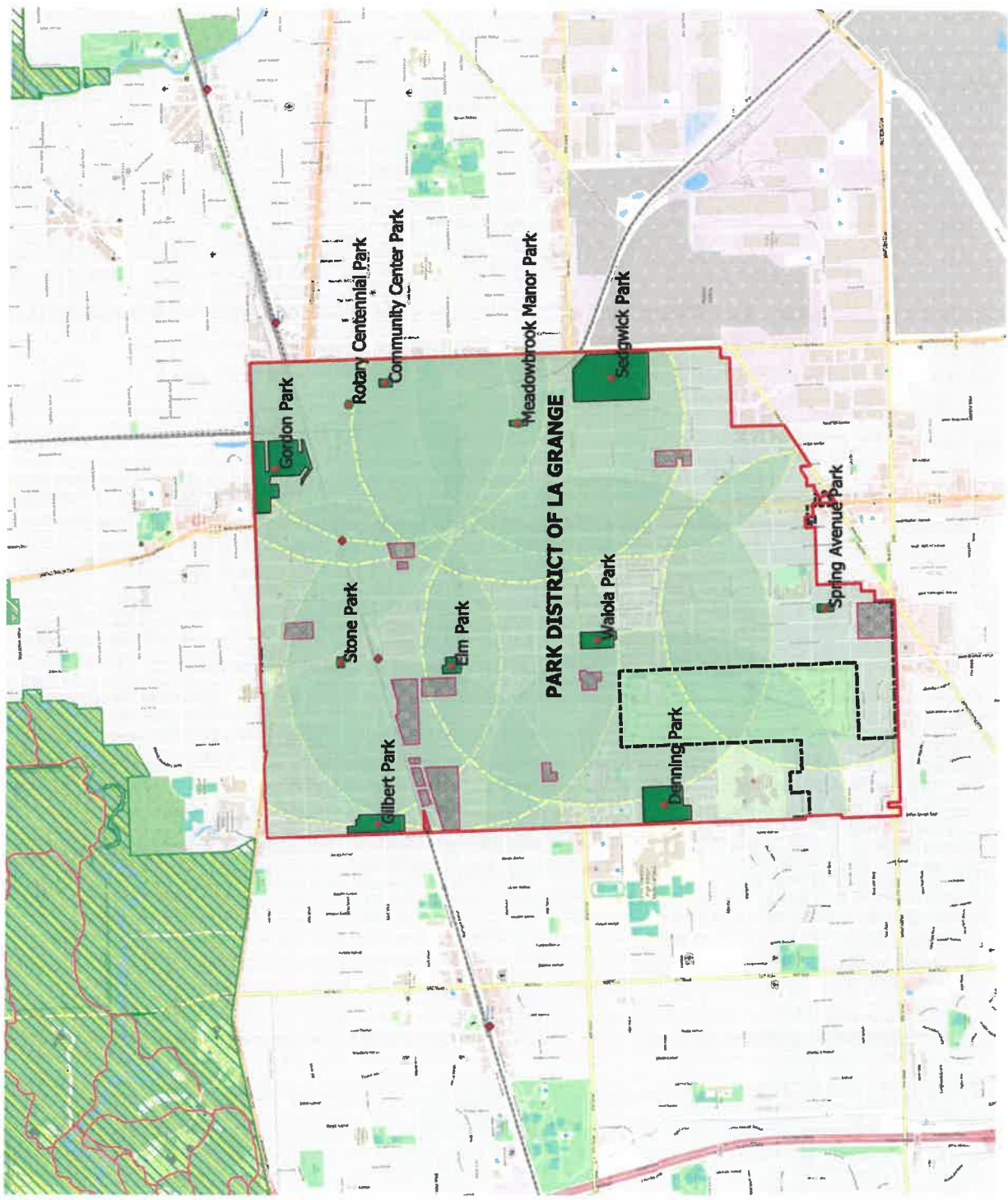
0 1,000 2,000 3,000 4,000 ft



**PARK DISTRICT OF LA GRANGE  
COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN**

**13. Playground Service Area**

- Legend**
- Park District of La Grange
  - La Grange Municipal Boundary
  - Forest Preserve Trail
  - Forest Preserve
  - Forest Preserve Shelter
  - Rail Road Station
  - School
  - Playground
  - Playground Service Area
- OpenStreetMap**





**PARK DISTRICT OF LA GRANGE  
COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN**

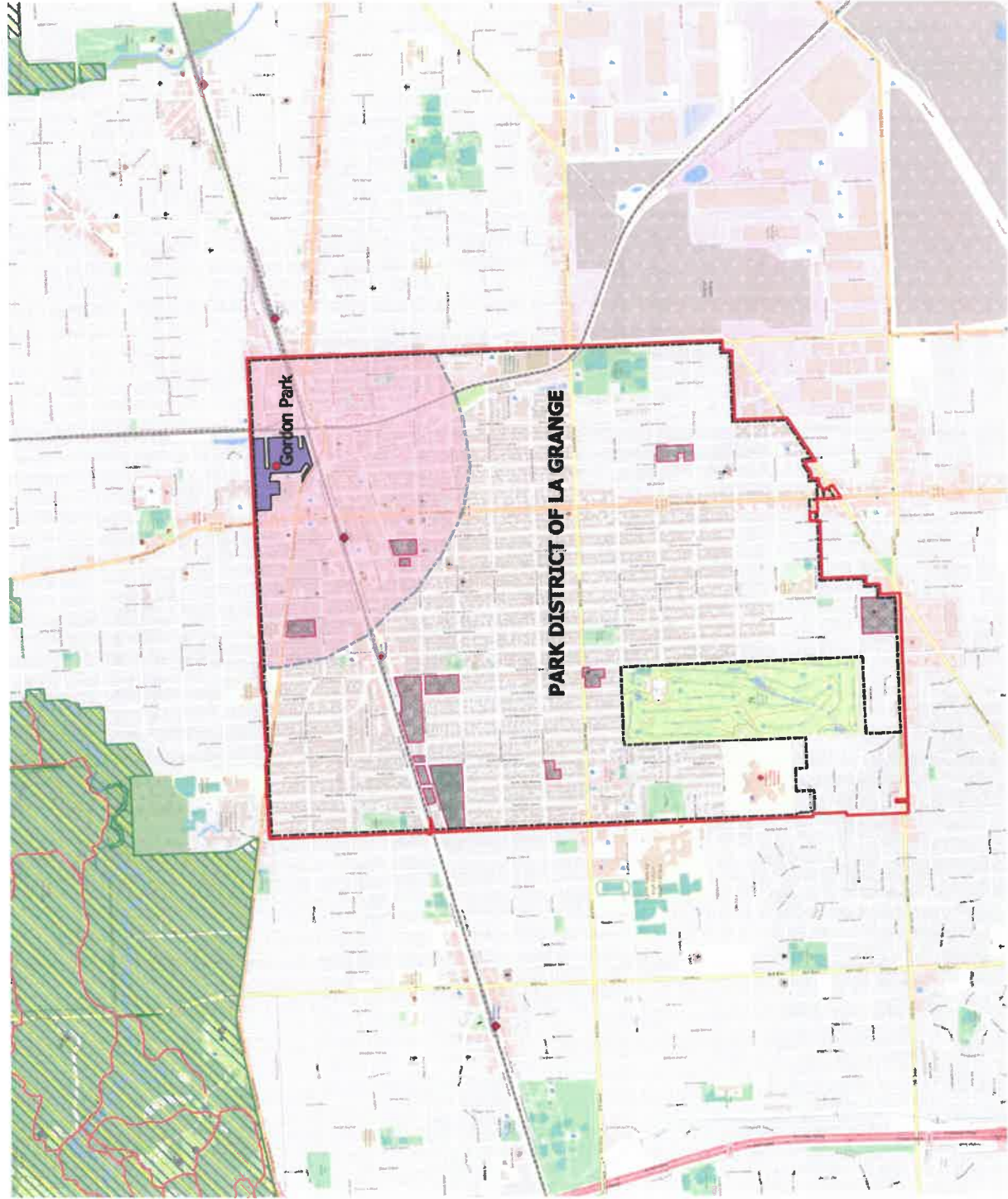
**14. Spray/ Splash Pad Service Area**

**Legend**

- Park District of La Grange
- La Grange Municipal Boundary
- Forest Preserve Trail
- Forest Preserve
- Forest Preserve Shelter
- Rail Road Station
- School
- Splash Pad
- Splash Pad Service Area

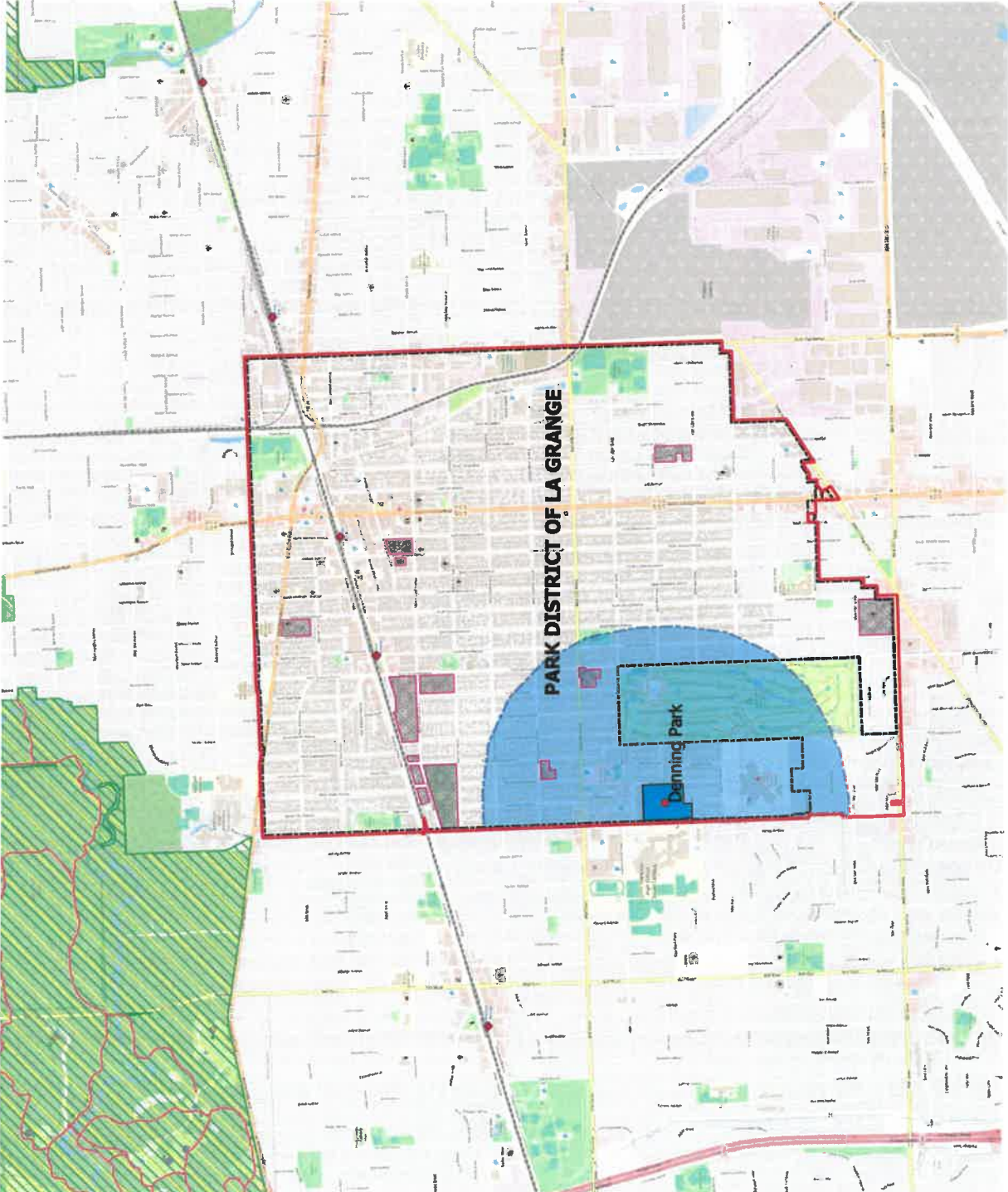
**OpenStreetMap**

**Level of Service**  
 No Required NRPA Guidelines  
 PDLG Population: 15,545  
 Total Splash Pad: 1





**PARK DISTRICT OF LA GRANGE  
COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN**



**15. Community Garden Service Area**

- Legend**
- Park District of La Grange
  - La Grange Municipal Boundary
  - Forest Preserve Trail
  - Forest Preserve
  - Forest Preserve Shelter
  - Railroad Station
  - School
  - Community Garden
  - Community Garden Service Area
- OpenStreetMap

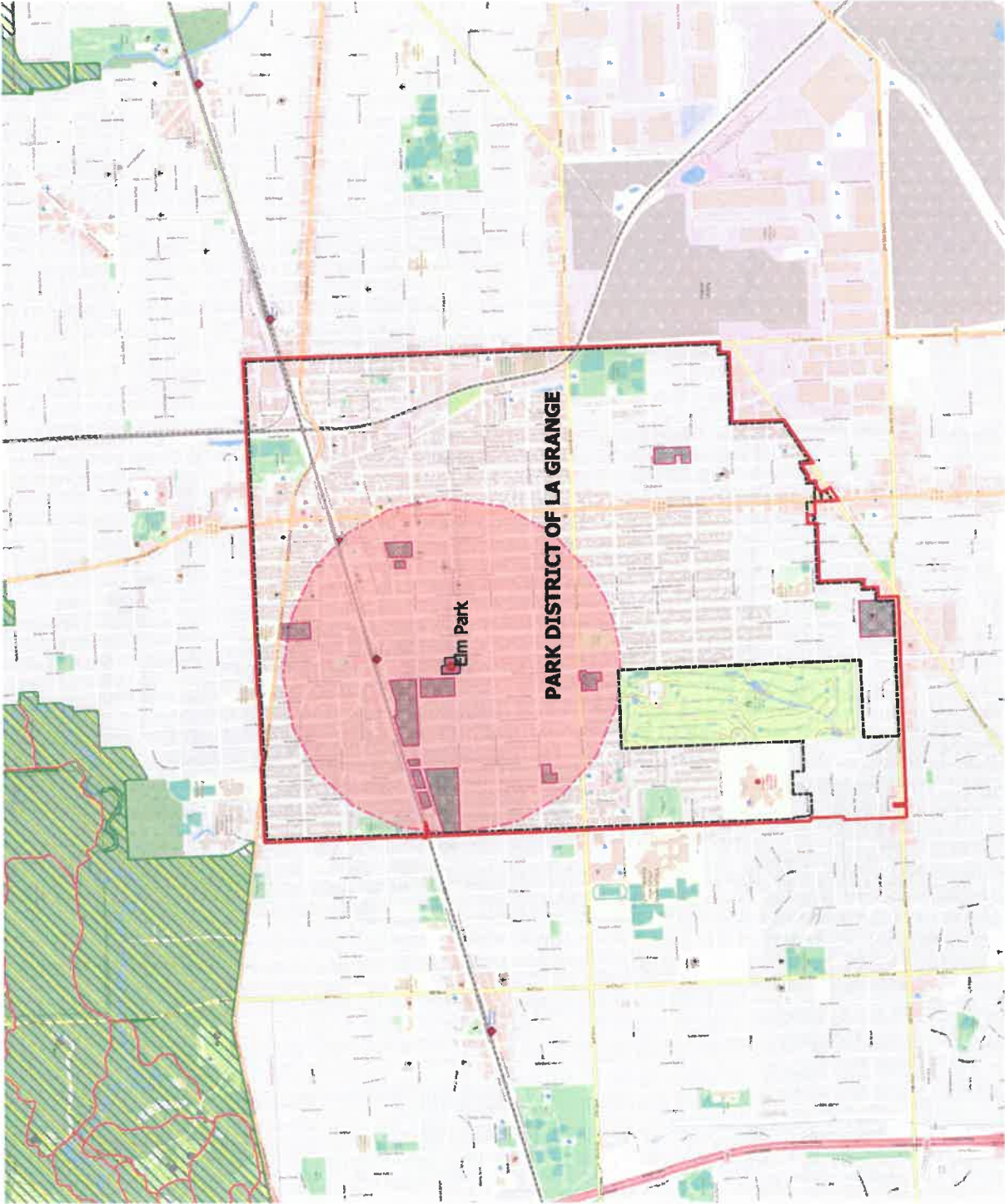
**Level of Service**  
 No Required NRPA Guidelines  
 PDLG Population: 15,545  
 Total Community Garden: 1





**PARK DISTRICT OF LA GRANGE  
COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN**

**16. Sled Hill Service Area**



**Legend**

- Park District of La Grange
  - La Grange Municipal Boundary
  - Forest Preserve Trail
  - Forest Preserve
  - Forest Preserve Shelter
  - Railroad Station
  - School
  - Sled Hill
  - Sled Hill Service Area
- OpenStreetMap**

**Level of Service**  
 No Required NRPA Guidelines  
 PDLG Population: 15,545  
 Total Sled Hill: 1



0 1,000 2,000 3,000 4,000 ft





**PARK DISTRICT OF LA GRANGE  
COMPREHENSIVE MASTER  
PLAN**

**17. Handball Court Service Area**

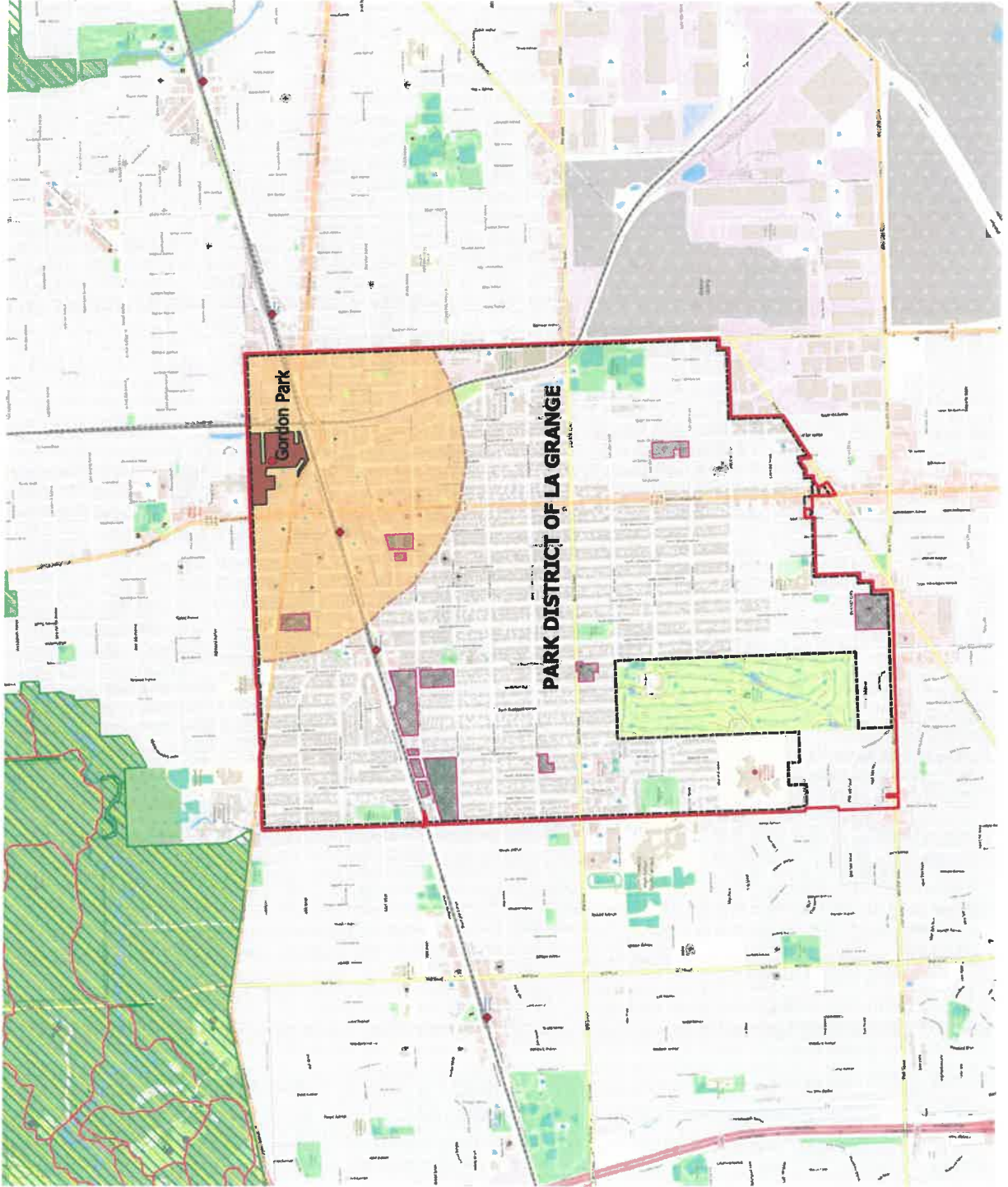
**Legend**

- Park District of La Grange
- La Grange Municipal Boundary
- Forest Preserve Trail
- Forest Preserve
- Forest Preserve Shelter
- Railroad Station
- School
- Handball Court
- Handball Court Service Area

**OpenStreetMap**

**Level of Service**

No Required NRPA Guidelines  
PDLG Population: 15,545  
Total Wallball Court: 3





# PARK DISTRICT OF LA GRANGE COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN

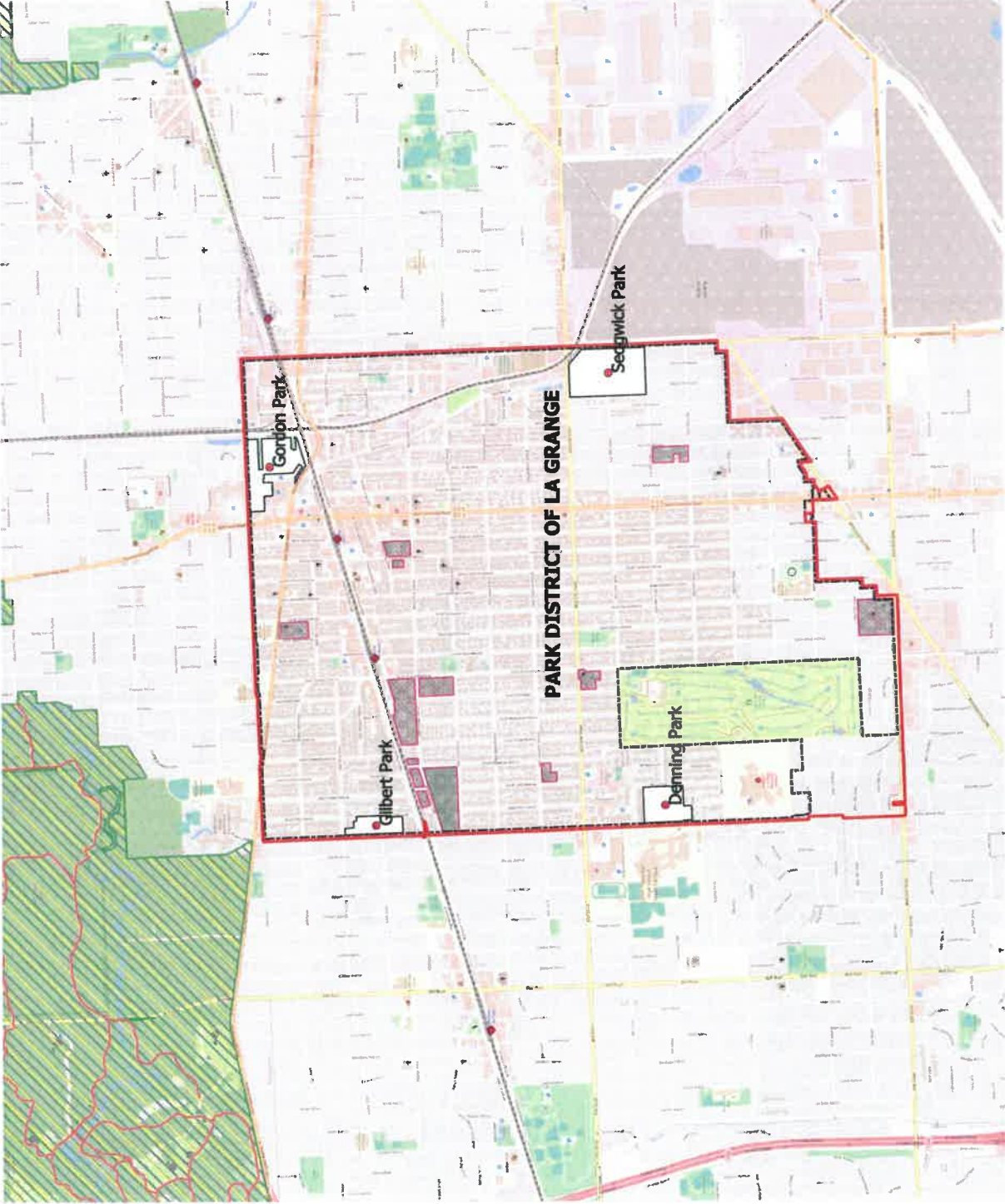
## 18. On Site Parking Lot

### Legend

- Park District of La Grange
- La Grange Municipal Boundary
- Forest Preserve Trail
- Forest Preserve
- Forest Preserve Shelter
- Railroad Station
- School
- On Site Parking Lot

### OpenStreetMap

**Level of Service**  
No Required NRPA Guidelines  
PDLG Population: 15,545  
Total On Site Parking Lot: 7



0 1,000 2,000 3,000 4,000 ft



**PARK DISTRICT OF LA GRANGE  
COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN**

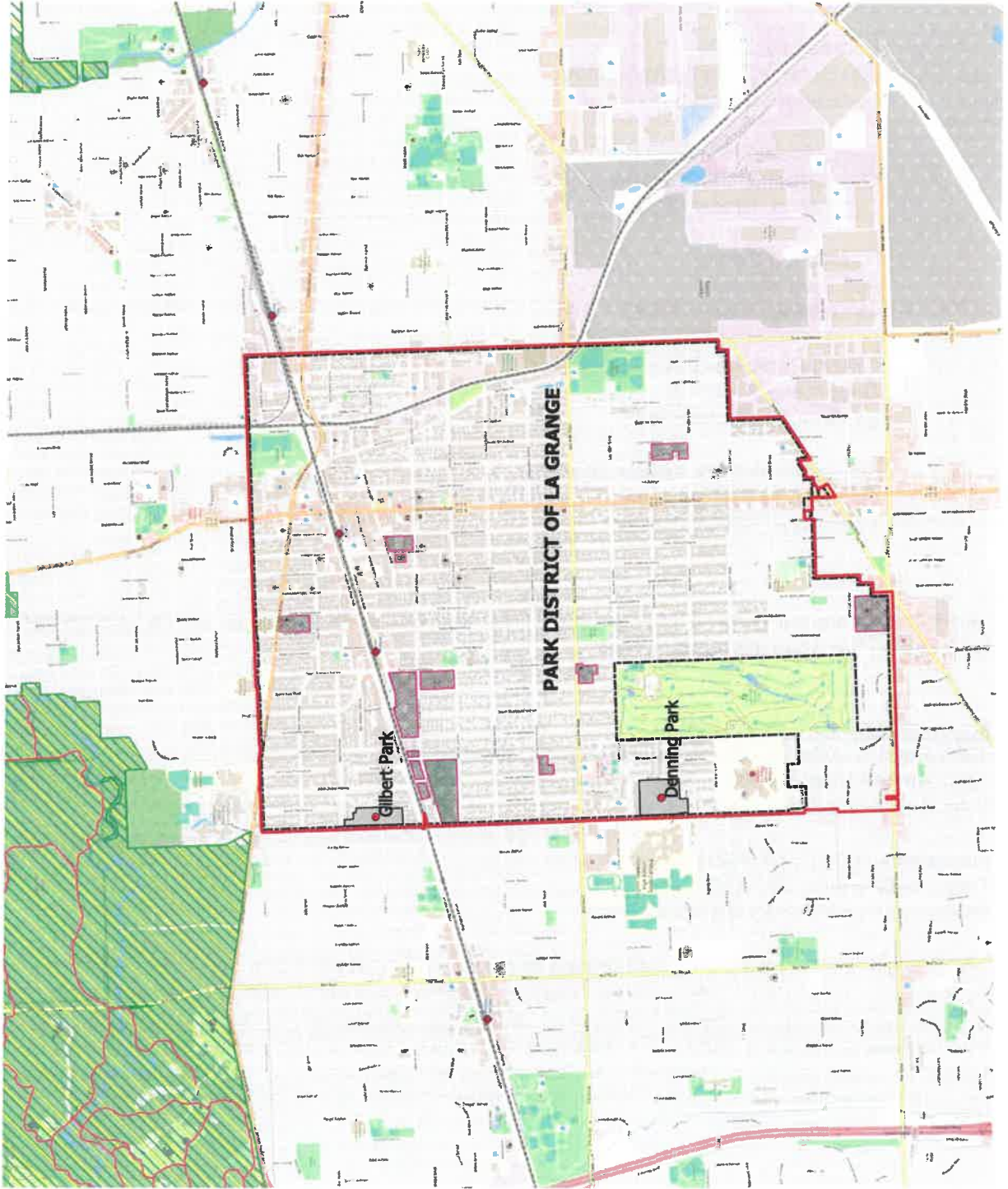
**19. Permanent Restroom  
Facilities**

**Legend**

- Park District of La Grange
- La Grange Municipal Boundary
- Forest Preserve Trail
- Forest Preserve
- Forest Preserve Shelter
- Railroad Station
- School
- Restroom

**OpenStreetMap**

**Level of Service**  
No Required NRPA Guidelines  
PDLG Population: 15,545  
Total Restroom Facilities: 2



## **Park District of La Grange Facilities Inventory and Assessment**

On May 13, 2021, and June 1, 2021, Tria Architecture, along with the MEP engineer OAS, performed a visual survey of the following buildings:

Denning Park Activity Building  
4903 South Willow Springs Road  
La Grange, Illinois 60525

Community Center  
200 South Washington Avenue  
La Grange, Illinois 60525

Sedgwick Park Activity Building  
48th Street & 10th Avenue  
La Grange, Illinois 60525

Recreation Center  
536 East Avenue  
La Grange, Illinois 60525

Gilbert Park Pre-School Building  
Gilbert Ave & 42<sup>nd</sup> St.  
La Grange, Illinois 60525

Gordon Park Concession Building  
Ogden Ave & Tilden Ave  
La Grange, Illinois 60525

The following are our general findings on each facility. Detailed information on the findings can be found on the attached spreadsheet.

### **Denning Park Activity Building**

4903 South Willow Springs Road, La Grange, Illinois 60525

Approximate Size: 3,550 sq. ft.

Date Constructed: 1976

Replacement Cost: \$1,242,500

Proposed Repairs: \$72,450

Percentage of Replacement Cost: 5.8%

The Denning Park activity building consists of multiple office spaces and one large program space on the north end of the building. The Denning Park activity building served as the former administrative offices for the Park District of La Grange until the acquisition and renovation of the Recreation Center in 2006. The facility is currently leased to “The LeaderShop”, a local non-profit organization that provides leadership and outreach/volunteer services for elementary through high school aged youths. There is a basement below the building that is used for storage.

The building is constructed mostly of masonry bearing walls with wood floor and roof framing. A rear section of the building is covered with wood siding that needs repair or replacement. The roof is covered in asphalt shingles that appear to be in good condition.

The building utilizes an exterior mechanical unit that is installed at grade. The unit is in poor condition and the exposed flue is a potential burn hazard as installed. This unit should be replaced in the near future.

The rear corridor that leads from the main entrance lobby and the program space to the rear exit has doors that swing into the corridor and items that are being stored in the corridor. Both items restrict egress in the corridor and should be addressed.

Flooding from time to time was discussed within the basement level at the time of the building assessment walkthrough. The source or cause of the flooding was not evident at the time of the walkthrough. Further investigation beyond the scope of this assessment should be conducted to determine the root cause of this flooding.

A wood column and additional wood supports have been installed in the basement in an area that may have contained an interior stair to the basement at some time in its history. The wood column appears to be bearing directly on the concrete floor slab. The Owner should enter into an agreement with a structural engineer to further analyze this bearing condition and to confirm that the slab is adequate to resist the loads from the column.

### **Community Center**

200 South Washington Avenue, La Grange, Illinois 60525

Approximate Size: 4,290 sq. ft.

Date Constructed: Actual Construction Date Unknown: Building Leased from Village

Replacement Cost: \$1,501,500

Proposed Repairs: \$381,885

Percentage of Replacement Cost: 25.4%

The Community Center consists of a large program space surrounded by storage rooms, a kitchen, toilet rooms, and an office for Park District staff. The building is constructed of masonry bearing walls with a low slope roof system. The roof is a white single ply membrane system with two internal roof drains. The roof system appears to be in good condition.

It is obvious that the masonry walls had previous water infiltration issues that have been addressed by Park District staff prior to the walkthrough. Efflorescence was witnessed at the time of the walk-through but has since been removed and repainted by Park District staff.

Within the mechanical room inside the building are interior mechanical units with remote condensing units located on the roof. The units appear to be in good condition. There are sections of piping within the mechanical room that Tria recommends be tested and abated and replaced if necessary.

The toilet rooms for both men and women do not meet the requirements of the Illinois Accessibility Act and should be renovated to better serve persons with disabilities.

### **Sedgwick Park Activity Building**

48th Street & 10th Avenue, La Grange, Illinois 60525

Approximate Size: 2,550 sq. ft.

Date Constructed: 1955

Replacement Cost: \$892,500

Proposed Repairs: \$167,370

Percentage of Replacement Cost: 18.8%

The Sedgwick Park activity building consists of one large program space surrounded by offices, storage, and support spaces. The shell of the building is constructed with load bearing masonry walls with a low slope roof. The existing asphalt low slope roof system is old and in poor condition. The Sedgwick Park Activity Building roof should be replaced in the near future.

The building is used, at least part of the time, as a partial day preschool. All electrical outlets within reach of children should be covered. Although the facility is exempt from the requirements for outdoor play areas, if outdoor play is provided, the area should be completely enclosed by fencing.

The mechanical system is housed inside the building in a utility room off the main program space. In this utility room, as well as within a storage room, there is exposed pipe insulation that Tria recommends be tested and be abated and replaced if necessary.

The light fixtures in the main program space do not have protective covers or lenses. These exposed fluorescent lamps are at risk of being broken should they be struck during room use. This would result in broken glass falling to the floor while the space is in use.

The exterior overhead door on the south side of the building is damaged and buckling. It is recommended this door be replaced with a new energy efficient insulated overhead door in the near future.

### **Recreation Center**

536 East Avenue

La Grange, Illinois 60525

Approximate Size: First Floor: 115,660 s.f. Second Floor: 8,950 s.f.

Date of Initial Build-Out: 2005 (Renovated in 2016)

Replacement Cost: \$43,613,500

Proposed Repairs: \$1,319,315

Percentage of Replacement Cost: 3.0%

The recreation center is the largest and most popular facility in the District's park system. It includes the Park District's administrative offices, the recreation department, the District's maintenance shop, the fitness center, gymnasiums, several program spaces, the White Sox Training Academy, as well as storage space, and an indoor parking garage. The building has a partial second floor above the main office that houses additional offices as well as a banquet room and conference room.

The building is constructed of exterior precast concrete bearing walls with steel low slope roof framing. The existing roof is divided into five roof areas. Three of these roof areas are newer white single-ply roof systems. One of the older roof areas is a ballasted EPDM roof system that is near the end of its life expectancy and should be replaced soon. There are a few areas where the ballast has been moved aside in this roof area, most likely done during an investigation into an active roof leak. At the time of the facility review and walkthrough, standing water was witnessed

in this roof area. Roof saddles need to be installed to achieve proper roof drainage and the ballast should be respread/replaced over the uncovered area if the roof repair work is complete. The white single ply roof areas appear to be in good condition with only minor maintenance items needing to be addressed.

HVAC is provided by twelve roof top mechanical units. These units are nearing, or beyond, their life expectancy. It is recommended a replacement strategy and plan be developed to begin replacing the units on a regular basis to prevent costly emergency replacements or repairs.

In the White Sox Training Academy, the netting of the batting cages has been attached to the wall in a way that prevents access to the second exit from the space. The netting installation needs to be revised to allow free and clear access to this exit door in case of emergency.

On the second floor there are approximately five ceiling tiles with evidence of water stains. It is difficult to determine if these stains are from current water infiltration or the result of older leaks that have been corrected. Further investigation into the source of the water infiltration is needed to determine if repairs are necessary.

The two server rooms in the building do not have dedicated cooling systems. At the time of the walk through, the doors of each were left open, likely to prevent overheating. It is recommended to have a dedicated cooling system for the server rooms so they can remain secured while not being allowed to overheat.

In the maintenance areas and the indoor parking garage, the carbon monoxide detection system does not have adequate coverage. The system needs to be upgraded to properly cover the entirety of both spaces.

### **Gilbert Park Preschool Building**

Gilbert Ave & 42nd St., La Grange, Illinois 60525

Approximate Size: 1,710 s.f.

Date Constructed: 1940's

Replacement Cost: \$598,500

Proposed Repairs: \$46,410

Percentage of Replacement Cost: 7.8%

The building at Gilbert Park once served as an ice skating warming shelter for the District's winter ice program. Today, the facility is utilized as a pre-school facility. It consists of a main activity area with toilet rooms on one side and a kitchen and office space on the other.

The building is constructed of masonry bearing walls with a wood framed roof structure. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles that appear to be in good condition. The rear entry is covered in wood siding that needs repair or replacement. There is a basement below the building that is used for mechanical and electrical systems.

Since the building is used as a partial day pre-school it must follow the requirements of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. All electrical outlets within reach of children should be covered. Although the facility is exempt from the requirements for outdoor play areas, if outdoor play is provided, the area should be completely enclosed by fencing.

As stated above, the areas of wood siding on the exterior of the building need repair or replacement. Three areas of wood fascia or wood trim on the exterior of the building is also in need of repair.

The existing toilet rooms are not fully accessible to persons with disabilities. To be fully accessible items will need to be removed, relocated, or specifically renovated to meet the Illinois Accessibility Code and the Americans with Disabilities Act Requirements.

**Gordon Park Concession Building**

Ogden Ave & Tilden Ave, La Grange, Illinois 60525

Approximate Size: 850 s.f.

Dated Constructed: 2014

Replacement Cost: \$297,500

Proposed Repairs: \$10,500

Percentage of Replacement Cost: 3.5%

The Gordon Park building is utilized as a concession building for the park and houses the control systems for the adjacent splash pad. The building appears to be new and is generally in excellent condition. The exterior shell is constructed of masonry bearing walls with an asphalt shingle roof system.

The paint finish on the wooden soffit and fascia appears to be worn and in need of repainting. The pull handles on the exterior doors do not meet the requirements of the Illinois Accessibility Code. Otherwise, the building is in excellent condition.

**Park District of La Grange - Building Assessment - Denning Park**  
**March 7, 2022**

Item ID	Building	Location	Building System	Component / Description	Anticipated Replacement Year	2022 Unit Cost	Quantity	Estimate of Replacement Cost	Comments
1	Denning Park	Copy Room	Electric	Reinstall loose wiring	2022	\$1,575	1	\$1,575	
2	Denning Park	Office	Electric	Reinstall loose wiring	2022	\$1,575	1	\$1,575	
3	Denning Park	East Elevation	Electrical	Exterior electrical box on east side is loose and does not have GFI outlet - fix and replace outlet	2022	\$210	1	\$210	
4	Denning Park	Corridor	Electrical	Add exit sign/light on East exit door	2022	\$263	1	\$263	
5	Denning Park	Toilet Room	Electrical	Add audio/visual device in toilet room	2022	\$289	2	\$578	
<b>Total 2022 Estimated Cost for Denning Park \$4,200</b>									
14	Denning Park	Basement	Stormwater	Basement floods during some storms	2023	\$0	1	\$0	Requires further investigation beyond the scope of this report
6	Denning Park	East Elevation	Door and Frame	Step down at door is a tripping hazard - rework sidewalk	2023	\$7,875	1	\$7,875	
<b>Total 2023 Estimated Cost for Denning Park \$7,875</b>									
7	Denning Park	North Elevation	Siding	Remove organic growth from siding	2024	\$1,575	1	\$1,575	
8	Denning Park	East Elevation	Siding	Replace damaged trim and refinish worn wood siding	2024	\$5,250	1	\$5,250	
9	Denning Park	West Elevation	Soffit and Fascia	Fill hole and touch-up paint at minor soffit damage at northwest corner	2024	\$1,575	1	\$1,575	
10	Denning Park	North Elevation	Siding	Fill hole in siding and touch-up paint	2024	\$1,575	1	\$1,575	
11	Denning Park	East Elevation	Siding	Fill hole in siding and touch-up paint	2024	\$1,575	1	\$1,575	
12	Denning Park	South Elevation	Stairs	Sand, prime and repaint rust on guardrail	2024	\$5,250	1	\$5,250	
13	Denning Park	West Elevation	Entry	Sand, prime and repaint rust on guardrail	2024	\$5,250	1	\$5,250	
<b>Total 2024 Estimated Cost for Denning Park \$22,050</b>									

Notes:  
1. Report does not reflect future damage to items or finishes beyond normal wear and tear.  
2. Estimated costs do not include A/E Fees.  
3. Estimated costs are in 2022 dollars.

**Park District of La Grange - Building Assessment - Denning Park  
March 7, 2022**

Item ID	Building	Location	Building System	Component / Description	Anticipated Replacement Year	2022 Unit Cost	Quantity	Estimate of Replacement Cost	Comments
15	Denning Park	Corridor	Door and Frame	Modify door from lobby that swings into corridor	2025	\$5,250	1	\$5,250	
16	Denning Park	Exterior	Mechanical	Grade mounted RTU is in poor condition. Also potential burn hazard on exposed flue stack. Replace	2025	\$8,400	1	\$8,400	
17	Denning Park	Basement	Structure	Wood column doesn't appear to have a proper foundation	2025	\$0	1	\$0	Requires further investigation beyond the scope of this report
<b>Total 2025 Estimated Cost for Denning Park \$13,650</b>									
18	Denning Park	Toilet Rooms	Mechanical	Replace or repair exhaust fans in toilet room(s) - not working	2029	\$630	2	\$1,260	
19	Denning Park	Roof	Chimney	Install permanent bird screens on top of chimney	2029	\$2,258	1	\$2,258	
20	Denning Park	East Elevation	Door and Frame	Replace worn door and frame	2029	\$7,875	1	\$7,875	
<b>Total 2029 Estimated Cost for Denning Park \$11,393</b>									
21	Denning Park	Varies	Plumbing	Install TMV's on sink or lavatories	2030	\$420	3	\$1,260	
22	Denning Park	Basement	Plumbing	Cap or remove unused sanitary piping in basement - 4" and 1.5"	2030	\$473	1	\$473	
<b>Total 2030 Estimated Cost for Denning Park \$1,733</b>									
23	Denning Park	All Elevations	Window	Tuckpoint worn mortar joint at windowsills	2031	\$525	10	\$5,250	
24	Denning Park	West Elevation	Door and Frame	Replace damaged stone units at door sill	2031	\$2,625	1	\$2,625	
25	Denning Park	Mechanical Room	Plumbing	Install backflow preventer on water service	2031	\$3,675	1	\$3,675	
<b>Total 2031 Estimated Cost for Denning Park \$11,550</b>									
<b>Total Estimated Cost for Denning Park \$72,450</b>									

Notes:  
1. Report does not reflect future damage to items or finishes beyond normal wear and tear.  
2. Estimated costs do not include AE Fees.  
3. Estimated costs are in 2022 dollars.

**Park District of La Grange - Building Assessment - Community Center**  
**March 7, 2022**

Item ID	Building	Location	Building System	Component / Description	Anticipated Replacement Year	2022 Unit Cost	Quantity	Estimate of Replacement Cost	Comments
1	Community Center	West Elevation	Egress	Step at door's presents a tripping hazard in an emergency - rework sidewalk	2023	\$7,875	1	\$7,875	
<b>Total 2023 Estimated Cost for Community Center \$7,875</b>									
2	Community Center	Toilet Rooms	Toilet Partitions	Toilet partitions are worn and damaged - replace	2024	\$10,500	2	\$21,000	
<b>Total 2024 Estimated Cost for Community Center \$21,000</b>									
3	Community Center	North Elevation	Entry	Repair damaged soffit at entry	2025	\$7,875	1	\$7,875	
4	Community Center	Storage Room	Door and Frame	Door hardware has a deadbolt but not pull handle - replace hardware	2025	\$788	1	\$788	
<b>Total 2025 Estimated Cost for Community Center \$9,663</b>									
5	Community Center	South Elevation	Masonry	Masonry mortar joints are loose - tuckpoint	2027	\$2,625	1	\$2,625	
<b>Total 2027 Estimated Cost for Community Center \$2,625</b>									
6	Community Center	North Elevation	Entry	Replace cracked concrete walk at entry	2029	\$13,125	1	\$13,125	
<b>Total 2029 Estimated Cost for Community Center \$13,125</b>									
7	Community Center	Mechanical Room	Pipe Wrap	Test pipe wrap insulation. Abate and replace as needed.	2030	\$7,875	1	\$7,875	
8	Community Center	Varies	Plumbing	Install TMV's on lavatories	2030	\$420	3	\$1,260	
9	Community Center	Mechanical Room	Plumbing	Add backflow preventer on water service	2030	\$3,675	1	\$3,675	
10	Community Center		Plumbing	Replace faucet on slop sink faucet with one that has a vacuum breaker	2030	\$788	1	\$788	
<b>Total 2030 Estimated Cost for Community Center \$13,588</b>									

Notes:  
1. Report does not reflect future damage to items or finishes beyond normal wear and tear.  
2. Estimated costs do not include A/E Fees.  
3. Estimated costs are in 2022 dollars.

**Park District of La Grange - Building Assessment - Community Center**  
**March 7, 2022**

Item ID	Building	Location	Building System	Component / Description	Anticipated Replacement Year	2022 Unit Cost	Quantity	Estimate of Replacement Cost	Comments
11	Community Center	Toilet Rooms	Accessibility	The toilet rooms are not fully accessible	2031	\$315,000	1	\$315,000	
<b>Total 2031 Estimated Cost for Community Center \$315,000</b>									
<b>Total Estimated Cost for the Community Center \$381,885</b>									

Notes:  
 1. Report does not reflect future damage to items or finishes beyond normal wear and tear.  
 2. Estimated costs do not include A/E Fees.  
 3. Estimated costs are in 2022 dollars.

**Park District of La Grange - Building Assessment - Sedgwick Park**  
**March 7, 2022**

Item ID	Building	Location	Building System	Component / Description	Anticipated Replacement Year	2022 Unit Cost	Quantity	Estimate of Replacement Cost	Comments
1	Sedgwick Park	Roof	Roof	Clean roof drains	2022	\$0	1	\$0	
2	Sedgwick Park	Roof	Roof	Conduit for lights is loose from junction box	2022	\$788	1	\$788	
3	Sedgwick Park	Entire Building	IDCFS	Cover all outlets in children used spaces	2022	\$210	1	\$210	
<b>Total 2022 Estimated Cost for Sedgwick Park \$998</b>									
4	Sedgwick Park		Electrical	Add two exit signlights	2023	\$263	2	\$525	
5	Sedgwick Park	Main Room	Electrical	Replace lights in Main room that have exposed fluorescent lamps with ones that have protective lenses	2023	\$630	1	\$630	
<b>Total 2023 Estimated Cost for Sedgwick Park \$1,155</b>									
6	Sedgwick Park	South Elevation	Door and Frame	Overhead door system is buckling and in need of replacement	2024	\$6,400	1	\$6,400	
7	Sedgwick Park	South Elevation	Door and Frame	Wood frame around overhead door is in need of replacement	2024	\$2,625	1	\$2,625	
8	Sedgwick Park	West Elevation	Window	Steel lintel at window is deformed and rusting - replace lintel	2024	\$7,875	1	\$7,875	
9	Sedgwick Park	East Elevation	Window	Mortar joints on windowsills need to be repaired	2024	\$625	6	\$3,150	
10	Sedgwick Park	North Elevation	Siding	Wood siding is worn and in need of repair/refinishing	2024	\$5,250	1	\$5,250	
<b>Total 2024 Estimated Cost for Sedgwick Park \$27,300</b>									
11	Sedgwick Park	Toilet Rooms	Accessibility	Door to accessible stall swings into swing of corridor door	2027	\$5,250	1	\$5,250	
12	Sedgwick Park	All Elevations	Metal Fascia	Existing metal fascia is damaged and worn. Needs to be replaced.	2027	\$15,750	1	\$15,750	
<b>Total 2027 Estimated Cost for Sedgwick Park \$21,000</b>									

Notes:  
1. Report does not reflect future damage to items or finishes beyond normal wear and tear.  
2. Estimated costs do not include A/E Fees.  
3. Estimated costs are in 2022 dollars.

**Park District of La Grange - Building Assessment - Sedgwick Park**  
**March 7, 2022**

Item ID	Building	Location	Building System	Component / Description	Anticipated Replacement Year	2022 Unit Cost	Quantity	Estimate of Replacement Cost	Comments
13	Sedgwick Park	Roof	Roof	Replace built-up roof system	2029	\$78,750	1	\$78,750	
14	Sedgwick Park	Roof	Roof	Remove old security camera and wiring	2029	\$0	1	\$0	
15	Sedgwick Park	Roof	Roof	Exhaust fan curb is too low - extend	2029	\$2,625	1	\$2,625	
16	Sedgwick Park	Roof	Roof	Condensing unit rails not anchored to roof	2029	\$5,250	1	\$5,250	
17	Sedgwick Park	Roof	Roof	Replace damaged air intake ductwork	2029	\$1,575	1	\$1,575	
18	Sedgwick Park	Roof	Roof	Coping is rusting and bent	2029	\$5,250	1	\$5,250	
<b>Total 2029 Estimated Cost for Sedgwick Park \$83,460</b>									
19	Sedgwick Park	Utility Room	Pipe Wrap	Test pipe wrap insulation. Abate and replace as needed.	2030	\$7,875	1	\$7,875	
20	Sedgwick Park	Storage Room	Pipe Wrap	Test pipe wrap insulation. Abate and replace as needed.	2030	\$7,875	1	\$7,875	
21	Sedgwick Park	Utility Room	Door and Frame	Frame on door is railed but door is not - replace door	2030	\$2,625	1	\$2,625	
22	Sedgwick Park	Varies	Plumbing	Install TMV's on sink or lavatories	2030	\$210	3	\$630	
23	Sedgwick Park		Plumbing	Replace faucet on slop sink faucet with one that has a vacuum breaker	2030	\$788	1	\$788	
24	Sedgwick Park	Mechanical Room	Plumbing	Add backflow preventer on water service	2030	\$3,675	1	\$3,675	
<b>Total 2030 Estimated Cost for Sedgwick Park \$23,468</b>									

**Total Estimated Cost for Sedgwick Park \$167,370**

Notes:  
1. Report does not reflect future damage to items or finishes beyond normal wear and tear.  
2. Estimated costs do not include A/E Fees.  
3. Estimated costs are in 2022 dollars.

**Park District of La Grange - Building Assessment - Recreation Center**  
**March 7, 2022**

Item ID	Building	Location	Building System	Component / Description	Anticipated Replacement Year	2022 Unit Cost	Quantity	Estimate of Replacement Cost	Comments
1	Recreation Center	White Sox Academy	Egress	Clear path to secondary egress door	2022	\$525	1	\$525	
2	Recreation Center	Fitness Center	Egress	Move cardio equipment that is blocking egress door access	2022	\$0	1	\$0	
3	Recreation Center	Pre-School Rooms	IDCFS	Cover all outlets in children used spaces	2022	\$210	1	\$210	
4	Recreation Center	Gymnasium	Electrical	Replace exit sign above doors that is not illuminated	2022	\$263	1	\$263	
5	Recreation Center	Parking Garage	Electrical	Raise exit sign at exterior egress doors	2022	\$1,575	2	\$3,150	
6	Recreation Center	Second Floor	Electrical	Add exit sign/lights Large meeting room	2022	\$263	2	\$525	
7	Recreation Center	Second Floor	Electrical	Add exit sign/light at kitchen	2022	\$263	1	\$263	
8	Recreation Center	First Floor	Electrical	Add audio visual device at new maintenance office	2022	\$289	1	\$289	
9	Recreation Center	First Floor	Electrical	Add exit lights to Meeting rooms off Children's playroom	2022	\$263	2	\$525	
10	Recreation Center	First Floor	Electrical	Relocate exit sign/lights in Fitness toilet/locker room	2022	\$263	2	\$525	
11	Recreation Center	First Floor	Electrical	Add exit sign/light to South large storage room	2022	\$263	2	\$525	
12	Recreation Center	First Floor	Electrical	Add exit sign/lights to large meeting room	2022	\$263	2	\$525	
13	Recreation Center	First Floor	Electrical	Add heat or smoke detector to Paint storage room	2022	\$289	1	\$289	
14	Recreation Center	Second Floor	Electrical	Add emergency lighting to office space and conference rooms	2022	\$420	3	\$1,260	
15	Recreation Center	Second Floor	Electrical	Add emergency lighting to Large mtl. room	2022	\$420	2	\$840	
16	Recreation Center	Second Floor	Electrical	Add emergency lighting at kitchen	2022	\$420	1	\$420	
17	Recreation Center	Second Floor	Electrical	Add emergency lighting at Main entry foyer stairwell area	2022	\$420	2	\$840	

Notes:  
1. Report does not reflect future damage to items or finishes beyond normal wear and tear.  
2. Estimated costs do not include A/E Fees.  
3. Estimated costs are in 2022 dollars.

**Park District of La Grange - Building Assessment - Recreation Center**  
**March 7, 2022**

Item ID	Building	Location	Building System	Component / Description	Anticipated Replacement Year	2022 Unit Cost	Quantity	Estimate of Replacement Cost	Comments
18	Recreation Center	First Floor	Electrical	Add emergency lighting at new maintenance office	2022	\$420	1	\$420	
19	Recreation Center	First Floor	Electrical	Add emergency lights to Meeting rooms off Children's playroom	2022	\$420	2	\$840	
20	Recreation Center	First Floor	Electrical	Add emergency light to South large storage room (only has one currently)	2022	\$420	1	\$420	
21	Recreation Center	First Floor	Electrical	Add emergency lights to large meeting room	2022	\$420	2	\$840	
<b>Total 2022 Estimated Cost for Recreation Center \$13,483</b>									
22	Recreation Center	Shipping Office	Ceiling	Install missing ceiling tiles	2023	\$263	1	\$263	
23	Recreation Center	Receiving Office	Masonry Wall	Repair failing mortar joint at masonry wall	2023	\$2,625	1	\$2,625	
24	Recreation Center	Fitness Center	Mechanical	Provide dedicated cooling to server room	2023	\$15,750	1	\$15,750	
25	Recreation Center	Admin Offices	HVAC	Provide dedicated cooling to server room	2023	\$15,750	1	\$15,750	
26	Recreation Center	Roof	Mechanical	There are twelve RTU's (roof top units) that are nearing or beyond their average life expectancy - Start replacement plan and replace units that are experiencing more need of repairs or by age	2023	\$43,750	1	\$43,750	Replace 2 units in this year
<b>Total 2023 Estimated Cost for Recreation Center \$78,138</b>									
27	Recreation Center	Roof	Mechanical	There are twelve RTU's (roof top units) that are nearing or beyond their average life expectancy - Start replacement plan and replace units that are experiencing more need of repairs or by age	2024	\$43,750	1	\$43,750	Replace 2 units in this year
<b>Total 2024 Estimated Cost for Recreation Center \$43,750</b>									
28	Recreation Center	Roof	Mechanical	There are twelve RTU's (roof top units) that are nearing or beyond their average life expectancy - Start replacement plan and replace units that are experiencing more need of repairs or by age	2025	\$43,750	1	\$43,750	Replace 2 units in this year
<b>Total 2025 Estimated Cost for Recreation Center \$43,750</b>									

- Notes:  
1. Report does not reflect future damage to items or finishes beyond normal wear and tear.  
2. Estimated costs do not include A/E Fees.  
3. Estimated costs are in 2022 dollars.

**Park District of La Grange - Building Assessment - Recreation Center  
March 7, 2022**

Item ID	Building	Location	Building System	Component / Description	Anticipated Replacement Year	2022 Unit Cost	Quantity	Estimate of Replacement Cost	Comments
29	Recreation Center	First Floor	Mechanical	Maintenance and garage CO monitoring system does not have adequate coverage - Upgrade/replace CO monitoring/control system	2026	\$21,000	1	\$21,000	
30	Recreation Center	First Floor	Mechanical	Exhaust/Ventilation system for maintenance/garage appears to be undersized/inadequate per code - Upgrade/modify existing exhaust/ventilation system.	2026	\$52,500	1	\$52,500	
31	Recreation Center	Roof	Mechanical	There are twelve RTU's (roof top units) that are nearing or beyond their average life expectancy - Start replacement plan and replace units that are experiencing more need of repairs or by age	2026	\$43,750	1	\$43,750	Replace 2 units in this year
<b>Total 2026 Estimated Cost for Recreation Center \$117,250</b>									
32	Recreation Center	Roof	Mechanical	There are twelve RTU's (roof top units) that are nearing or beyond their average life expectancy - Start replacement plan and replace units that are experiencing more need of repairs or by age	2027	\$87,500	1	\$87,500	Replace 4 units in this year
<b>Total 2027 Estimated Cost for Recreation Center \$87,500</b>									
33	Recreation Center	Roof	Roof	Replace ballasted section of roof	2028	\$21	43,222	\$907,662	
34	Recreation Center	Roof	Roof	Add a second downspout to east gutter at south end	2028	\$525	1	\$525	
35	Recreation Center	Roof	Roof	Add a second downspout to the west gutter at south end	2028	\$525	1	\$525	
36	Recreation Center	Roof	Electrical	Electrical service outlets on roof are installed improperly and allow water to enter outlet box - Replace	2028	\$263	3	\$789	
<b>Total 2028 Estimated Cost for Recreation Center \$909,500</b>									

Notes:  
1. Report does not reflect future damage to items or finishes beyond normal wear and tear.  
2. Estimated costs do not include A/E Fees.  
3. Estimated costs are in 2022 dollars.

**Park District of La Grange - Building Assessment - Recreation Center**  
**March 7, 2022**

Item ID	Building	Location	Building System	Component / Description	Anticipated Replacement Year	2022 Unit Cost	Quantity	Estimate of Replacement Cost	Comments
37	Recreation Center	Loading Dock	Stairs	Replace handrail at loading dock stair that does not meet code.	2030	\$7,875	1	\$7,875	
38	Recreation Center	First Floor	Mechanical	Rec center offices utilize corridor as return plenum which is not to code - Revise return to unit	2030	\$6,825	1	\$6,825	
39	Recreation Center	First Floor	Plumbing	Add TMV's on the lavatories Throughout entire building	2030	\$420	16	\$7,560	
40	Recreation Center	First Floor	Plumbing	Eyewash in maintenance area is cold water only, must be tempered - Pjue hot water to eye wash and install TMV	2030	\$2,100	1	\$2,100	
41	Recreation Center	First Floor	Plumbing	Add backflow preventers to Janitor closet sloop sinks	2030	\$788	2	\$1,575	
<b>Total 2030 Estimated Cost for Recreation Center</b>								<b>\$25,935</b>	

**Total Estimated Cost for the Recreation Center \$1,319,315**

Notes:  
1. Report does not reflect future damage to items or finishes beyond normal wear and tear.  
2. Estimated costs do not include A/E Fees.  
3. Estimated costs are in 2022 dollars.

**Park District of La Grange - Building Assessment - Gilbert Park  
March 7, 2022**

Item ID	Building	Location	Building System	Component / Description	Anticipated Replacement Year	2022 Unit Cost	Quantity	Estimate of Replacement Cost	Comments
1	Gilbert Park	Vestibule	Door and Frame	Interior doors at south vestibule require too much force to open - adjust closers	2022	\$283	2	\$525	
2	Gilbert Park	Classroom	Door and Frame	Exits through toilet rooms are not allowed - remove exit signs	2022	\$1,575	2	\$3,150	
3	Gilbert Park	Entire Building	IDCFS	Cover all outlets in children used spaces	2022	\$210	1	\$210	
4	Gilbert Park	Toilet Room	Electrical	Add audio/visual device in toilet room	2022	\$283	2	\$578	
5	Gilbert Park	Toilet Room	Electrical	Add emergency light in toilet room	2022	\$420	2	\$840	
6	Gilbert Park	Varies	Electrical	Add additional emergency lighting	2022	\$420	2	\$840	
<b>Total 2022 Estimated Cost for Gilbert Park \$6,143</b>									
7	Gilbert Park	East Elevation	Stairs	Sand, prime and paint rust on guardrail	2023	\$5,250	1	\$5,250	
<b>Total 2023 Estimated Cost for Gilbert Park \$5,250</b>									
8	Gilbert Park	North elevation	Soffit and Fascia	Patch hole in soffit at electrical service	2025	\$525	1	\$525	
9	Gilbert Park	Roof	Chimney	Mortar joints are falling and require tuckpointing	2025	\$2,625	1	\$2,625	
10	Gilbert Park	South elevation	Siding	Wood siding is worn and in need of repair/refinishing	2025	\$5,250	1	\$5,250	
11	Gilbert Park	North elevation	Soffit and Fascia	Wood fascia is worn and in need of repair/refinishing	2025	\$2,625	1	\$2,625	
12	Gilbert Park	North elevation	Soffit and Fascia	Replaces missing metal trim at fascia	2025	\$788	1	\$788	
13	Gilbert Park	North elevation	Entry	Refinish worn wood brackets	2025	\$1,575	2	\$3,150	
14	Gilbert Park	East elevation	Stairs	Guardrail is not tall enough - replace	2025	\$10,500	1	\$10,500	
<b>Total 2025 Estimated Cost for Gilbert Park \$25,463</b>									

Notes:  
1. Report does not reflect future damage to items or finishes beyond normal wear and tear.  
2. Estimated costs are in 2022 dollars.  
3. Estimated costs are in 2022 dollars.

**Park District of La Grange - Building Assessment - Gilbert Park  
March 7, 2022**

Item ID	Building	Location	Building System	Component / Description	Anticipated Replacement Year	2022 Unit Cost	Quantity	Estimate of Replacement Cost	Comments
15	Gilbert Park	Women's Toilet	Accessibility	Modify accessible stall to meet ADA requirements	2030	\$7,875	1	\$7,875	
16	Gilbert Park	Main Room	Electrical	Light switches are not located adjacent to entry doors - relocate switches and consider 3-way switching	2030	\$840	1	\$840	
17	Gilbert Park	Varies	Plumbing	Install TMVs on lavatories	2030	\$420	2	\$840	
<b>Total 2030 Estimated Cost for Gilbert Park \$9,555</b>									

**Total Estimated Cost for Gilbert Park \$46,410**

Notes:  
1. Report does not reflect future damage to items or finishes beyond normal wear and tear.  
2. Estimated costs do not include AE Fees.  
3. Estimated costs are in 2022 dollars.

**Park District of La Grange - Building Assessment - Gordon Park  
March 7, 2022**

Item ID	Building	Location	Building System	Component / Description	Anticipated Replacement Year	2022 Unit Cost	Estimate of Replacement Cost	Comments
1	Gordon Park	Exterior	Soffit and Fascia	Wood soffit and fascia are worn - repaint	2025	\$5,250	\$5,250	
<b>Total 2025 Estimated Cost for Gordon Park \$5,250</b>								
2	Gordon Park	Exterior	Door and Frame	Replace door to have ADA compliant pulls	2030	\$2,625	\$5,250	If flush mounted pulls were approved as ADA accessible by door manufacturer at time of installation, this can be removed
<b>Total 2030 Estimated Cost for Gordon Park \$5,250</b>								
<b>Total Estimated Cost for Gordon Park \$10,500</b>								

- Notes:
1. Report does not reflect future damage to items or finishes beyond normal wear and tear.
  2. Estimated costs do not include A/E Fees.
  3. Estimated costs are in 2022 dollars.

**Park District of La Grange - Building Assessment - Cost Summary  
March 7, 2022**

Year	Building	Total Cost for the Year	Comments
2022	Denning Park	\$4,200	
2022	Community Center	\$0	
2022	Sedgwick Park	\$998	
2022	Recreation Center	\$13,493	
2022	Gilbert Park	\$6,143	
2022	Gordon Park	\$0	
<b>2022 Total Estimated Cost</b>		<b>\$24,833</b>	

Year	Building	Total Cost for the Year	Comments
2023	Denning Park	\$7,875	
2023	Community Center	\$7,875	
2023	Sedgwick Park	\$1,155	
2023	Recreation Center	\$78,138	
2023	Gilbert Park	\$5,250	
2023	Gordon Park	\$0	
<b>2023 Total Estimated Cost</b>		<b>\$100,293</b>	

2024	Denning Park	\$22,050	
2024	Community Center	\$21,000	
2024	Sedgwick Park	\$27,300	
2024	Recreation Center	\$43,750	
2024	Gilbert Park	\$0	
2024	Gordon Park	\$0	
<b>2024 Total Estimated Cost</b>		<b>\$114,100</b>	

2025	Denning Park	\$13,650	
2025	Community Center	\$8,663	
2025	Sedgwick Park	\$0	
2025	Recreation Center	\$43,750	
2025	Gilbert Park	\$25,463	
2025	Gordon Park	\$5,250	
<b>2025 Total Estimated Cost</b>		<b>\$96,775</b>	

Notes:  
 1. Report does not reflect future damage to items or finishes beyond normal wear and tear.  
 2. Estimated costs do not include A/E Fees.  
 3. Estimated costs are in 2022 dollars.

**Park District of La Grange - Building Assessment - Cost Summary  
March 7, 2022**

Year	Building	Total Cost for the Year	Comments
2026	Denning Park	\$0	
2026	Community Center	\$0	
2026	Sedjwick Park	\$0	
2026	Recreation Center	\$117,250	
2026	Gilbert Park	\$0	
2026	Gordon Park	\$0	
<b>2026 Total Estimated Cost</b>		<b>\$117,250</b>	

Year	Building	Total Cost for the Year	Comments
2027	Denning Park	\$0	
2027	Community Center	\$2,625	
2027	Sedjwick Park	\$21,000	
2027	Recreation Center	\$87,500	
2027	Gilbert Park	\$0	
2027	Gordon Park	\$0	
<b>2027 Total Estimated Cost</b>		<b>\$111,125</b>	

Year	Building	Total Cost for the Year	Comments
2028	Denning Park	\$0	
2028	Community Center	\$0	
2028	Sedjwick Park	\$0	
2028	Recreation Center	\$909,500	
2028	Gilbert Park	\$0	
2028	Gordon Park	\$0	
<b>2028 Total Estimated Cost</b>		<b>\$909,500</b>	

Year	Building	Total Cost for the Year	Comments
2029	Denning Park	\$11,383	
2029	Community Center	\$13,125	
2029	Sedjwick Park	\$93,450	
2029	Recreation Center	\$0	
2029	Gilbert Park	\$0	
2029	Gordon Park	\$0	
<b>2029 Total Estimated Cost</b>		<b>\$117,968</b>	

Notes:  
 1. Report does not reflect future damage to items or finishes beyond normal wear and tear.  
 2. Estimated costs do not include A/E Fees.  
 3. Estimated costs are in 2022 dollars.

**Park District of La Grange - Building Assessment - Cost Summary  
March 7, 2022**

Year	Building	Total Cost for the Year	Comments
2030	Denning Park	\$1,733	
2030	Community Center	\$13,598	
2030	Sedwick Park	\$23,468	
2030	Recreation Center	\$25,935	
2030	Gilbert Park	\$9,655	
2030	Gordon Park	\$5,250	
<b>2030 Total Estimated Cost</b>		<b>\$79,538</b>	
2031	Denning Park	\$11,550	
2031	Community Center	\$315,000	
2031	Sedwick Park	\$0	
2031	Recreation Center	\$0	
2031	Gilbert Park	\$0	
2031	Gordon Park	\$0	
<b>2031 Total Estimated Cost</b>		<b>\$326,550</b>	

<b>Total Estimated Cost</b>		<b>\$1,997,930</b>
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Notes:  
1. Report does not reflect future damage to items or finishes beyond normal wear and tear.  
2. Estimated costs do not include A/E Fees.  
3. Estimated costs are in 2022 dollars.

Park District of La Grange – Building Assessment  
Denning Park



Denning Park 7



Denning Park 8



Denning Park 9



Denning Park 10



Denning Park 12



Denning Park 15

Park District of La Grange – Building Assessment  
Denning Park



Denning Park 17



Denning Park 20



Denning Park 23



Denning Park 24



Denning Park Roof



Denning Park Roof

**Park District of La Grange – Building Assessment  
Community Center**



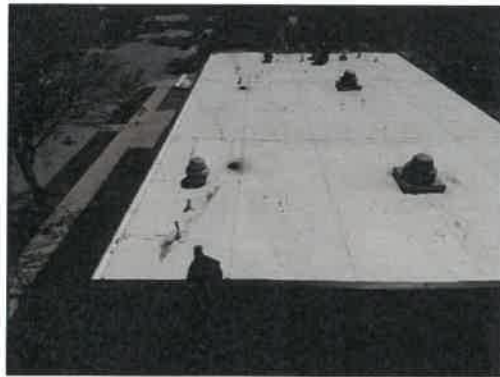
**Community Center 2**



**Community Center 3**



**Community Center 6**



**Community Center Roof**



**Community Center Roof**

Park District of La Grange – Building Assessment  
Sedgwick Park



Sedgwick Park 2



Sedgwick Park 6, 7



Sedgwick Park 8



Sedgwick Park 9



Sedgwick Park 10

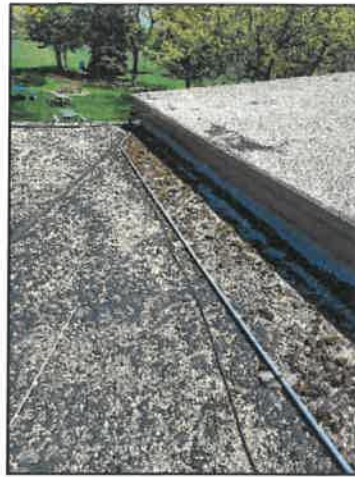


Sedgwick Park 11

**Park District of La Grange – Building Assessment  
Sedgwick Park**



Sedgwick Park 13



Sedgwick Park 13



Sedgwick Park 13



Sedgwick Park 13



Sedgwick Park 14



Sedgwick Park 15

**Park District of La Grange – Building Assessment  
Sedgwick Park**



Sedgwick Park 16, 17



Sedgwick Park 18

Park District of La Grange – Building Assessment  
Recreation Center



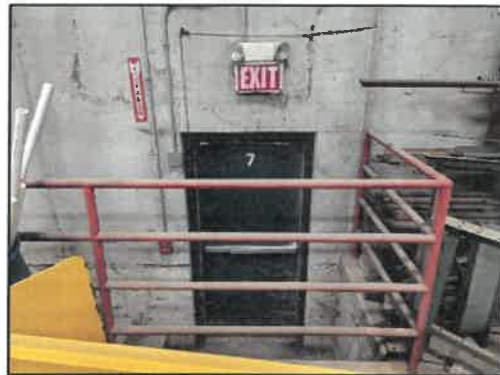
Recreation Center 1



Recreation Center 1



Recreation Center 2



Recreation Center 5



Recreation Center 22



Recreation Center 23

**Park District of La Grange – Building Assessment  
Recreation Center**



Recreation Center 33



Recreation Center 34, 35



Recreation Center 36

Park District of La Grange – Building Assessment  
Gilbert Park



Gilbert Park 7, 14



Gilbert Park 9



Gilbert Park 10



Gilbert Park 11



Gilbert Park 12



Gilbert Park 13

**Park District of La Grange – Building Assessment  
Gilbert Park**



Gilbert Park Roof



Gilbert Park Roof

**Park District of La Grange – Building Assessment  
Gordon Park**



Gordon Park 1



Gordon Park 2



Gordon Park Roof

# Park District of La Grange Recreation Programming

## INTRODUCTION

The recreation program assessment identifies trends in program enrollment and popularity, as well as strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities. It measures performance in meeting community needs in an effective and efficient manner, and presents strategies to improve programming efficiency, effectiveness, and net revenue.

In theory programming drives demand. In practice it means running a baseball league brings players to the park not only on games days or during organized practice sessions but also on their own to work on skills or enjoy a game of catch. It means those taking golf lessons may return to the golf course for “practice” rounds. Youths taking swim lessons are likely to return to the swimming pool/water park during open swim to practice techniques or enjoy the water. The same can be said of the child enrolled in gymnastics or the individuals taking ice skating lessons. The wannabe artist taking a drawing class will gravitate to the pencils and scratch pad outside the classroom. Those enrolled in fitness classes are prime prospects for fitness center memberships. The theory applies across the board.

Understanding this principle, brings understanding that quality programming will bring participants to your parks and facilities beyond the formal instruction or program times which will benefit facility attendance, revenue, and concessions. It is vital to sustain energetic programming to remain vibrant, relevant, and financially sustainable.

People purchase products and services to fill a need or desire. The more in sync with the needs, desires, and trends of your marketplace, the more successful are your programming.

Customer feedback from program evaluations, surveys, suggestions, as well as staff involvement in civic and community organizations are valuable means of gathering customer opinion.

Distinguishing yourself from your competitors is critical to gain market share. Whether through customer centric service, quality programming, special features, or providing the best value, the District must set itself apart from other local recreation service providers. Your reputation, quality of instruction, cleanliness of facility, and customer service matter equally as price when consumers consider their purchasing choices.

Several rooms in the recreation center have limited programming capacity because of their small size. Nonetheless, only 9% of community survey respondents reported dissatisfaction with the general program rooms. Forty one percent (41%) were satisfied while fifty percent (50%) were neutral.

Recreation and fitness providers with the high market share often have facilities specifically designed for their activities. For example, people looking to for a dance class favor a facility that has a suspended wood floor, mirrors on the walls, excellent acoustics, and qualified instructors. Those in search of aerobic fitness or karate programs desire the same qualities in the hosting facility. Arts and crafts programs will attract more participation when held in spaces designed and equipped specifically for arts and crafts with sinks, kilns, storage, and display shelves. Programs held in multi-purpose rooms or tailored into available spaces are perceived as lesser quality.

Facilities designed for specific recreation activities improve the public's perception of quality, and boost participation.

## **PROGRAM ANALYSIS**

### Key Performance Indicators

Documenting key performance indicators along with maintaining a 5-year comparison delivers a macro level dashboard of overall performance for informed decision making. Recommended key performance indicators are the household penetration rate, program enrollment/attendance, success rates and average class size. Waiting lists and the number of new and free offerings may also be included. Graphing each KPI over a 3 to 5-year period produces the Park District's unique trending information.

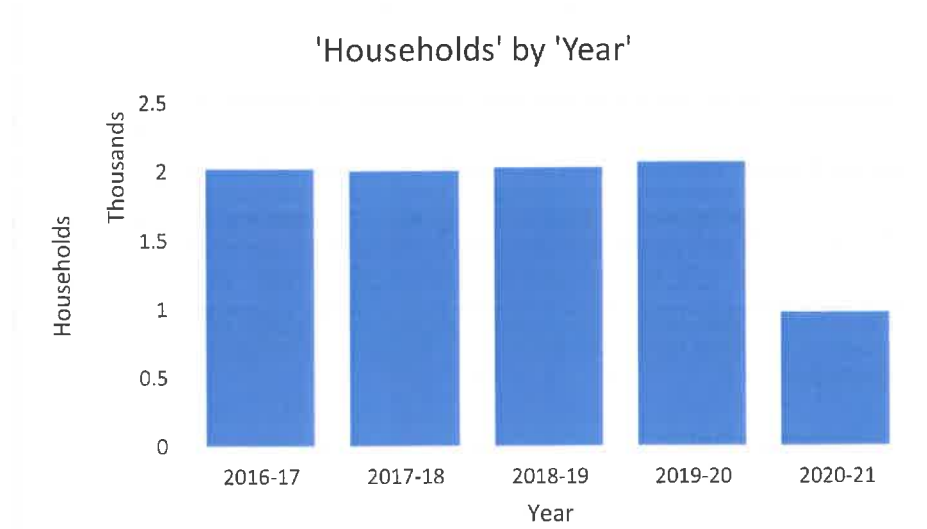
### Household Penetration Rate

The household penetration rate is a measure of the number of households that had at least one member of the household register for a program or activity within the year. A year-to-year increase or drop in household participation does not indicate a trend. At minimum three years, but ideally 5 years of tracking is necessary to identify the trend. If the 3 to 5-year trend line is increasing, programming is connecting with a growing number of households and the customer base is expanding. Conversely, if the trend line shows a decline, your customer base is shrinking. It represents a growing number of households disengaged from programming. For the non-participating households, your reputation hinges upon the visual appeal of your parks, word of mouth, social media, and news reports. A penetration rate of 30% or higher is desired.

Using the US Census estimated population for La Grange, IL household penetration rates for the last 5 years were:

Year	<u>2016-17</u>	<u>2017-18</u>	<u>2018-19</u>	<u>2019-20</u>	<u>2020-21</u>
Unique Households	2018	2001	2026	2065	970
Penetration Rate	13.20%	13.10%	13.20%	13.50%	6%

These numbers exclude BASE and Recreation Center memberships which would assumedly increase the household penetration rates.



**Program Enrollment/Attendance**

Program enrollment and attendance gauge the popularity and relevance of your programs and services. These straightforward numbers indicate whether more or fewer people are participating in programs and services from year to year.

Program Participation	2016	2017	%	2018	%	2019	%	2020	%	Trending
Athletics	3340	2810	-16%	2765	-2%	2769	0%	1847	-33%	Down
Fitness	861	964	12%	1073	11%	1119	4%	720	-36%	Upward
Special Interests	789	665	-16%	620	-7%	671	8%	137	-80%	
Special Events	625	770	23%	700	9%	749	-7%	227	-70%	
Performing Arts	272	197	-28%	238	21%	307	29%	138	-55%	Upward
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5877</b>	<b>5406</b>	<b>-8%</b>	<b>5396</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>5615</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>3069</b>	<b>-45%</b>	

Overall program participation during the last five years has been relatively level though participation in specific program areas has varied. Program offerings decreased dramatically in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic corresponding with an overall 45% decrease in participation.

Program data for preschool, day camp and BASE data are presented separately.

Enrollment	2016	2017	%	2018	%	2019	%	2020	%	Trending
Preschool	73	81	11%	91	12%	102	12%	35	-66%	Upward
Day Camps	1035	935	-10%	913	2%	844	-8%	245	-71%	
Day Camp Before/After	446	541	21%	503	-7%	508	0%	N/A		
BASE Summer Camp	282	293	4%	309	5%	345	12%	52	-85%	Upward

### Program Success Rates

The program success rate is an indication of effectiveness and efficiency. It is calculated by dividing the number of programs run by the number offered. Executive Decisions Consulting recommends a success rate for the overall program menu between 70% to 90%. With respect to measuring *effectiveness* - A success rate that is below 70% suggests time, effort and resources are allocated to programs that are not in sync with community interests. The loss (or waste) of time, effort, and resources on developing programs that do go is a gauge of *efficiency*.

A success rate above 90% may indicate conservative programming lacking fresh, trending, innovative offerings. New avant-garde opportunities when nurtured can mature into core programs.

### **Average Program Success Rates 2016 – 2019**

*(Given the pandemic 2020 data not included)*

Athletics	69%
Performing Arts	54%
Special Interests	57%
Fitness	61%
Special Events	52%

According to the community survey, inconvenient program times and programs not meeting needs/desires were frequently mentioned as reasons for non-participation.

Like all products and services, selling recreation programs is a function of awareness, supply and demand, and pricing. When cancellation rates are greater than 30%:

- Consider eliminating programs and services when the market is saturated with competition.
- Eliminate offerings that have been marketed yet repeatedly fail to generate sufficient enrollment.
- Consider reducing the number of similar or competing program choices.
- With respect for busy schedules, consider shorter class schedules. Agencies around the country are moving from 8-week programs to 4- or 6-week increments.

### Average class size

The average class size impacts the program's margin. It's calculated by dividing the total number of participants by the number of programs run. As the average class size increases, so does the margin. Once direct costs are covered, incremental revenue hits the bottom line.

For the years 2016 to 2019, average class sizes across programming areas were:

<u>Average Class Size</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>
Athletics	7	7	7	7
Performing Arts	2	2	3	4
Fitness	8	8	8	8
Special Events	32	31	29	30
Special Interests	4	5	6	5
Preschool	10	12	11	10
Day Camp Before/After	12	15	14	13

Program Balance

Each recreation program progresses through a lifecycle. The stages of the lifecycle are Introductory, Growth, Maturity, and Decline. Recreation programming staff placed programs in the following categories:

<b>Growth</b>	
Dance Programs	Kids First Sunday Athletic Classes
Tai Chi	Gymnastics
La Grange Lions Travel Basketball	

<b>Mature</b>	
Youth Developmental Basketball League 1 <sup>st</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup> grades	
Yoga Classes	Jujitsu Classes
Kiddie Kollege	All Star Sports Soccer & T-Ball

<b>Decline</b>	
Karate	Piano
EVP Volleyball	Men's Basketball League
Kid Rock/Tot Rock Classes	

The Learning Resources Network (LERN) is the world's leading and largest association in continuing education and lifelong learning. According to LERN, 10% to 15% of the program menu should be new programming. These programs should be suitably marketed and given opportunity to grow. Sixty - 70% of the program menu should be in a growth or mature stage. These offerings should be routinely energized with a new or improved component. Ten to 15% of the program menu should be scrutinized for termination with

the resources reinvested in new, trending, or innovative programming. Staying current and relevant with your offerings is as much about your image and branding as it is about programming.

Staff cited the following challenges and inhibitors in programming for the community:

- Free programming by the library
- Competition
- Weather
- Getting the word out
- Finding knowledgeable instructors

The content, delivery and description of mature programs should be examined routinely and refreshed. Participant program evaluations are valuable when adjusting program content.

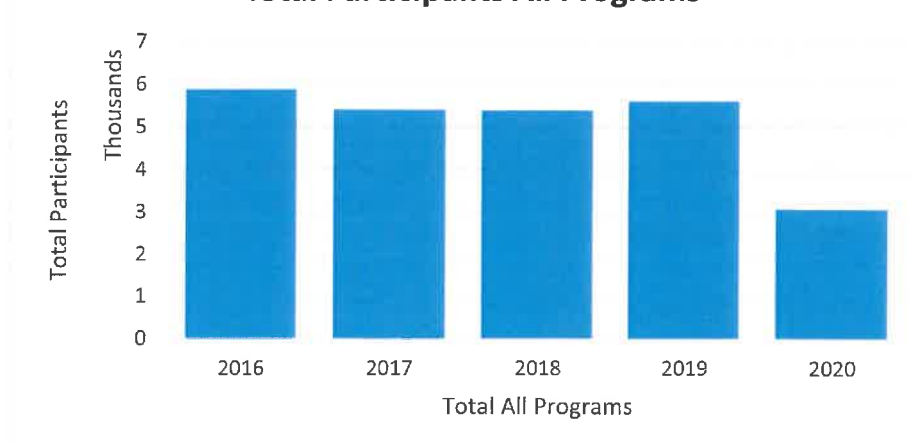
The following charts identifies key program data from the last 5 years.

### Program Data - 5 Year History

TOTALS	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Programs Offered	1418	1324	1278	1229	1067
Program Run	925	785	793	796	398
Success Rate	65%	59%	62%	65%	37%
Avg. Number Participants	6	7	7	7	8
Total Participants	5887	5406	5396	5615	3069

COVID

### Total Participants All Programs



Martial arts, Learning Ladders Preschool and La Grange Fitness received the highest satisfaction ratings in the community survey.

## RECREATION STAFF PERSPECTIVES

Perspective of the recreation programming staff was obtained through a SWOT analysis and discussion of societal, cultural, and behavioral trends held April 13, 2021. Trends impact participation and provide opportunities to develop programs that meet current needs. Six staff participated.

### *Strengths*

- Fitness Center
- Basketball
- Day Camp/BASE
- Pre School

### *Weaknesses*

- Capital Improvement Plan
- Facility Upkeep
- Marketing/ Branding
- Salary & Wages
- Staff Complacency
- Web Site

### *Opportunities*

- Expand BASE Program
- Generate New Program Ideas
- Organizational Structure
- Improve Customer Service

### *Threats*

- Legislation
- Number of Recreation Providers w/in Proximity
- COVID 19

According to *Recreation Management State of the Industry Survey*, the primary pre-COVID 19 pandemic challenges and concerns facing programming staff from across the nation were:

- Equipment and facility maintenance
- Staffing
- Marketing and increasing participation
- Creating new and innovative programs

The SWOT Analysis action plan is to build upon strengths, attack weaknesses, and seize opportunities.

*Build upon strengths.* Promote comprehensive “*something for everyone*” programming. Emphasize your premier fitness facility BASE program, day camp and safety record.

*Attack weaknesses.* Marketing/Promotions and Brand Awareness is not a one person or one department function; it takes the collective input and effort of the team. Consider hiring a marketing expert. Challenge staff to create new programs each quarter.

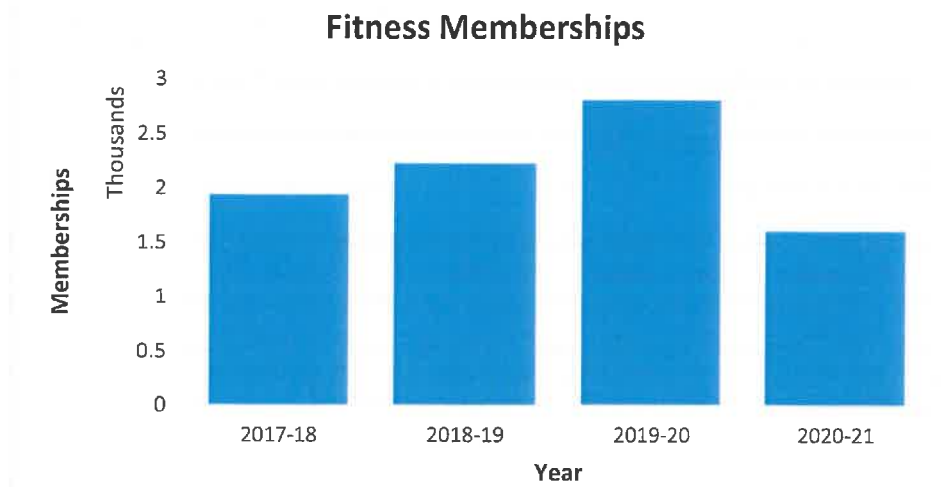
*Seize opportunities.* Every weakness presents an opportunity for change and growth. Brainstorm solutions to each weakness. Prioritize the remedies into a 2- or 3-year action plan.

## **FITNESS**

According to the health fitness industry 16% to 25% of Americans are or have the propensity to join a gym/fitness center. The industry is benefitting from longer life spans and a desire to live a healthier more active lifestyle. The fitness industry is at the forefront of combating the obesity epidemic in the United States. Good health is a long-term investment. Individuals too often give up working out when it is tedious, or they do not see immediate results. Therefore, it is important to stay current with the latest fitness equipment and classes to maintain member interest and not lose them to attrition or a competitor.

La Grange Fitness competes for market share with private sector facilities. It must be flexible and quick to counter competitors' membership drives, pricing discounts and chic programming.

Since opening in September 2017, La Grange Fitness has been well received.



Until the COVID-19 pandemic hit in March 2020, households with at least one membership at La Grange Fitness were increasing briskly at 15% and 26% respectively.

	La Grange	Households with	Percent
<u>Year</u>	<u>Households</u>	<u>Membership</u>	<u>Change</u>
<b>2017-18</b>	5,352	1,944	---
<b>2018-19</b>	5,352	2,233	15%
<b>2019-20</b>	5,352	2,814	26%
<b>2020-21</b>	5,352	1,609	-43%

Three core strategies for continued success are:

1. Growing membership
2. Membership retention
3. Fitness programming

#### *Growing Membership*

There are two options to increase membership. Gain a higher percent of market share or expand the market. In other words, either sway members away from your competitors or give the non-active population who live and work in La Grange a compelling reason to exercise/join.

Luring members from the competition is a struggle. People often have acute reasons for choosing where they work out - the amenities, location, travel distance, rates, equipment, appearance/cleanliness, reputation, workout partner, etc. Those variables are difficult to compete against.

A better option is to increase membership by expanding the market. Give sedentary people a reason to get active. Give active people a plausible reason to join. The fitness market is comprised up of adults aged 25 to 54 years old. You will find this market segment participating in your adult programs and sports leagues, as members of local walking clubs, customers of health food stores, sports stores, and vitamin shops. Market to community partners (service groups, programming partners) having the same demographic.

Lastly, expand the market by stimulating interest of high school and college age individuals, and active seniors.

Record all membership inquiries. Obtain the name, phone number, email, and interest of the potential member. Offer a 5-day free trial. The 5-day pass allows one a true feel for the facility, equipment, and environment. It gives staff time to engage the potential member, discover their fitness goals, and sell the membership. Do not give the potential member a reason to check out the competition.

Follow up with each membership inquiry within five days. If the individual has joined another facility, find out which one and why. If they have not joined a facility offer an incentive to join La Grange Fitness. If they decide not to join any facility, ask why. The market research is vital to better position yourself.

Market La Grange Fitness to your captive audience - the parents of children enrolled in classes at the recreation center. While the child is in class mom or dad can get in a 45-minute workout.

### *Member Retention*

More imperative than gaining new members is keeping current members. Providing a rewarding experience which retains members is less expensive than acquiring new members. Therefore, the retention rate is the most important key performance indicator for a gym/fitness facility. It is an indicator of member satisfaction and financial performance.

Staying current with the latest workout equipment is essential to keep from becoming dated and maintaining member interest. La Grange Fitness leases fitness equipment. Typically, facilities that lease equipment are in a better position to turn over and upgrade equipment on a regular basis. From a cash flow perspective, leasing provides steady year-to-year budgeting. Facilities that outright purchase equipment tend to hold onto the equipment longer, then experience a spike when equipment replacement is necessary.

Maintaining the member retention rate is recommended. According to the International Health, Racquet and Sports Club Association (ISHRA) Profiles of Success report the average club retention rate is 66%. The top three reasons people stop gym memberships are:

1. It's too expensive.

Antidote

- Everything costs money but what better to spend one's money on than better health. Good health is much less expensive than doctor visits, medical exams, and prescription drugs. Further, according to the 2015 community survey one out of 4 people indicated price as a primary reason in selecting a health club. Hours of operation, friendly staff/clean environment, and equipment account for 50% of their selection criteria. Therefore, being open during hours people are available to workout, employing knowledgeable, personable staff, and having up-to-date equipment in working order are most important in gaining and maintaining members
- Be the best value. Demonstrate that La Grange Fitness provides the most bang for the buck compared to its competition.
- Provide members with an incentive to renew at least 30 to 60 days prior to their renewal date. This may prevent them from shopping around.

2. They could exercise somewhere else for free.

Antidote

- This is difficult to combat, but all free passes end at some point...and working out at home usually is not sustained. Home is too distracting. Be positioned in the customers mind when the time comes to capitalize.

### 3. They were not using their membership.

#### Antidote

- Keep members engaged. Personal connections with fitness instructors, desk staff and personal trainers should make them feel valued. Do staff know members by name? Do staff know members fitness/health goals? Do they assist in meeting those goal and then set new challenges?
- Are there special member functions? Contests? A special demonstration? A wine and cheese event?
- Keep the facility and equipment current and in working order.

While staff-to-member connections are important, retention rates are increased more so with member-to-member connections. Participants in group fitness and activities have a higher retention rate than a member who simply uses exercise equipment. Exercising with friends and creating new friendships are valuable retention means. Therefore, creating a social and engaging environment is advantageous.

Regaining a former customer is easier and less expensive than landing a new one. Contact former members 30 days after their membership expires and offer an incentive to re-join. Former members should be contacted again 6 to 12 months after their expired membership. Each month an outreach should be made to former members whose memberships expired a year ago that month.

According to the International Health, Racquet and Sports Club Association (IHRSA), facilities with higher monthly fees are perceived to have a higher value. A higher price is often the symbol of higher quality. Within the fitness industry, there is a correlation between price and attrition: the higher the price, the lower the attrition; the lower the price, the higher the attrition.

Correspondingly, the more one is willing to pay, the more deeply they are committed to the facility.

The community survey documents residents support and satisfaction with La Grange Fitness.

#### *Fitness Programming*

Participants in fitness classes are ideal candidates for membership and members are ideal candidates for fitness programs. Cross-selling requires routine interaction with members and guests. You must get to know their fitness goals, then over time, explain how a membership or class would achieve that goal.

The style and content of fitness programs change frequently. New programs keep participants engaged and routines from getting boring. To maintain member interest, remain up to date with current with trends.

Mental health has taken a toll during the pandemic. Programs that connect the mind and body with mental and emotional health are highly desired. Yoga, Mindfulness, Ninja Warrior type activities, high intensity training, body weight training, and fitness activities for older adults have remained strong coming out of the pandemic.

Wearables (i.e., Fit Bit, Apple Watch, and others) have become mainstream. They are used to track activity levels, food intake and sleep as well as to keep one motivated. Encourage their use for personalized goal setting and record keeping.

## EFFECTS OF COVID-19

The 2020 coronavirus pandemic shut down businesses and kept people homebound and isolated. As society recovers a new normal will emerge.

Big and small businesses are likely to continue work from home options causing changes in use patterns at your facility. This may alter what were previously peak times and impact staffing patterns.

Parks and recreation benefitted from more than a year of pent-up demand for activity, socialization, and engagement. The industry has always been a champion for bringing people together and creating social engagement. As the pandemic cedes, people are thirsting for these opportunities.

According to the Sports & Fitness Industry Association organized team sport activity decreased measurably during the pandemic, while casual or recreational participation increased. Basketball which lends itself to solo participation and less than full team games, and having indoor and outdoor venues, was the most participated in team sport. Soccer, ultimate frisbee and flag football also grew in participation during the pandemic.

Remote work from home and layoffs changed the employment landscape. Many of the positions eliminated are likely not to return. Making do with fewer resources including staff has become a constant challenge. Despite layoffs and business closings, discretionary income remained due to government stimulus payments. The economy endured.

Recreation program providers slashed offerings due to government regulations restricting indoor activities, staffing shortages and public fear of COVID-19. Programs focused on core activities, outdoor recreation, and virtual participation. Moving forward, programs that do not break even will be minimal. Classes sizes are expected to be lower.

School districts face financial and operation challenges as well. According to Recreation Management (July 2020 edition) numerous school districts expect lower operating budgets for the 2021/2022 year. Consequently, they may not be able to fund after school social and athletic programs. Further, costs to use school facilities may have to be borne by the user.

The pandemic drove fresh thinking and approaches. Impacts of the pandemic:

- Explosion of ZOOM
- People began to view parks & outdoors as a right, not a luxury (NRPA)
- Reduced workforces
- Remote working
- Reduced budgets
- Increased personal hygiene
- Customer experiences that are faceless and/or touchless
- Most important in people's decisions are value, convenience, and sanitation.
- Eliminating the hard copy program guide
- Rise in electronic flip books (in lieu of hard copy guide)
- Reaffirmation for the value of being outdoors - parks, trails, open space
- Pent-up demand for outdoor activity led to renewed appreciation for nature and being outdoors. Biking and hiking programs as well as gardening flourished in the past year.

## **PROGRAMMING PARTNERS**

A comprehensive list of recreation service providers serving the La Grange area can be found on Addendum One. Staff identified its programming cooperatives and partnerships as well as its competitors.

### *Cooperatives & Partnerships*

School District  
AYSO  
Lyons Township Soccer  
La Grange Little League  
Babe Ruth Baseball  
City of Countryside  
La Grange Business Association  
Chicago White Sox  
Library  
Rotary Club  
Celtics Soccer  
Neighboring Park and Recreation Agencies

### *Competitors*

Club Pilates  
Orange Theory  
LA Fitness  
Chicago Lockdown Basketball  
Right-at-School  
The Max  
Flying High  
Gemini Gymnastics  
Ivy League Kids  
Community Park District – La Grange Park

Competition is healthy. Competition challenges the agency to keep from getting complacent; to strive for continuous improvement and customer satisfaction. Today's competitors can be tomorrow's partners.

## **TRENDS**

Societal, cultural, and behavioral trends have a significant impact on the success (or lack) of recreation programs and services, and public support. Park and recreation personnel must be cognizant of these trends and their influence on the park and recreation industry.

- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- Faster pace for everything
- Forgetfulness
- Anxiety / Mental Health
- Demographic changes (aging, race, nuclear family, melting pot)
- Subcultures (the parts are greater than the whole)
- Networked (everything is linked, connected)
- Personalization (products/services tailored to one's own tastes & needs)
- Obesity
- Violence (including bullying, insensitivity)
- Diminishing middle class
- Technology (an app for everything)
- Work from home

Programming with societal and cultural trends in mind should boost interest and participation. A leading challenge today is mental health. Not only are adults facing anxiety and depression, but pre-pandemic children were over committed and stressed beyond their capacity. Factor in the isolation caused by the pandemic, mental and emotional anguish spiked. Prescriptive medications use increased to calm nerves and assist in the ability to focus.

People are now turning to natural ways to improve their physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. Wellness activities including mild exercise, healthy eating/cooking, natural remedies, meditation, yoga, and nature walks are rising. These programs place an emphasis on relaxation, anxiety relief and peace of mind.

Pre-pandemic people were pressed for time. They were less focused and more readily changed plans on short notice. Recognizing that shift, shrewd recreation programmers are offering classes in shorter increments (i.e., 2 or 4 weeks instead of the traditional 6 to 8 weeks).

For youths, sedentary technological options - iPad, iPhone, gaming - have won their attention. Excluding reading, the most popular leisure activities take place on a screen:

- watching TV
- computer/internet
- playing video games and computer/internet games
- watching/going to the movies

Recreation and fitness journals and forums identify a myriad of trends. Consider which recreation and fitness trends are applicable for your District:

#### Recreation Program Trends

- Pickleball leagues and lessons
- Farmers Markets
- Esports
- Drones and Robotics
- Kayaking
- Windsurfing
- Stand up paddling
- DIY classes
- Photography / Videography
- Lacrosse
- Rugby
- Cricket
- Disc golf (aka Frisbee golf)
- STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math)
- Environmental education and nature programs
- Programming *in* parks (yoga, fitness, dance) connects people *with* the parks.
- Programs for families with children of all ages. Gen X (1966-1976) and Gen Y (1977-1994) place high value on family.
- Life Sports (biking, swimming, jogging/walking)
- Participation in organized youth sports is decreasing.

According to a study by the Sports & Fitness Industry Association, more kids than ever are not playing sports. Nearly 3 million fewer children have played basketball, soccer, track and field, baseball, football, and softball. Given the attention to sports concussions, parents are facing a difficult decision on their children's participation in traditional sports.

Over time, an emphasis on competitive sports and traveling teams has smothered recreational leagues in many communities. Parents feel compelled to put their kids on competitive teams with perceived expert coaching and skill development. Travelling youth's sports has become a lucrative industry. Costs for travel, practice time and other needs often force a child to specialize and select one sport over the others.

### Fitness Trends

- Using wearable technology to monitor and record biometric data.
- Online video, on-demand workout programs including programs developed specifically for mobile devices that allow fitness consumers to enjoy an instructor-led workout anywhere they choose.
- Virtual fitness programs developed during the pandemic will co-exist with in-person classes.
- Mental wellness will continue to grow.
- Programming fitness classes outdoors.
- Maintaining ultra clean facilities.
- Online personal training / virtual coaching services. The primary difference between video-on-demand workout programs and online personal training is that the former offers workouts for general goals while the latter delivers specific, progressively challenging programs to achieve well-defined fitness outcomes.
- Group training programs are being personalized to everyone participating in the workout. In the past, a group exercise class meant moving the same way at the same time and same speed as everyone else in the room. With technology to track intensity (via heart rate monitors) on-screen in the front of the room, an instructor can provide a group workout that allows each participant to work at his or her own comfort level.
- Competitive formats like American Ninja Warrior, Parkour, Spartan Race, and obstacle courses.
- Personal training has the highest adoption rate of any program or service in the fitness industry.
- Traditional functional fitness equipment and accessories (medicine balls, BOSU stability balls) and flexibility/mobility equipment (foam rollers, stretch trainers and myofascial release devices) are today's hottest equipment.
- Boot-camp training, small-group training, HIIT group exercise classes and functional resistance training continue to have above average growth nationwide.
- Social media is the only well-adopted technology trend. The industry has yet to fully embrace technology to enhance the member/client experience and improve productivity and efficiency. Technology opportunities such as online pricing transparency, online registration, and reservations for programs, selling memberships online, virtual training and club mobile applications all have opportunity to gain significantly greater adoption with the industry.

### Parks and Facilities Trends

- Wi-Fi Enabled Parks
- Technology in Parks (trail counter, drones, geocaching, geofencing)
- Trails and Bike Paths
- Pocket Parks
- Dog Parks
- Nature/Interpretive Parks
- Inner City Gardens
- Aerial Parks
- Green Infrastructure

## MARKETING

Marketing is inclusive of advertising, public relations, promotions, and sales. It is a process by which a product or service is introduced and promoted to potential customers.

Developing a District-wide annual marketing plan containing specific actions, timelines and costs is advised. Why? Because a proactive marketing plan is strategic. It serves as a map to guide you toward your sales/enrollment goals. It is a schedule of what you want to market/promote, when you want to market/promote each program/event/service, and how much each promotion will cost and who will lead the effort.

Branding is the process of creating distinctive and long-lasting perceptions in the minds of consumers. Its main benefit is that customers are much more likely to remember your business. It benefits businesses by building ...

- A consistent universal image.
- Loyalty. When people have a positive experience with a memorable brand, they are more likely to buy again from that company rather than a competing brand.
- Familiarity. Branding makes an impact on your non-customers. People who have not done business with the Park District but have encountered your identity/brand/logo numerous times may become willing to recommend you even when they have little or no personal knowledge of your programs or services.
- A reputation for quality and service. With a well-established brand, you can introduce new programs or services and more easily win acceptance because your reputation precedes it.
- Greater equity. A reputable brand can leverage its good name when seeking public support, fundraising or volunteers.
- Your ability to attract and retain the best employees.
- Your ability to establish partnerships within the community.
- Greater employee satisfaction including an increased sense of pride and loyalty.

### The Seasonal Brochure

According to The Learning Resource Network (LERN) hard copy seasonal brochures remain the number one source for marketing an agency's programs and services. As a tangible piece residents acknowledge the hard copy brochure even if it is to simply discard it. Web sites, the second most effect means of marketing, must be intentionally accessed.

E-books – an on-line version of the program guide - are quickly becoming popular as a less expensive marketing choice to replace the printed brochures.

When designing electronic or paper copy brochures adhere to four principles:

1. The cover must attract the reader's attention.
2. The first two pages should create an interest read further.
3. Inside pages must generate the intrigue and desire to register for a class.
4. The registration page needs to inspire action and registration.

Program descriptions have two purposes: to *describe* and to *sell*. The descriptions should begin with a dynamic opening statement or emotional appeal then describe the course. They should end with a call to action; a reason to enroll.

Whether in print or via social media, you have three seconds to capture the reader's attention. Therefore, the message needs to be immediate and exceptionally clear.

### Photos

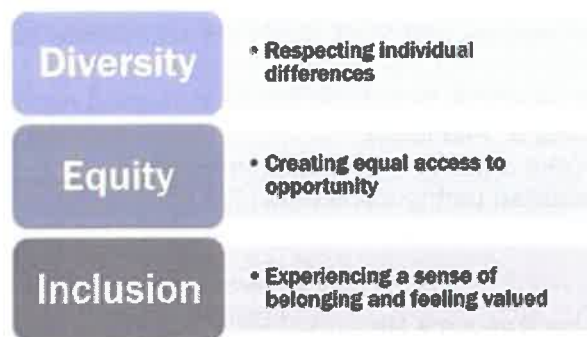
A picture is worth a thousand words. Use pictures to convey the diversity – ethnic, gender, age, culture, ability, etc. - of your programs and facilities. Photos should speak to the viewer. They should stir an emotion. To do so capture candid moments with tight shots of activity or emotion.

### DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Participation by minorities depends upon the Park District's relevance to them. They must be able to relate to the programs and services offered. Does programming reflect their interests? Do they perceive themselves as invited and welcome?

Online and print materials must represent community demographics and your target audience. Diverse constituencies must be able to see themselves in marketing materials and programming or they assume they are not the invited audience.

*Diversity* refers to all sectors and labels put upon groups of people: race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, ability, mental, physical, and emotional health. *Equity* is equal opportunity and access to the parks programs and facilities including those who have limited financial means. *Inclusion* is inviting and welcoming all with the same fervor, enthusiasm, and respect. Equity and inclusion are achieved when diversity reveals in participation.



Inequities divide communities. A key element in closing the gap is representation. Regardless of the level of diversity in a community, representation in staffing, program participation and marketing assure voices are heard.

### REVENUE ENHANCEMENT / EXPENSE MANAGEMENT

Price is not always the primary driver in a consumer's purchasing decision. Consumers consider various matters including reputation, quality of instruction, quality of facility, customer service, and price. In fact, price is a statement of quality. Low price implies low quality.

Recreation and fitness providers with the high market share often have facilities specifically designed for their activities. For example, people looking for a dance class are more apt to register at a facility that has a suspended wood floor, mirrored walls, excellent acoustics, and well-qualified instructors. Those in search of aerobic fitness or karate programs desire the same qualities in the hosting facility. Arts and crafts programs will attract more participation when held in spaces designed and equipped specifically for arts and crafts with sinks, kilns, storage, display shelves, etc.

If you have the optimum facility and highly qualified staff, let that be reflected in your pricing. Aim to provide the best value, not the cheapest price.

Cost recovery is the degree to which a program's fee covers the direct and indirect expenses related to the provision of that program. The degree of cost recovery is based upon who benefits from the activity - the individual or the community - and how much benefit is apportioned to each. Simplistically, there are three general levels of cost recovery.

- Level One – Full cost recovery. Programs and services that provide significant personal benefit and little to marginal community benefit. These programs and services – frequently competing with the private sector - should generate sufficient revenue to cover direct, indirect, and administrative costs associated with program/service.
- Level Two – Self-sufficient programs. Programs in this category generate sufficient revenue to cover the direct costs of the program but not 100% of the indirect and administrative overhead. These programs and services benefit the individual participant and contribute to a well-rounded menu of activities consistent with the agency's mission.
- Level Three – Subsidized programs. Programs in this category do not generate enough revenue to cover the program's direct costs, nor any portion of the indirect and administrative costs. Often these programs are of a large-scale nature such as a July Fourth celebration, summer concert series, community fest or car/art show offered free of charge therefore fully subsidized.

For instructional and classroom type programs the Learning Resource Network (LERN) recommends ideal percentages to obtain financially successful programming. It suggests budgeting begin with revenue first, then limit direct costs to 60% of income.

While individual programs may vary from the 40% target margin, the collective program category (preschool, youth, adult, seniors, athletics, etc.) should aim toward a 40% goal. The philosophy of your elected officials, community demographics or economics may not allow for a 40% margin. In such cases work to achieve as close to 40% as possible.

*Footnote: In 2020 the COVID 19 pandemic gave the country record level unemployment. With individuals' ability to pay severely impacted, most spending during the onset and midlife of the pandemic was on essential items. When spending is tight, focus on two program types. The first - core programs. Programs that are fundamental to your mission and provide positive net revenue. The second – programs that offer engagement and interaction since the population has been cooped up for a protracted period. The need for socialization and reconnection is great. Once government stimulus payments were initiated, spending behaviors slowly returned to pre-pandemic levels.*

*In 2021 the Federal government began stimulus payments. The influx of money increased purchasing power yet countless goods and services were limited or unavailable due to the lingering pandemic. In the latter half of 2021 carrying into 2022, an unexpected negative impact of the stimulus payments occurred. Job vacancy rates were at an all-time high. With free federal money, there was little incentive to work especially in lower paying jobs.*

Improving net revenue often requires shifting from a government mindset to a business mindset. Once a budget is approved, government employees typically zero in on only one side of the budget, the expense side. Program expenses should be approved only in relationship to the revenue the program will derive. If revenue is short of projections, expenses must be managed to maintain the margin.

The key to long term financial success is revenue growth. To improve the bottom line a business must either increase income or reduce expenses. The first step to increasing margins should be to analyze and reduce expenses.

Instructor costs must be rational and justified in the marketplace, not inflated because of longevity.

Independent contractor compensation among Illinois public park and recreation agencies varies from 80% instructor/20% agency to 60% instructor/40% agency. Ideally compensation should be a 60%/40% or 65%/35% split of revenue based on the contractor's qualifications, experience, reputation, and ability to assist in promoting the program.

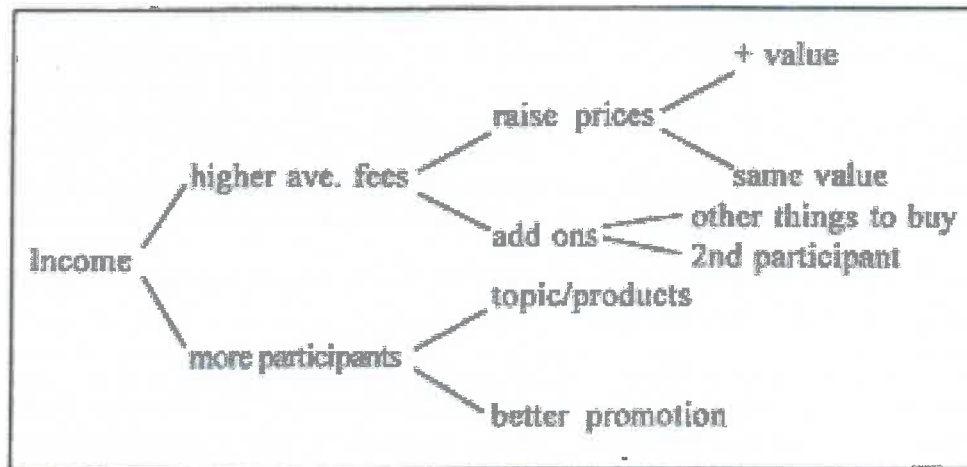
Critical compensation factors to consider when using independent contractors:

- When seeking to increase revenue from contracted instructor courses, do not simply increase fees. If a contracted instructor gets 70% of revenue, raising a fee from \$35 to \$45 generates an additional \$7 for the contractor but only \$3 for the Park District. To improve the bottom line, negotiate a better percentage for the Park District.
- Another method of contracting with independent providers is to give them a flat fee per participant. Negotiate a per person charge with the provider. What the Park District charges a participant should be of no business to the contractor; it is between the Park District and the participant. Example: The Park District agrees to pay a contractor \$20 per person to teach karate. If the class fee is \$40, the Park District nets \$20/participant. Under a 70%/30% contract, the Park District net would be merely \$12.
- Contracted instructors should never get a share of the premium charged to nonresidents. It does not cost the contractor any more to service a nonresident. The nonresident premium should be assessed by the Park District as a "fair share" fee as residents support the Park District through tax dollars.

There are unique situations that call for a customized agreement. The more complex the relationship, for example partnering with a hospital, the more detailed the contract.

Negotiate the best price for all equipment and supplies. Competitively price or negotiate Purchases and services every year. Lock in low prices with multi-year contracts. A final step would be to eliminate nonessential expenses.

For a business, whether public or private, to improve its bottom-line, it must either increase income or reduce expenses.



### Increasing Fees

When increasing fees, overall income goes up while enrollment stays the same. Three techniques for increasing fees are:

- Simply increase the fee.
- Increase the fee while adding to the real or perceived value, such as including a t-shirt or item relative to the class. Example: Little Sport Basketball program – give each participant a basketball as part of the program. If the basketball costs \$3.99 increase the program fee by \$10. Or enhance the perceived value of a class with a nicer presentation, special guest /speaker, better environment, etc. Using this technique, the participant will get more for their money.
- Provide ancillary retail opportunity; the ability for participants to purchase items related to the class. Its concept public speakers use when they sell copies of their books or CDs in the back of the room.

### Increasing Enrollment

The second way to increase income is to increase enrollment. Strategies to consider.

- Refresh or restructure the program. Change the title, give it a new format or new instructor using a different style. Perhaps hold the class in a new location or outside. The objective is to grow enrollment by improving the product.
- Better promotion.
  - Reach more people.
  - Repetition - Reach the same people repeatedly.
  - Diversify Marketing - Market the same message in multiple formats, multiple times.
  - Target Market - Identify the target market and focus on them.

When demand exceeds supply, prices rise and/or businesses are motivated to expand. This would mean raising fees and/or adding additional sessions of programs with waiting lists. However, when supply exceeds demand, businesses scale back. This means reducing the number of programs or sessions offered so the ones that are offered have a greater chance of succeeding. Park and recreation agencies offer so many choices in dance, gymnastics, etc. that few of these classes reach maximum and many are cancelled. It is better to be over demanded and under supplied than over supplied and under demanded.

A final consideration for increasing net margin is to examine market pricing. After determining your program fee using your budget formula, compare it to the local competition. When comparing like-to-like programs if your fee is low by comparison, raise it. Seek to provide the *best value*, not the cheapest price. (Value defined as what one gets in return for what one pays.)

The recreation buildings are large investments. They are expensive to staff and operate. Lease agreements provide an exceptional revenue opportunity for unused space.

Lease agreements are in place with the Illinois Park and Recreation Association, the Chicago White Sox, and The Leadership.

Creating a strategic plan to lease available rooms and spaces should lead to maximization of each facility's revenue potential. Seek renters to conduct meetings, trainings, teambuilding, fundraisers, and private gatherings to keep the facility busy while increasing its exposure and generating revenue. Utilize the Chamber of Commerce, schools, and community organizations to market the facilities availability. Reach out beyond the park district and municipal limits to fill the space, expand the customer base, and increase revenue.

## ----- RECOMMENDATIONS -----

### Programming

#### *High Priority*

1. Continue to chart key performance indicators to gauge programming performance and effectiveness. Graph over a five-year period to detect trending. Recommended KPI's are:
  - a. Household penetration rate for recreation programs & fitness memberships
  - b. Number of programs/classes offered
  - c. Program enrollment
  - d. Program Success Rates
  - e. Average class size
  - f. Wait lists
2. Conduct a Program Lifecycle Assessment every 3 to 5 years to methodically and factually determine where programs are in their life span and determine which should be refueled and energized and which should be terminated.
3. Offer classes in shorter terms. Run classes in 2 or 4 week increments in lieu of the traditional 6 or 8 weeks. Offer a discount as incentive for people who sign up for 2- or 4-week sessions at the same time.

#### *Medium Priority*

1. Concentrate on core programs. Offer more sessions of programs with waiting list. Eliminate programs struggling in decline.
2. Create spin offs of popular classes. When considering the development of new or introductory programs, base them on the current or future needs/interests of the district, what's trending in the industry or addressing a societal issue.
3. Develop programs to combat or address negative societal, cultural, and behavioral trends. Consider courses in safety, healthy eating, anti-violence solutions, cultural diversity, and other topics from the trends list.
4. Due to the population living longer and having more interest in health and wellness, differentiate between younger and older adult populations. Offer programs for the 65+ as well as the new "Middle Age" being 45-64 years of age.
5. Baby boomers (born 1946-1964) desire to be fit and healthy. Design programs for them to maintain cardiovascular health, strength, and flexibility. Consider programs and classes that use a chair or standing support rails.
  - Offer classes that promote balance and range of motion
  - Offer classes that provide breathing exercises, relaxation, and mental clarity.
  - Offer classes that increase muscular strength, cardiovascular endurance, and resistance training
  - Provide an atmosphere that is warm, friendly, and safe.
6. Each town has an opportunity to develop unique programs derived from utilizing their community assets. A great suggestion was a program series titled 'How Do They Do

That?' featuring a weekly or monthly trip to a local business to find out how the product is made, or service delivered.

*How do they do that?*

Week 1 – Get a behind the scenes tour of a fine dining restaurant, chat with the chef, leave with a treat or a discount on a reservation.

Week 2 – Meet with a realtor. Discover best methods to buy and sell property

Week 3 – Visit a car dealership. Learn how to buy and sell a car

Market the tours to curious adults and high schoolers who may be exploring career choices.

7. Host mixology programs in the DeSitter Room exposing it to potential renters.
  - Classic Cocktails
  - Holiday Cocktails
  - Wine and Paint
  - Beer and Poker
8. When programming space is limited, offer programs that have proven successful and bring the highest financial return. Consider the owner of a retail store with limited space, stacks shelves with the most popular, highest mark-up products to obtain maximum sales and return on investment.
9. Provide opportunities for continued learning and/or development. When offering an introductory level class, be sure to offer an intermediary class and an advanced class.

#### *General Recreation Program Ideas*

1. Host an adult comedy night perhaps once a month in the DeSitter Room. Consider selling beer, wine, and light snacks.
2. Outdoor Adventure Trips (Canoeing, Kayaking, Rock Climbing, Off-Road Vehicles, Trail activities)
3. Wellness and Fitness Programs for Women (the fastest growing segments of fitness programming)
4. Make Better Coffee (or Beer) at Home
5. Craft Your Own Cocktails
6. "The Skin You're In" Facial treatment workshop / classes
7. Class in Improvisational Comedy
8. Handcrafted Scarfs and Blankets
9. The Art of Cartooning
10. Robotics for Kids
11. Drones: Uses, Operation, Legalities

12. Make Your Own 3-D Video Game - Create your own online video game! Games will be available to share on a password-protected website.
13. Entrepreneurship – For adults, how to start and succeed running your own business.
14. Juice and Canvas - Painting on canvas while sipping from the Juicebox! Children be instructed step-by-step how to create very own masterpiece. Ages 4 to 12
15. Change Your Brain workshop - Learn how mindfulness can change your emotional and physical well-being. A mental health therapist will share the science behind mindfulness and the benefits of the practice. Discover tips for incorporating mindfulness into your daily life reducing stress and increasing your overall well-being.
16. Digital Photo Management – Don't know what to do with those photos on your phone? Learn techniques for digital photo management including storage options available with Google photos, Flickr, and iCloud. Create digital space on your phone by moving photos to your computer or print.
17. iPad 101 - How you can maximize the use of your iPad? Find out! Keep up to date with reading books, email, current affairs, music, social media, games, and pictures. Learn how to download an organize apps.
18. Secrets of Awesome Gift Wrapping
19. The Psychic Experience (Psychic readings)
20. Introduction to Magic
21. Introduction to Meditation
22. Small Steps to Health: Diet and Foods to Reduce – Everything you need to know about healthy eating, food safety, stretching your food dollars, meal planning, and five food groups.
23. Wills and Trusts Are Not Spooky Subjects - A workshop about the need for a living trust, power of attorney, and wills. Learn how to write your own or what to ask when seeking professional assistance.
24. Chair Yoga for Seniors
25. Craft Brewery Tour
26. Cyber Crimes: Keep Yourself Safe - A presentation by a detective from the state police discussing cyber-crimes and how you can prevent yourself from being a victim.
27. Photography class
28. Financial security for teenagers
29. How to do your banking / Money Management (youth class or workshop)

30. Time management classes or workshops (for teens and adults)
31. Preparing for College
32. Programs for high schooler age on internships, skill building, exploration, outdoor adventures, tours, ACT prep as well as a Teen Advisory Board.
33. Intergenerational program for teens to provide seniors with computer assistance.
34. Benefits of Essential Oils

### Fitness

1. Track the membership retention rate. Use it to benchmark against the industry standard and to evaluate the satisfaction of your members. It is the key performance indicator for fitness facilities.
2. Track attrition.
  - o Use surveys and phone calls to identify reasons for dropping out.
  - o Send membership invitations with an incentive to return to past members who dropped out one and two years previously.

### Partnerships

#### *High Priority*

1. Establish a La Grange Athletic Council that consists of one representative from each youth sport group and the Park District.
  - a. Establish formal written agreements with each youth sport group detailing the roles, responsibilities, and financial obligations of each party.
  - b. Meet monthly to discuss and coordinate field and facility allocation, field maintenance, registration, promotion, etc.
2. Schedule quarterly intergovernmental meetings between leaders of each local government (village, library, school district, township) to maintain open dialog and coordinate schedules of major activities. Do the same with your program partners (Little Lagrange Business/Chamber of Commerce, Service clubs)

### Revenue Enhancement - Improving Net Margin

#### *High Priority*

1. Develop a strategic plan to fill unused space at the Recreation Center. Consider renting to the private sector within and beyond park district/municipal boarders.
2. Strive to offer the best value not the cheapest price. (Value is defined as what one gets for what they pay).

3. Retail stores price at \$2.98, \$4.99, etc. A person's brain tends to register those as \$2 and \$4 not what they really are - a penny away from \$3 and \$5. When pondering price increases, price up to just below the nearest 5 or 0. If you are considering a price increase from \$24 to \$26, raise it to \$29. Avoid prices ending in 0 or 5 as in \$20 or \$25.
4. Value Added. Add greater value to a program that justifies a price increase. Using the example of a Little Shots basketball program for ages 4 to 6 – Give each participant a basketball to keep. If the ball costs \$3 each, raise the price \$5 which adds \$2 to the bottom line. The basketball becomes a keepsake.
5. Consider independent contractor agreements based on a flat rate per participant rather than a percentage. On percentage-based instructor contracts move splits toward 65/35.
6. When possible, employ a "one more" strategy. Certain program capacities are established based on room size or instructor preference. If you have classes reaching capacity consider extending capacity by one, perhaps two participants if quality and safety aren't compromised. Since overhead costs are already covered, most revenue from one or two additional enrollments goes to the bottom-line.
7. Begin program budgeting by estimating revenue first, based on the minimum number of participants. For classroom type programs, limit expenses to 60% to 70% of revenue, leaving 30% to 40% for overhead/administration and surplus.
8. Once a program fee has been established, compare it to local competition. All things being equal, if the fee is low, raise it marginally keeping it just below the competition. If your price is higher than the competition, make sure you are offering greater value or service.
9. Use zero based program budgets to identify specific costs and quantities. Only then can one make educated decisions on reducing expenses.

#### *Medium Priority*

1. Seek renters for unused space in the recreation center. Reach out through the Chamber of Commerce, community organizations and schools. Search beyond the immediate boundaries of the District, if necessary.
2. Routinely shop for competitive prices on supplies and services. Do not hesitate to negotiate. Consider your volume of business and ask for a better deal. Can they afford, or do they want to lose your business, or would they rather compromise on the price? Lock in low prices with multi-year contracts.
3. On all marketing materials, social media, and menu boards, follow LERN's recommendation for pricing without zeros right of the decimal point (\$35 instead of \$35.00). Using zeros right of the decimal point subconsciously makes the price seem higher.

## Marketing

### *High Priority*

1. With input from key staff (recreation programmers and facility managers) develop an annual marketing plan for each District facility and major program/event. Each plan should include marketing activities, timeline, budget, responsible party, and post event evaluation.
2. Technology and social media should dominate the marketing plan. Make sure content is user friendly and relevant. Understand your desired outcome and use a variety of sources to connect with the community.
3. Use testimonials from participants or local authorities/celebrities to give credibility to programs/facilities.
4. Assure your marketing materials (brochures, social media, web site) reflect your community demographics. Illustrate diversity in marketing campaigns to express the all-inclusiveness of the Park District. Similarly, programming should reflect the interests of the diverse population.
5. Enrich your web site with interactive features such as short videos of popular classes, an overhead visual tour of major parks and a welcome address by the Executive Director.
6. Use the web sites, publications and connections of your community programming partners to promote your activities.
7. Grow the local fitness market by co-sponsoring a fitness fair or fitness week with other local health/fitness facilities.
8. Target active adults aged 25 to 54 years old for fitness memberships. They make up the largest segment of gym memberships in the US. Many of these people participate in your adult programs and sports leagues, are members of local walking clubs, customers of health food stores, sports stores, and vitamin shops. Go after them.
9. Work with new members to establish a frequency of two or more visits per week in the first month to develop a fitness routine and connection with the facility.
10. Establish a member-to-member engagement program. New Member welcome parties, member socials, Coffee and... after morning fitness classes, etc.)
11. Continuously seek feedback and follow up to assure your desired outcomes are being met. Giving your participants a voice is vital for growth and customer satisfaction.

### *Medium Priority*

1. Develop and market a Park District of La Grange brand tying all facilities and operations to a single recognizable presence. Maintain high quality branding by examining the brand image on an annual basis.

2. Edit program descriptions annually. Whether in print or online opening lines should be dynamic or emotional to capture reader attention. Avoid starting out with “This camp will...,” “This program...,” “Participants will...,” “This is a .....” Program descriptions should use persuasive language focusing on the benefits of participation.
3. To showcase and inform constituents about your good work, include a half to full page Annual Report to the winter-spring brochure. In bullet point form state the major accomplishments, awards, financial data, and what’s to come in the next 12 months.
4. Sprinkle the seasonal brochure and web site with statements about the benefits of parks and recreation. These can be found on the NRPA web site (nrpa.org) Examples:  
Did you know:
  - a. Children are at their highest level of development when they are at play?
  - b. Kids that play outside have better vision than those who play inside.
  - c. Community play spaces boost positive attitudes toward cultural diversity and feelings of isolation?
  - d. Fifty percent (50%) of all vigorous exercise happens in parks?
  - e. Seventy-three percent (73%) of American adults believe parks, trails and open space are an essential part of the healthcare system?
  - f. More doctors are prescribing spending time in parks and on trails as a remedy for mental, physical, and emotional health.
5. In exchange for a *Neighbor Rate* negotiate having Park District of La Grange programs in which the neighbor rate applies listed/promoted in the neighboring park and recreation agency brochures and web sites.
6. While printed brochures remain the prime source of information, technology and social media are necessary to systematically reach today’s audiences. Employ multiple means of social media to connect with the community.
7. Use testimonials from participants or local authorities/celebrities to give credibility to programs/facilities.

## Trends

### *High Priority*

1. Consider programs trending around the state and country that may be of interest to the citizens of the Park District of La Grange.
2. Review the societal, cultural, and behavioral trends.
  - o Evaluate the impact these trends have on your programs and services.
  - o Develop programs that address or reverse negative trends. Create an antidote.
3. Offer one-time free classes (aerobics, yoga, martial arts, meditation) outdoors in Sedgwick, Denning, Gordon, and other highly visible park locations. Market through running clubs, sports stores, shoe stores, health stores and vitamin shops.

4. Ten to 15% of the program menu should be first time offerings. An agency's programming must be relevant and contemporary. Routinely offering new, innovative, and trending programs gives your residents and customers reason to look forward to your next brochure. The 10%-15% minimum keeps recreation staff challenged and up to date with trends. It also keeps your overall program from becoming stale and outdated.
5. Differentiate between younger adult and older adult populations. Consider three categories - Adult, Middle Age, Seniors (or Active Adults)
6. 60 is the new 40. Program for the active elderly.

## **COMMUNITY SURVEY PROGRAM SUMMARY**

1. The main barriers to program participation are:
  - a. Inconvenient times
  - b. Unaware of offerings
  - c. Not enough time
  - d. Programs do not meet needs
  
2. Programs with the highest satisfaction:
  - a. La Grange Fitness Center
  - b. Martial Arts
  - c. BASE
  - d. Learning Ladders Preschool
  
3. Programs with the least satisfaction:
  - a. Senior Activities
  - b. Senior Athletics
  - c. Gymnastics
  - d. Martial Arts
  
4. Most preferred day of the week:
  - a. 43% No preference
  - b. 32% Monday thru Thursday
  - c. 20% Saturday/Sunday
  
5. Preferred time of day:
  - a. 39% 5 pm -7 pm
  - b. 23% 10 am – 2 pm

## COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING SUGGESTIONS

Tabulating the open-ended community survey question asking for programming suggestions was daunting. Respondents did not limit comments to program ideas but included facility recommendations and evaluation of district personnel and operations. The input was vast, varied, and personal.

In order of frequency, the programs/facilities mentioned most frequently were:

- Swimming Pool / Swim Lessons
- Adult Sports (flag football, pickleball, tennis, softball)
- Ice Hockey Rink / Hockey
- Fitness Center
- Aerobic & Fitness Classes
- Senior Programs
- Dog Park

Of specific note is the suggestion for a fitness center. Since the district operates a fitness center the implication is some members of the community are unaware of it.

Suggestions for dance, arts, cooking, and other classroom programs may also be a reflection on a lack of awareness as opposed to lack of offering. Hence, a multi-faceted annual marketing plan that incorporates print and social media is critical.

----- Sources and References -----

Community Engagement Meetings  
Park Board of Commissioners  
Park District of Lagrange Staff  
Program Registration Data  
SWOT Analysis with District Staff  
LERN – Learning Resource Network  
Sports & Fitness Industry Association  
American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM)  
Outdoor Industry Foundation  
Recreation Management  
The Outdoor Foundation  
Center for Disease Control  
Various park and recreation agency web sites  
Illinois Park and Recreation Association (IPRA)  
National Park and Recreation Association (NRPA)  
Illinois Park and Recreation Association's *Open Forum*  
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[www.greatschools.org](http://www.greatschools.org)  
[www.afterschoolalliance.org](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org)

## PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Residents of PDLG are not limited to Park District properties for their open space and outdoor recreational opportunities. Like most recreation agencies, Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) are a key component of the PDLG parks and recreation system. As financial pressures and budget constraints increase, park agencies and recreation districts rely on PPPs as a way of reducing operating budgets – turning these responsibilities over to or sharing them with other governmental agencies or private companies.

La Grange is served by two public elementary school districts – Districts #102 and #105; including the Lyons Township High School. The school districts provide similar active recreation amenities at their school sites, including playgrounds, fields, and courts. Rather than trying to cover all of the community’s recreation needs themselves, partnerships with other open space providers are a good opportunity to assist all agencies in providing the highest level of service to La Grange residents. The PDLG currently partners with La Grange School District 102 in addition to a like partnership with the Village of La Grange, City of Countryside, St. Francis Xavier Parish, and the Chicago White Sox to provide more services, facilities and programs to its residents. These agreements benefit all parties and allow a land-locked community to gain more green space, as well as recreational and programming opportunities.

The Park District takes an active approach in collaborating with its partners. Partnerships take on different forms, but there are three primary types that the park and recreation agencies like PDLG engage with. They include:

- Intergovernmental Partnerships
- Affiliate Partnerships
- Corporate Partnerships

All three of these types are important to the Park District mission. The first two PPP types are well established within the District, but

the third one, corporate park partnerships, is an untapped opportunity that should be considered in the future.

As the Park District reviews and renews its partnership agreements, it should classify the user fee potential to be gained by the type of services offered within each category. Each section below outlines the terms of the agreement and benefits to the Park District of La Grange.

### INTERGOVERNMENTAL PARTNERSHIPS

#### Village of La Grange

The Village of La Grange and the Park District of La Grange both serve the interests of Village residents. Their Cooperative Agreements help ensure the delivery of excellent quality services to the residents of the community while holding costs to a minimum and eliminating duplication. Their agreements underscore the long-standing tradition of the Village and Park District sharing equipment and services

The Park District of La Grange has an agreement with the Village of La Grange to lease the East Side Center, known as Community Center and Park, located at 200 S. Washington Avenue. The one-acre site contains the community center building, a playground and two full basketball courts. The agreement started on May 1st, 1980, and expires April 30th, 2079, for a fee of \$1.00 per year. The Park District is responsible for paying all utility charges associated with the site.

#### City of Countryside

The City of Countryside and the Park District of La Grange entered into an agreement in July 2012 to share recreation resources to expand their offerings to community members. Since the Park District is land locked, they have gained 22.5% more park land and athletic fields through this partnership. The residents of Countryside have also benefited. Countryside residents have access to a recreation center and dedicated park and



recreation staff, which includes admission to more programming, camps and special interest classes.

The initial term between the two entities is a five-year period with the option to renew for five successive five-year periods. This term entitles the Park District to use the following facilities owned by the City of Countryside:

- Countryside Playschool tot lot
- Brancato Park
- City Park
- Countryside Park
- Hollands Park
- Ideal School Park
- Woodland Ridge Park
- Memorial Park

- Srjema-Michalek Park
- Andrew Whiting Memorial Park

The use of these facilities is for recreation purposes only and does not include any private or for-profit ventures. The Park District is responsible for scheduling all activities at the City of Countryside's facilities. The schedule must be prepared forty-five days prior to the start of the following month and shall be approved by the City in less than thirty days after submission. The City does have priority to schedule the use of their facilities for certain events.

The term also includes responsibilities that the Park District must execute, which include the following:

- The Park District must allow all residents of the City to participate in Park District

## PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS *(continued)*



- facilities, activities, and programs at a resident rate;
- The Park District is responsible for handling all registration;
- The Park District shall continue to run Ponytail Softball;
- The Park District is responsible for printing and distributing the program guide;
- The Park District is responsible for running the summer camp program; and
- The Park District shall not tax or levy any charge on City residents.

The City in-turn also agrees to the following items:

- When the City offers recreational activities or programs, residents of the Park District shall get resident rates;

- They City must allow the Park District to use the La Grange School District 105 Ideal School; and
- The City will assist the Park District in exercising any agreements the City has with recreational entities.

### **SCHOOL-PARK PARTNERSHIPS**

School-Park Partnership Sites expand outdoor recreational opportunities and fill-in areas of deficiency with the PDLG. The approach of making more effective use of existing facilities like athletic fields, playgrounds, and indoor gymnasium spaces expand year-round recreational opportunities for cash-strapped agencies within land locked communities.

- *School District 102* – The Park District of La Grange entered into agreement with School District 102 in January 2018 to

lease the five school buildings to run their BASE (Before & After School Recreational Experience) program. The facilities include the following:

- Barnsdale Road School
- Congress Park School
- Cossitt Avenue School
- Forest Road School
- Ogden Avenue School

The lease runs through December 31, 2023, with an option to extend the lease for a five-year period. The BASE program provides before and after school recreational activities for children enrolled in District 102 elementary schools. The Park District operates the before school activities Monday through Friday 6:30am to 8:20am and the after-school activities Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 3:15pm to 6:30pm and Wednesdays 2:30pm to 6:30pm.

- *St. Francis Xavier Parish* - The Park District of La Grange and St. Francis Xavier Parish began an intergovernmental agreement on August 21, 2019, for an amount of \$200.00 per month, utilities are included within this fee. The parish gives the park district the right to use a variety of their facilities, which include:

- Joyce Hall
- Annex Room
- Parking lot (south of the school including pick-up and drop-off area)
- Outdoor play area and

Use times include Monday through Friday 6:45am to 8:45am; Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 2:30pm to 6:00pm; Wednesdays from 1:00pm to 6:00pm; and staff is allowed to enter the school at 6:30am on weekdays.

## **AFFILIATE PARTNERSHIPS**

### South East Association for Special Parks & Recreation (SEASPAR)

The Park District of La Grange is a member of the SEASPAR organization along with eleven other municipalities and park districts. The goal of this group is to provide recreational programs for people with disabilities and to share program costs. Each organization belonging to this group appoints one member to sit on the Board of Directors. Each member entity pays SEASPAR an annual amount of the total cost of operating the organization based on the following formula.

- $(\text{Total amount raised by taxation}) / (\text{Total EAV of each member entity added together}) = \text{Rate applied to the EAV of each entity}$

The contribution cannot exceed the statutory limit. Assessments are calculated and given to members by November 1st of each year. Members of the SEASPAR organization can terminate their membership in writing, but must do so by September 1st, which is twenty months prior to the effective date.

### Chicago White Sox

The Chicago White Sox and the Park District of La Grange have an agreement where the Park District provides the facility, located at 536 East Avenue, and the White Sox provides their expertise in the planning, coaching and supervision of baseball and softball training. The White Sox are able to use the baseball area and office to run their programs. The agreement runs for three consecutive years and started November 1, 2019, through October 31, 2020; from November 1, 2020, through October 31, 2021; and from November 1, 2021, through October 31, 2022. The White Sox have an option to renew the agreement for three consecutive terms, with each renewal for a period of three years. The White Sox pay \$2,080.00 per month during prime months (December through April) for November 1, 2019 through October 31, 2020.

## PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS *(continued)*

For each term after that the fee per prime month is the “Adjusted License Fee” based upon the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The CPI for the Chicago area is multiplied by the prior year’s License Fee.

### Rotary Club of La Grange

The Park District of La Grange and the Rotary Club of La Grange entered into an agreement allowing the Rotary Club to use approximately 1,500 to 2,200 square feet of storage space to store donated items for its Secret Santa program. The agreement began September 1, 2017 through August 31, 2020. The Rotary Club may choose to extend the agreement for one additional three-year term.

### **CORPORATE PARK PARTNERSHIPS**

As previously mentioned, Corporate Partnerships are an untapped opportunity the PDLG should consider moving forward. The Village of La Grange has a vibrant downtown business environment and can provide outlets for businesses that seek local exposure and value the mission of the Park District. Through Corporate Partnerships, the PDLG can create unique and customized branding opportunities that are also cost effective in order to meet the District’s goals and objectives.

Local businesses and corporations can maximize their marketing dollars by combining resources with the Park District in the development of a banner campaign. The banner campaign could consist of a multi-level sponsorship program or with multiple events and programs across various District parks, facilities, and platforms. For example, for branding and visibility, businesses and corporations could advertise their brand at two softball fields, 4 baseball fields or 4 t-ball fields across the community. A 6’ x 4’ banner could be displayed on the backstops or side wing fence from April 1 – November 30 each year seen by hundreds of local sports enthusiasts each week throughout the year.

Additionally, the Park District’s website is a great resource used by residents and program participants monthly. Local businesses and corporations could integrate their brand along with the Park District’s logo through digital website advertising.

Lastly, the Recreation Center is a dynamic facility that features a fitness center, gymnasium, walking track, indoor playground, and more. This facility serves as the main hub of activity for the District. Corporate messaging/branding can run on the various large-screen monitors located throughout the facility. Options could include still ads or thirty second commercials.





## Chapter 5

# COMMUNITY VISIONING PROCESS

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Public input is an essential part of the comprehensive master planning process to identify the District's current issues and community values. The most effective plans directly relate to the realities and visions of the communities that created them.

This Comprehensive Plan cannot be written, nor recommendations made without input from residents who live, work, and play in the Park District of La Grange community. Without public input, this document would not accurately represent the wants and needs of the PDLG residents. Throughout the twelve month-long Comprehensive Master Plan process, the Park District and its consultant planning team worked hard to obtain ideas, opinions, feedback, and record concerns, using focus groups, community open houses and workshops, a statistically valid public opinion survey, and an open on-line engagement survey. This collaborative approach provides community insight into the future of the Park District of La Grange.

To ensure the process was Meaningful, Relevant, Accessible, Inclusive and Equitable, this plan was developed using a combination of input from community members, local school partners and resource affiliate groups, District staff, and elected officials to inform the community engagement portion of the information-gathering process.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

The District and project team designed the public engagement process to maximize opportunities for input and feedback as a means of increasing public trust and organizational competence ensuring the community was Represented, Informed, Heard, and Empowered. The process was intended to be equitable and inclusive, offering a variety of input opportunities and methods for all community members to have a comfortable platform to participate and freely express their thoughts.

The public engagement process included the following elements:

- **Online Engagement** - The Project Team established an on-line presence for the Comprehensive Master Plan through a project specific link on the Park District's webpage ([www.pdlg.org/comprehensive-master-plan](http://www.pdlg.org/comprehensive-master-plan)). The website link contained a wide range of information regarding the project, including information describing the project (Rediscover Fun), upcoming meetings, Comprehensive Master Plan Goal, the Project Team, and a link to the open on-line engagement survey.
- **"Meet the Planners"** Introduction session  
An informal listening session coordinated and facilitated by the Project Team to allow participants to interact with Park staff and the Consultants to become informed about the project and its process. The session was held from 6PM to 8PM beneath the shelter pavilion at Denning Park where the Project Team engaged twenty-nine total persons.
- **2 Public Issues & Opportunity Open House Meetings** - The Project Team hosted two "Hybrid In-person and Online" Open House Meetings during June and July 2021. The Team engaged with more than 39 In-person and 7 Virtual PDLG residents and stakeholders collectively over the course of the two open houses. All meetings were held from 6PM to 8PM, one located at the Recreation Center, and the other open house held at Community Center Park. The Public Issues & Opportunity Open House Meetings were designed to have a format with interactive exercises and information stations, allowing flexibility for attendees to move about the room and to drop-in when their schedule permitted.
- **6 Community Focus Group Sessions** - In addition to the 2 Public Issues & Opportunity Open House Meetings conducted for the project to gather

valuable insight from the public, the Project Team held and facilitated 6 virtual Focus Group sessions with various special interest and user groups to assess current and future needs, while at the same time, gather qualitative information on the user groups opinions, perceptions and experiences with District operations, management, park sites and facilities.

- **Park Board of Commissioners Engagement Meeting** - The Park Board of Commissioners Engagement Meeting was designed to gather input and opinions from the District decision-makers. The goal was to gain insight into how the Park Board's opinions and issues facing the District. Board members were also asked to identify District strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
- **Recreation Programming Staff Perspectives Session** - The perspective of the recreation programming staff was obtained through a SWOT analysis that included a discussion of societal, cultural, and behavioral trends affecting District programs. Trends impact participation and provide opportunities to develop programs that meet current needs.
- **"Rediscover Fun 2022-2032" Community Needs Survey** - A community-wide Household Interest and Opinion Statistically Valid Survey branded and titled, "Rediscover Fun 2022-2032 Community Needs Survey" was initiated as a key component of the public engagement process to guide the planning efforts of the PDLG Comprehensive Master Plan. The primary purpose was to measure the attitudes and interests of the District's residents as it related to a variety of subjects, including park conditions, activities, information delivery, interest in a community swimming pool, and future projects. A six-page questionnaire was developed jointly by District staff and Board, and the Planning Team.

- In addition to the mail survey, in an effort to reach out to as many residents as possible an on-line survey instrument (with identical questions) was developed.

The results of each method are included in this summary which includes meeting purposes, number of attendees, and content.

These public engagement methods are combined with other research and observations to develop a triangulation approach to public involvement. Triangulation is a concept which recognizes that no single public engagement strategy will accurately reflect the true preferences of an entire community. Repeatedly asking the same or similar questions in a variety of forums and then comparing the answers can identify common themes and issues. This combination of methodology results in a thorough understanding of the general public's views, which can then be incorporated into the Master Plan. The public input process also included a statistically valid survey which polled a representative portion of the Park District of La Grange's population. The survey provided an opportunity to reach individuals who would not typically attend a meeting or otherwise participate in a public engagement process.



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT *(continued)*



### **MEET THE PLANNER,S SESSION & PUBLIC OPEN HOUSES**

#### *DATES:*

June 16, 2021

June 29, 2021

July 19, 2021

#### **PURPOSE**

Introduce the master planning process and to determine community values, satisfaction with the current parks, facilities, and services; and identify recreational needs and wants.

#### *OPEN HOUSE FORMAT*

The Open House sessions consisted of a presentation, and a question-and-answer public forum. Multiple stations were set up within the venue that allowed the attendee to identify which park and open space facility was closest to where they reside, what they liked BEST about their neighborhood park/Park District, what they liked least about their neighborhood park/Park District, and any Key Issues/Concerns regarding the Park District they may have. Following a short review of items specified at the various stations and the next steps in the master planning

process, participants also shared their thoughts the Park District's external communications and their dissemination of information.

*NOTE: It should be noted that the following summary does not represent PDLG policy or Plan recommendations and were collected as feedback from individuals with knowledge of the PDLG.*

**BIG IDEAS:**

**Community Values/Expectations**

- Enhance the quality of maintenance and care a PDLG park sites, facilities and amenities where needed
- Equity and accessibility – provide parks and recreational facilities that reflect the ability to serve a diverse public
- Maintain what the PDLG owns as it relates to parks and facilities to support positive use and increased property values for District residents
- Continue to enhance safety and security in the parks and recreation facilities
- Health and fitness
- Environment and climate resilience
- People and community

**Most Desired Programs**

- Youth basketball
- Jujitsu
- Girls' softball

**Most Desired Facilities**

- High quality ballfields
- Regraded Soccer Fields
- Resurfaced Basketball Courts
- Dedicated Pickleball Courts
- Community Pool
- Dog Park



**Most Desired Amenities**

- Mature Trees and Shade
- Indoor recreation center playground and gym
- Walking path

**Reasons for Visiting Parks**

- Great place for enjoying nature
- Great place to play organized sports
- Relaxing and peaceful.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT *(continued)*

### SUMMARY

Summer 2021: Over three different evenings during the months of June and July, the Project Team facilitated public meetings focused on the development of the Comprehensive Master Plan. The meetings were an Open House format, with multiple stations set up to facilitate focused input on specific topics and to allow for one-on-one interaction with the Planning Team. Additionally, the meetings allowed the community to engage with one another in hearing the needs and expectations of the community through their own voice. There were four stations to gauge the public's opinion on the district's current services and facilities, as well as an open station where people could discuss unrelated topics, new ideas, key issues, and concerns.

Specific objectives of the Master Plan component of the public meetings were to:

- Present findings related to key issues or focus areas including background information and questions for the public to consider in their dialogue.
- Gather input regarding each of the focus areas to confirm and validate preliminary findings.

Throughout the public outreach meetings, multiple comments were recording during dialogue that identified needs and expectations of the community to be considered in the master plan process relative to the following:

#### Recreation Programs

Multiple comments recorded continued support and expansion of Athletics and Children's Programs including the addition of fine arts programming for kids and adults. As a result of the increasing aging population, new programming opportunities and the ability to meet changing trends was also identified. Another theme included the cost of programs to the community. Public comments illustrate the need for affordable programs for all members of the community including scholarships for underprivileged participants.

#### Asset Management

A recurring theme in each public open house session was the community's desire for the district to focus on the facilities that the district currently owns and manages, and not necessarily to provide more. Multiple statements and comments illustrated a desire for better maintenance and use of existing facilities. Many comments stated a need for better maintenance of facilities - specifically, the play fields (i.e., Gordon Park's soccer fields, and Sedgwick Park's ballfields). The remaining comments identified individual desires for to enhance the athletic fields in the district by the addition of covered dugouts, batting cages, scoreboards at Gordon Park, and an increased inventory of athletic fields.

#### New Amenities and Park Features for Consideration

Multiple comments were recorded that identified a need to design and implement new amenities to provide additional opportunities for active recreation within existing parks particularly as the community/population grows. Suggestions include new facilities such as a dog park, pickleball courts, disc golf course, paddle tennis, accessible restrooms, skate park, public ice skating, and a community pool facility. One-on-one discussions with ardent pool advocates identified the health and social cohesiveness provided by a community pool facility as well as serve as an additional revenue generator by offering swim programs, rental opportunities, and expansion of summer camp activities.

### Environmental Stewardship

At least two residents who attended one of the engagement sessions expressed their ideas and suggestions for the district to prioritize “Green Practices” and focus more on being a leader in environmental stewardship in the community. Major themes included resource management, green infrastructure, enhanced pedestrian connectivity in areas to expand pedestrian walkability, and educating the public on the benefits of native plants and efficiently maintained landscapes.

### Other Community Outreach and Equitable Management of Facilities & Park Sites

In addition to the Comprehensive Master Plan public engagement, the district was encouraged to continue outreach to minorities and other special populations. Targeted outreach to minorities and other special populations in the community will build relationships and trust with these under participating groups. Additionally, comments regarding the community’s desire for the district to balance revenue, distribute costs fairly throughout the district to prevent deterioration of parks and facilities through a systematic program of maintenance, rehabilitation, and/or replacement.

### Relationships

A recurring theme amongst the focus group participants was for the district to stay active in establishing and nurturing critical partnerships. They see these partnerships as essential for PDLG’s continued success and would encourage their continuation, expansion, and enrichment. Increased interaction could be beneficial to the Park District as a whole and its programs.

### Awareness

Branding and promotion are challenges for most park districts and recreation agencies; however, attendees acknowledge there is a growing recognition of what the PDLG has to offer.



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT *(continued)*

They see a redeveloped and focused social media strategy as a potential rich opportunity for further enhancement of that awareness.

### Athletic Fields and Capacity Issues

Many of the athletic organizations and sports associations that provided input on the athletic field needs in the within the District expressed a concern about field maintenance and the lack of field availability.

### Equity

Social equity is a critical responsibility of park and recreation agencies. Representatives from the CommUNITY Diversity Group expressed their concern for inconsistency and inequality in dispersing resources appropriately and fairly to ensure that all PDLG residents have access to quality recreational opportunities, programs and facilities. The PDLG is encouraged to prioritize, invest in and redevelop its parks and facilities where residents of low-income and minority communities have less access than their more affluent neighbors (East side of La Grange).

## RECREATION PARTNERS AND LOCAL AGENCIES STAKEHOLDERS

Date July 8, 2021

### PURPOSE

Engage a broad group of stakeholders to gather local insight and knowledge about community needs and opportunities for the parks, facilities and services offered by the district.

### Organizations Represented

- La Grange Public Library
- La Grange Business Association
- Western Springs Recreation Department
- Community Park District of La Grange Park
- Illinois Parks and Recreation Association (IPRA)
- YMCA Men's Club
- League of Women Voters
- LASDSE

### SUMMARY

The following is a summary of key concerns identified throughout the engagement process. These issues, actions, and strengths were strongly emphasized by outreach participants and were consistently discussed by stakeholders. However, these lists are not exhaustive and numerous additional comments were received through public engagement, all of which have helped guide plan recommendations and policy.

*NOTE: It should be noted that the following summary does not represent PDLG policy or Plan recommendations and were collected as feedback from individuals with knowledge of the PDLG.*



### *The Strengths of the District*

- For the size of the Park District area, the number of parks and their geographic distribution throughout the Village offers a vast array of green space options and at the same time, offer a variety of activities and recreation opportunities. (i.e., walkable sites)
- Gordon Park is a well-designed facility within the District
- Staff are passionate, informed and hardworking
- Safe and clean park and recreation facilities

### *Weaknesses of the District*

- Park facilities should be professionally designed to reflect changes in lifestyle (Keep up with the times)
- Underutilization of properties/maximize open space
- No Platform and Paddle Tennis courts in the community for older adults to get moderate exercise by burning calories from the fast style of play but not as physically exhausting as regular tennis.
- Lack of adequate ballfields in the community. An additional ballfield should be constructed in Sedgwick Park to meet the recreation demand for the community.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT *(continued)*



- Field conditions at the major athletic park sites need to be upgraded and improved to give the fields a cleaner crisp look. Updates to the fields to be considerate of the environment even if the cost of the improvements are higher.
- Low priority on green infrastructure practices.
- Equitable management of existing facilities and park sites. (Socio-Economic Race and gender)
- Park District to work toward expanding partnership with the Village and other organizations to enhance and provide more support of the district's mission, programs, and events.
- Available financial resources – need to find ways to provide PDLG with more funding tools to maintain and enhance the system.
- Inconsistent design standards in parks for landscaping, site furnishings, amenities etc.

### MUNICIPAL PARTNERS STAKEHOLDERS

Date July 8, 2021

#### PURPOSE

Engage decision-makers with adjacent jurisdictions to ensure that the recommendations of this plan are well integrated into the district's full planning context.

Organizations represented:

- City of Countryside
- La Grange Village Manager
- La Grange Village Economic Development
- La Grange Village Public Works
- La Grange Village Board President
- Brookfield Village President
- Village of Countryside Aldermen

## **SUMMARY**

The following is a summary of key issues identified throughout the Municipal Partners stakeholder engagement session. These issues, actions, and strengths were strongly emphasized by stakeholder participants and were consistently discussed by attendees. However, these lists are not exhaustive and numerous additional comments were received through public engagement, all of which have helped guide plan recommendations and policy.

*NOTE: It should be noted that the following summary does not represent PDLG policy or Plan recommendations and were collected as feedback from individuals with knowledge of the PDLG.*

### *The Strengths of the District*

- Parks are a strong asset to the community
- The District offers a wide variety of programs and activities to residents.
- The program brochure offers residents diverse and wide-ranging recreational activities – there is something for everyone.
- Responsive Staff – good customer service related to parks, facilities and programs
- Great community, neighborly people who support one another

### *Weaknesses of the District*

- No Community Swimming Pool for residents not interested in nor have the resources to join and sustain the membership fees for use of the nearby private pool facilities.
- No Dog Park – establish a PDLG Dog Park
- Communication: increase marketing efforts about programs and parks – improve website
- Upgrade ballfields

## **LOCAL SCHOOL PARTNERS & RESOURCES STAKEHOLDERS**

Date July 8, 2021

### **PURPOSE**

Engage decision-makers with adjacent public facilities and resources to ensure that the recommendations of this plan are well integrated into the district's full planning context.

Organizations represented:

- Lyons Township High School
- Riverside-Brookfield High School
- St. Francis Xavier School
- School District 102
- Innovation Arts Connection
- The LeaderShop
- La Grange Rotary
- Caring Place

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT *(continued)*

### SUMMARY

The following summarizes the main strengths and areas of improvement that have been indicated by local school partners and resources stakeholders. Participants expressed that the Park District needs to continue being good partners as well as build more partnership opportunities within the community. These priorities as well as specific park, facility, and programming concerns were strongly emphasized by outreach participants and were consistently discussed by attending stakeholders. However, these lists are not exhaustive and numerous additional comments were received through public engagement, all of which have helped guide plan recommendations and policy.

*NOTE: It should be noted that the following summary does not represent PDLG policy or Plan recommendations and were collected as feedback from individuals with knowledge of the of the PDLG.*

#### *The Strengths of the District*

- Leadership invested, passionate, and competent
- Knowledgeable professional staff
- Events
- Great partner and seek partnerships
- Long history of success and collaboration with community partners
- A community asset
- Variety of program offerings

#### *Weaknesses of the District*

- Facility maintenance – need more staff
- More funding
- No community pool
- Increased/maintain playground equipment
- Promotion of park programs and events



### **“REDISCOVER FUN 2022-2032” COMMUNITY NEEDS SURVEY**

A Household Public Opinion Community Needs Survey entitled “Rediscover Fun 2022-3032” was developed to gather public feedback on the PDLG parks recreation facilities, services and programs, track trends in the community’s needs--and how well the District is meeting those needs. The survey was conducting using three primary methods: 1) A statistically valid mail-back survey, 2) An “Open-link” on-line survey for members of the public who were not part of the randomly selected statistically valid survey sample, and 3) An “Over-the-counter” hard copy available at the Recreation Center – Park Administration Office. The Planning Team worked extensively with PDLG staff in the development of the survey questionnaire.

This work allowed the survey to be tailored to issues of strategic importance in effectively planning the District’s future system.

The analysis primarily focuses on responses from the statistically-valid survey sample. However, open link responses are also analyzed and discussed later in the report, highlighting differences from the statistically valid sample. The primary list source used for the statistically-valid mailing was the current Voter Registration List provided to PDLG from Cook County Clerk’s Office – Cook County, Illinois. Use of Cook County’s Voter Registration List also includes renters in the sample who are frequently missed in other list sources such as utility billing lists.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT *(continued)*

The “Rediscover Fun 2022-2032” Community Needs Survey was sent to a random sample of 2,000 PDLG households evenly distributed throughout the District on November 9, 2021. Residents who received the survey were given the option of returning the survey by mail or completing it on-line. One week after the surveys were mailed, the Project Team sent a reminder post card to the non-respondent households that received the surveys to encourage participation. The goal was to obtain completed surveys from at least four hundred households. This goal was not met at the time the survey instrument closed on December 7, 2021. After accounting for undeliverable addresses (124), 7,740 Survey mailings were delivered, and 232 responses were received, resulting in a response rate of 11%. The margin of error for the 232 statistically valid responses is approximately +/- 6.3 percentage points calculated at the 95% confidence level.

Residents who were not selected to participate in the randomly mailed statistically valid survey, were given the opportunity to participate in an open on-line engagement survey that was identical to the statistically valid survey. The open link survey received 656 completed responses.

The survey findings for both instruments helped inform District staff about the wide range of needs within the District, and how well those needs are being met.

### Survey Analysis:

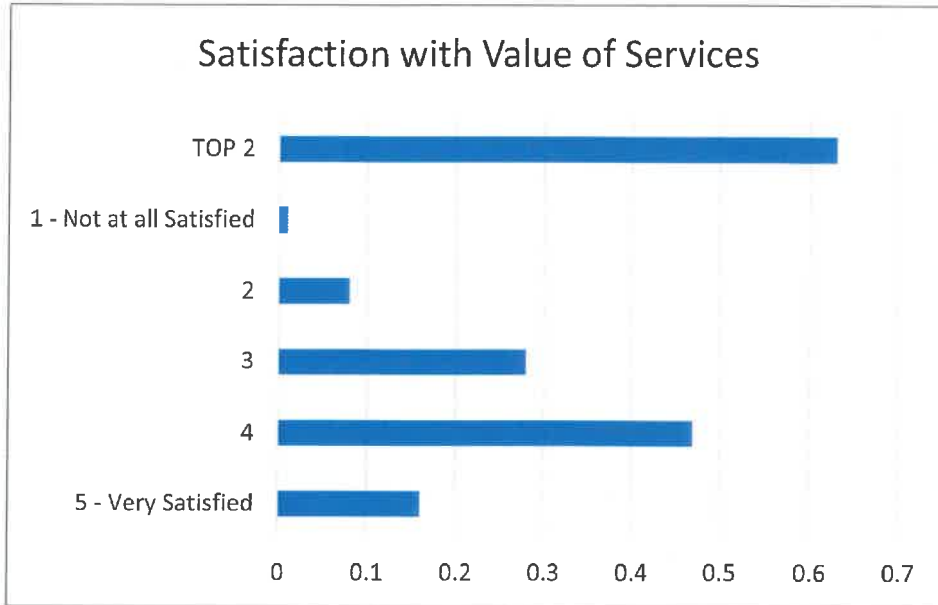
Planning Resources Inc. reviewed and analyzed the raw data obtained from each survey option. There are 152 tables generated from the survey questionnaire. PRI completed the analysis for select tables from the Community Survey on the following pages:



**T001: Value of Services**

**1. How would you rate the value of services (i.e. programs, facilities, parks, special events) you receive from the Park District of La Grange?**

Data Tables - Mailed Respondents



Data Tables - Generic Link Questionnaire Respondents

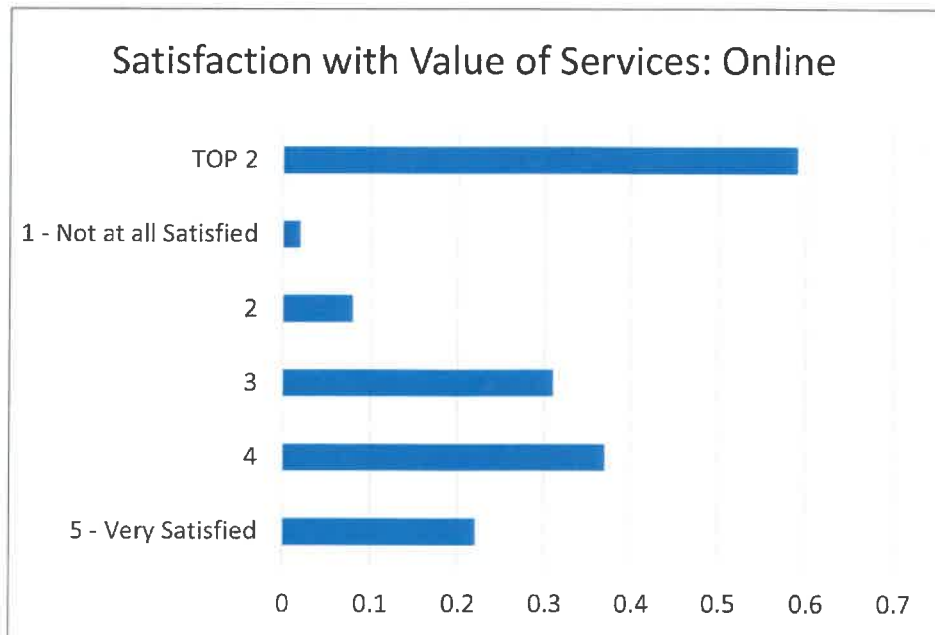
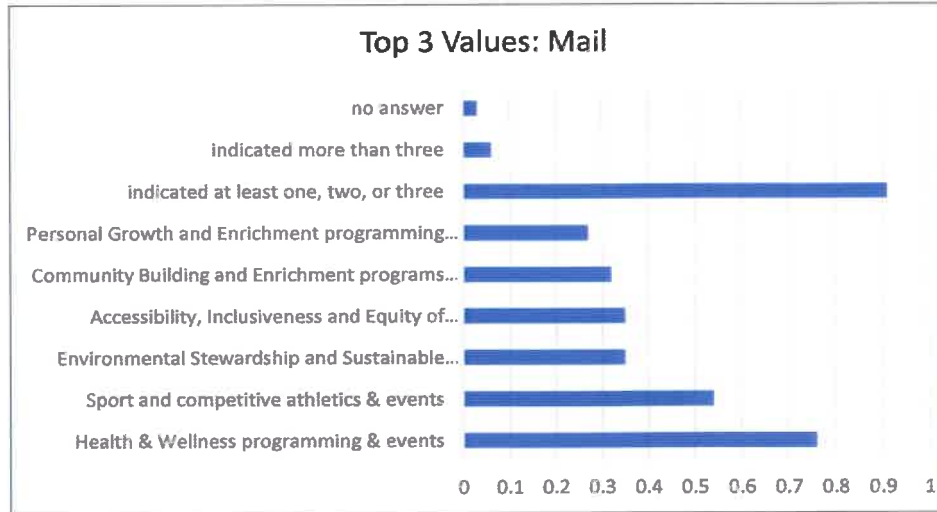


Table 001: The mailed survey respondents indicated 63% of respondents were Satisfied or Very Satisfied with the value of services while the online survey respondents indicated 59% of respondents were Satisfied or Very Satisfied with the value of services.

**T002: Top 3 Values**

**2. The PDLG wishes to develop programming, services, parks and facilities according to the core values of the community. Please choose the top 3 values from the list below that you think should be the priorities of the Park District.**

Data Tables - Mailed Respondents



Data Tables - Generic Link Questionnaire Respondents

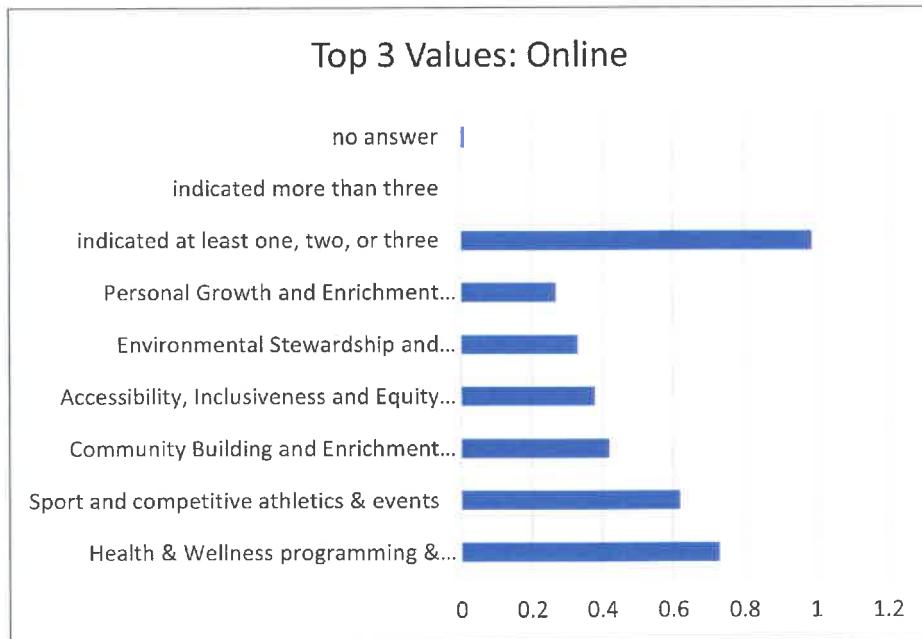
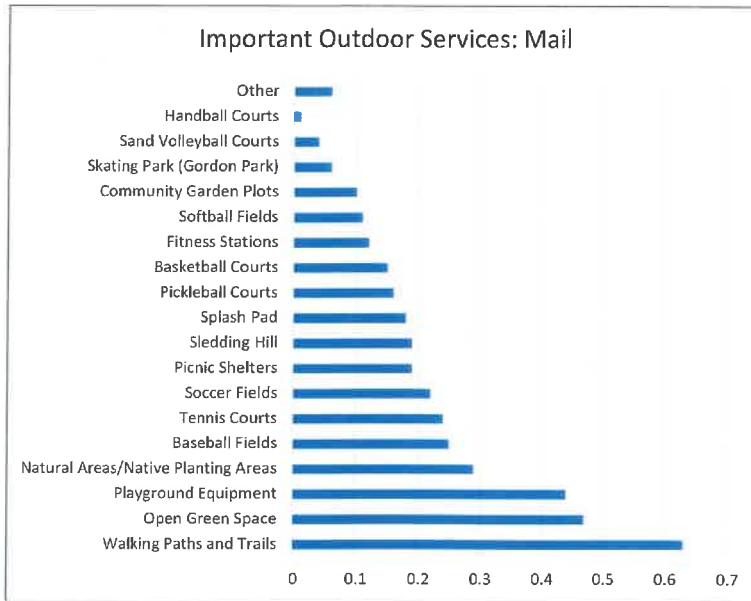


Table 002: Select the Top 3 Values the respondent thinks should be a priority of the Park District of LaGrange. Both the mail and online respondents rated Health and Wellness programming and events and Sport and competitive athletics and events as the top two, while the next three priorities varied between Community Building and Enrichment; Accessibility, Inclusiveness and Equity of Programs and Facilities; and Environmental Stewardship and Sustainable Practices in Programs, events, and facilities.

**T003: Important OUTDOOR Services**

**3. What CURRENT OUTDOOR parks, facilities, and amenities are MOST IMPORTANT to you and members of your household? Choose your top five.**

Data Tables - Mailed Respondents



Data Tables - Generic Link Questionnaire Respondents

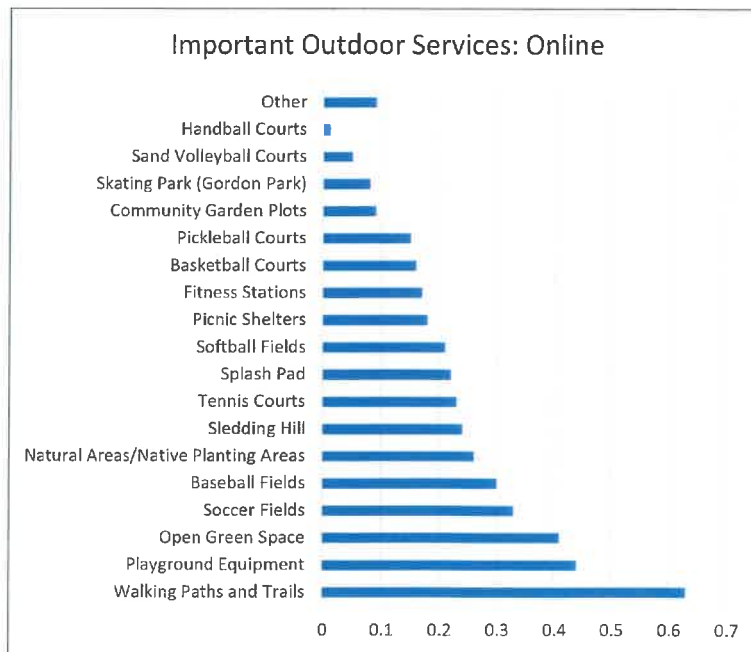


Table 003: Rate MOST IMPORTANT CURRENT OUTDOOR parks, facilities, and amenities to the respondent and members of the respondent's family. The top three most important were consistent between Mail and Online responses, Natural areas/Native Planting areas dropped several positions in the Online responses while baseball field and soccer fields climbed in the Online responses.

**T004: New OUTDOOR Facilities**

**4. What NEW OUTDOOR parks, facilities, and amenities would you and members of your household like to see in the Park District? Choose your top five.**

Data Tables - Mailed Respondents



Data Tables - Generic Link Questionnaire Respondents



Table 004: Respondents were requested to choose the top 5 NEW OUTDOOR parks, facilities, and amenities from a supplied list of possible new outdoor activities. The number 1 identified NEW OUTDOOR facility or activity in both the Mail (56%) and Online (58%) the second most requested activity varied between the two survey methods, while the third most requested activities were an Off Leash Dog Park. During various focus group and community open house meetings both Exclusive Pickleball Courts and Disc Golf facilities were requested. Both activities were identified by less than 20% of the responses in both survey methods.

**Mail Survey Responses Below**

**T005: On Average Satisfaction with District parks and playgrounds**

**5. On average, how satisfied are you with the following Park District of La Grange parks and playgrounds; and how often do you or your family members use them?**

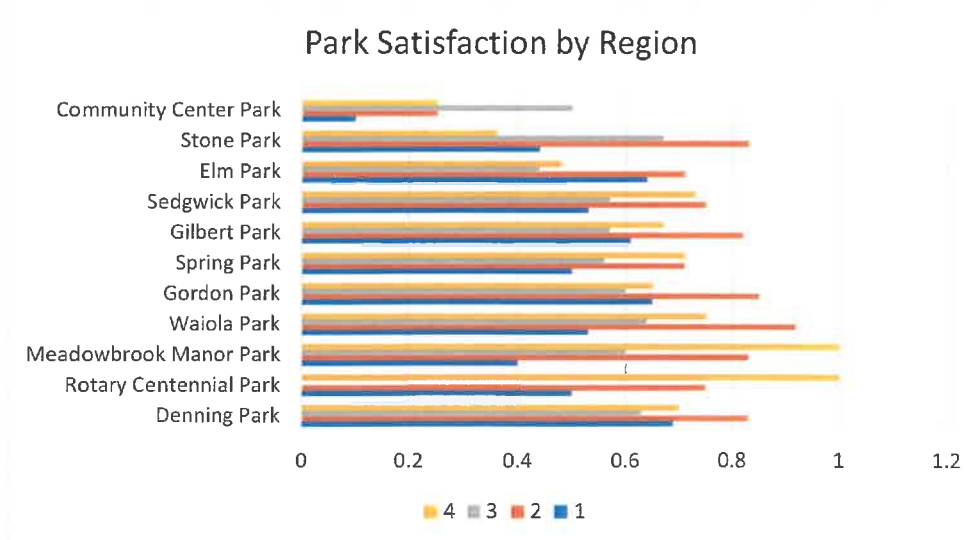
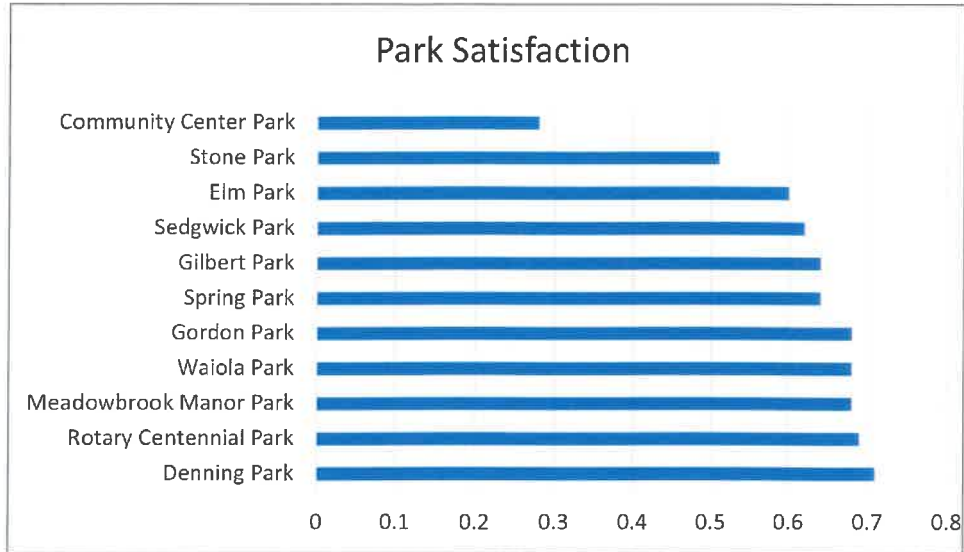


Table 005: On Average Satisfaction with District parks and playgrounds.

**Mail Survey Responses Below**

**T005: On Average Satisfaction with District parks and playgrounds**

**5. On average, how satisfied are you with the following Park District of La Grange parks and playgrounds; and how often do you or your family members use them?**

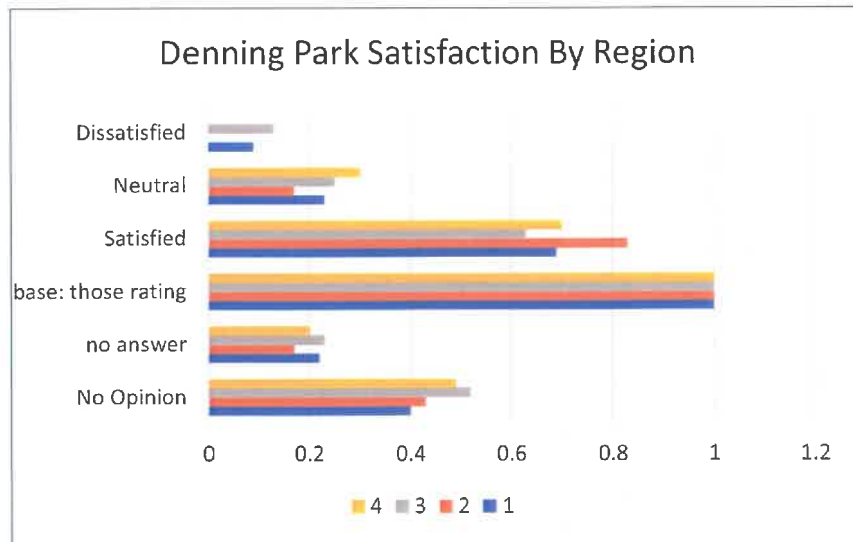
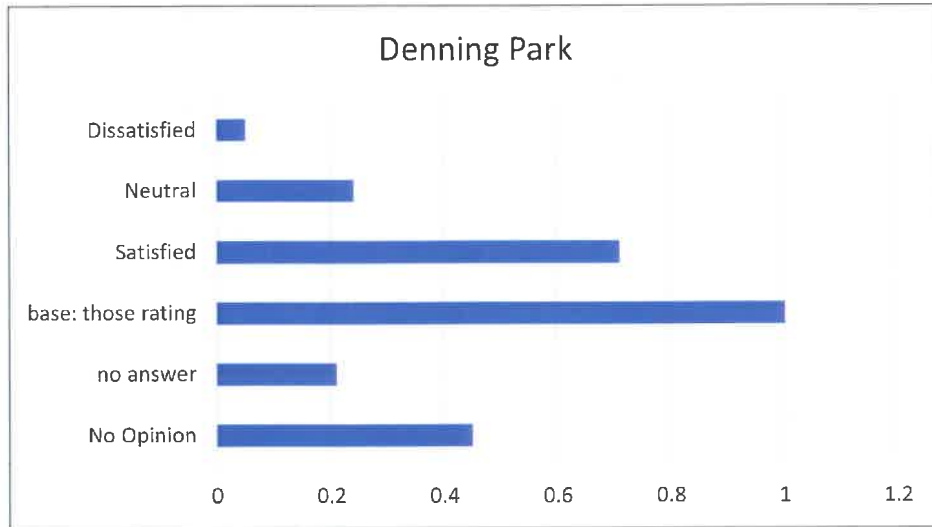


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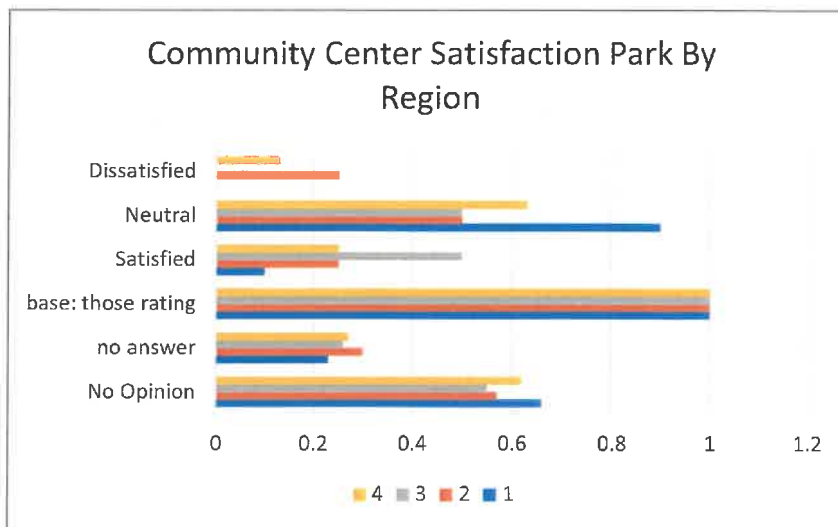
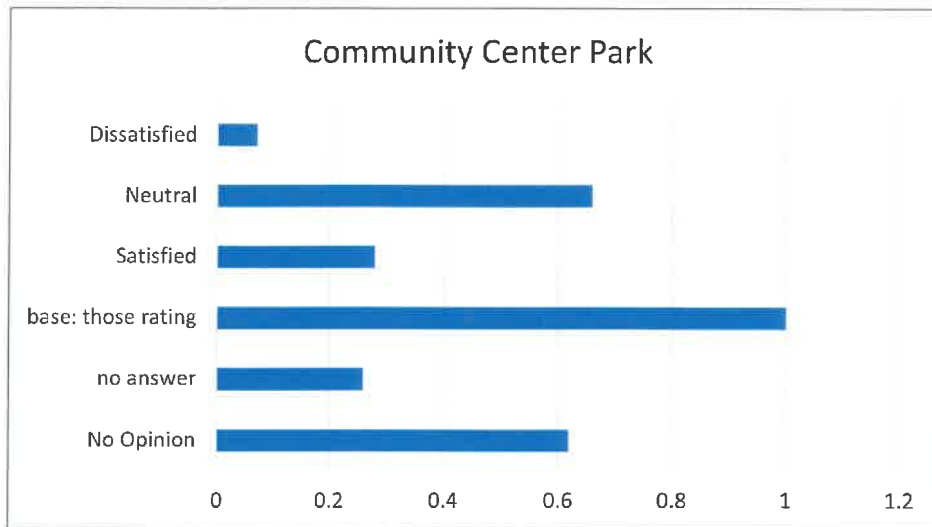


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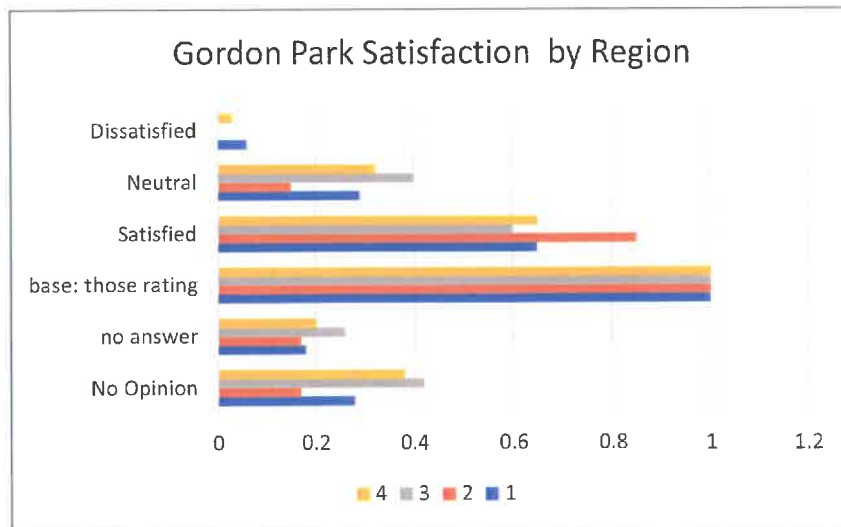
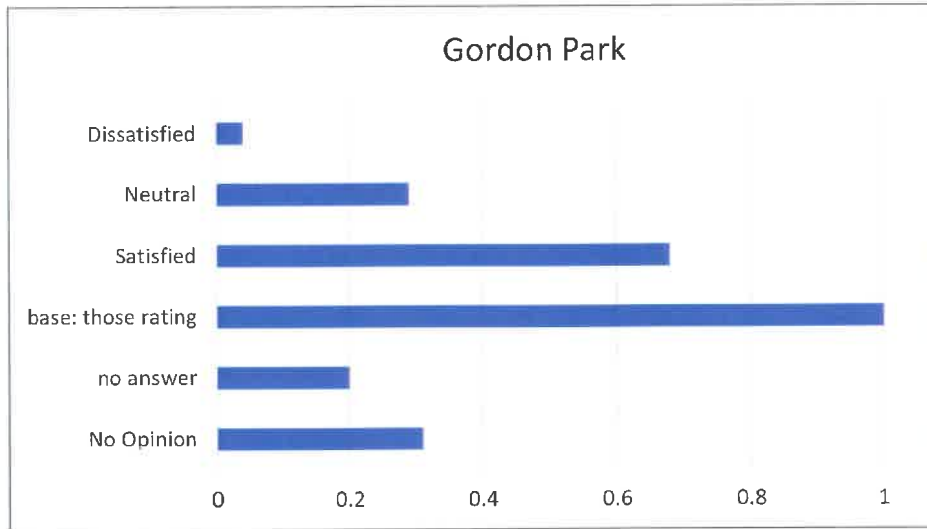


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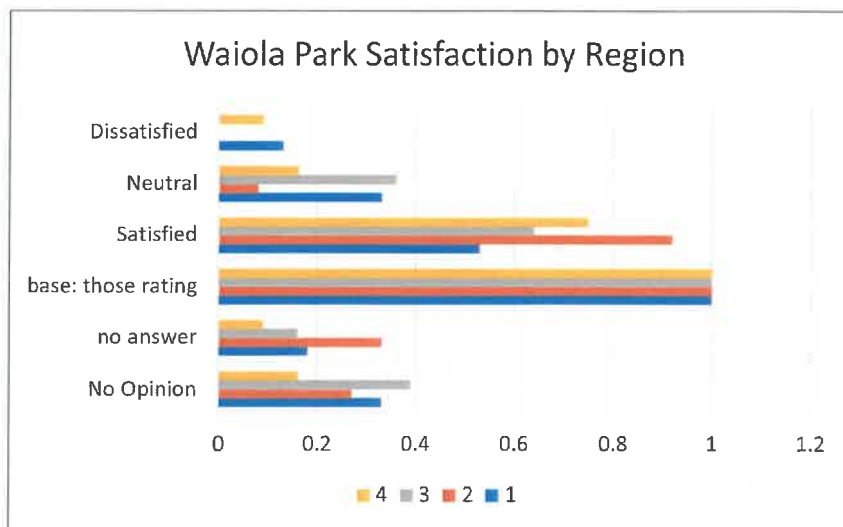
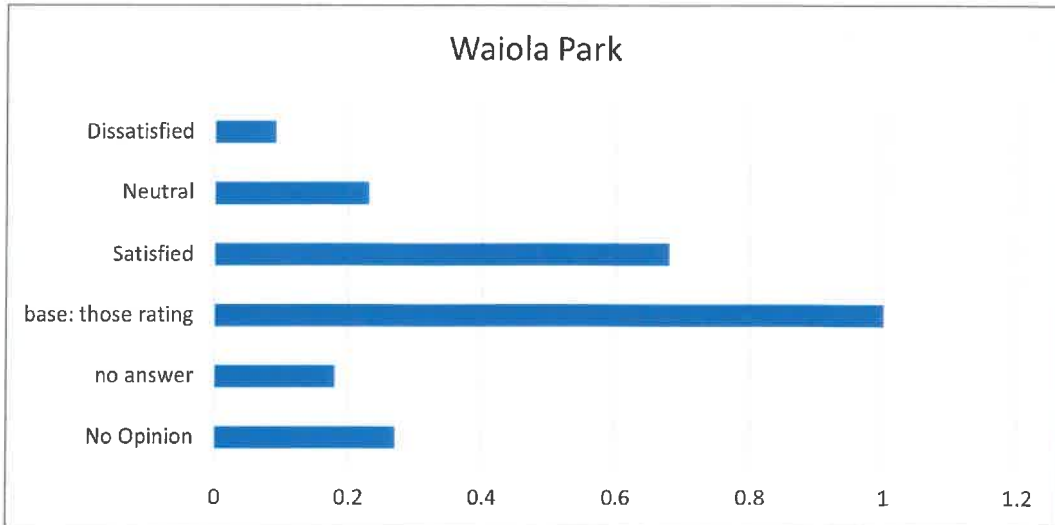


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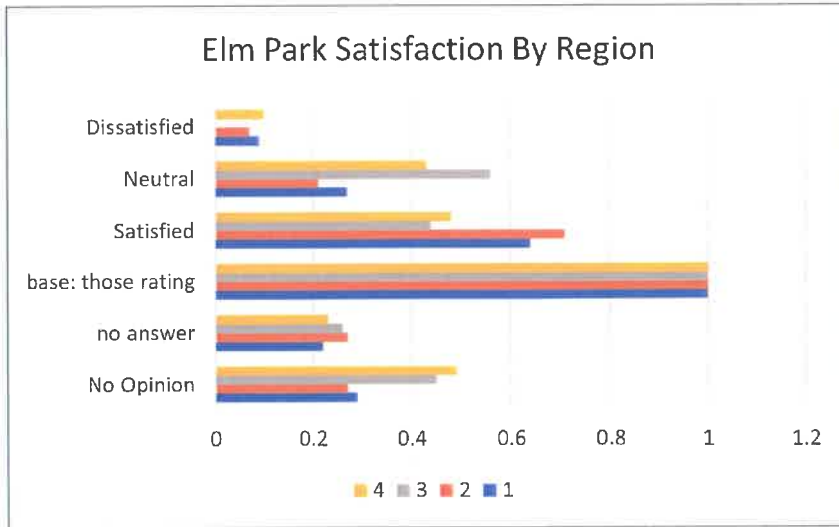
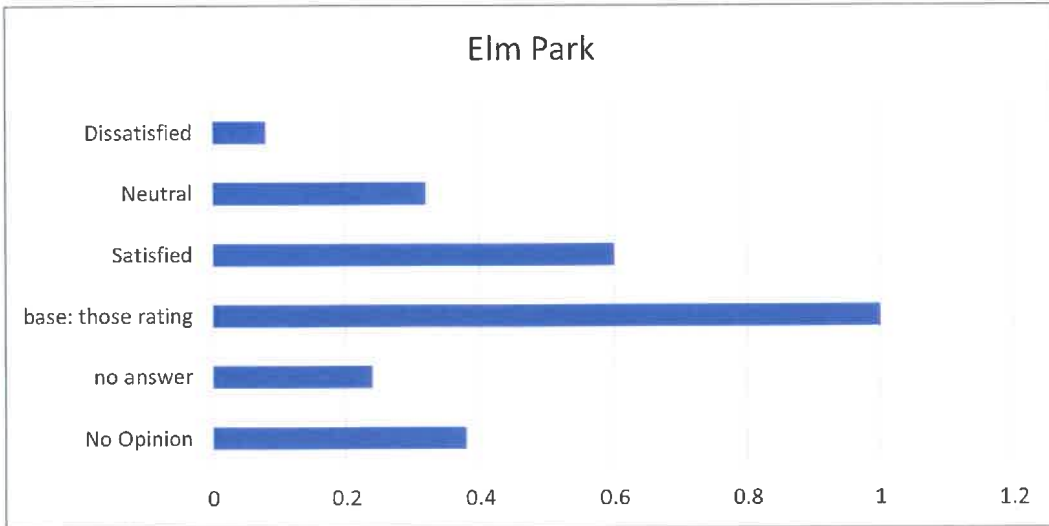


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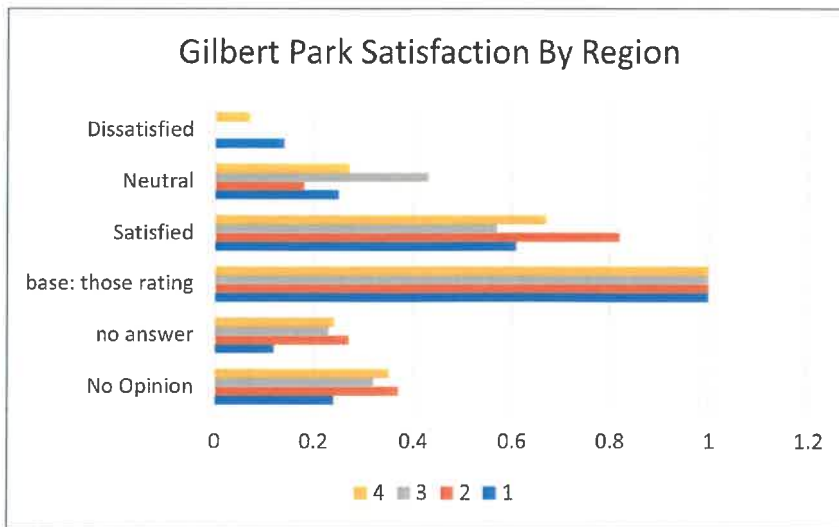
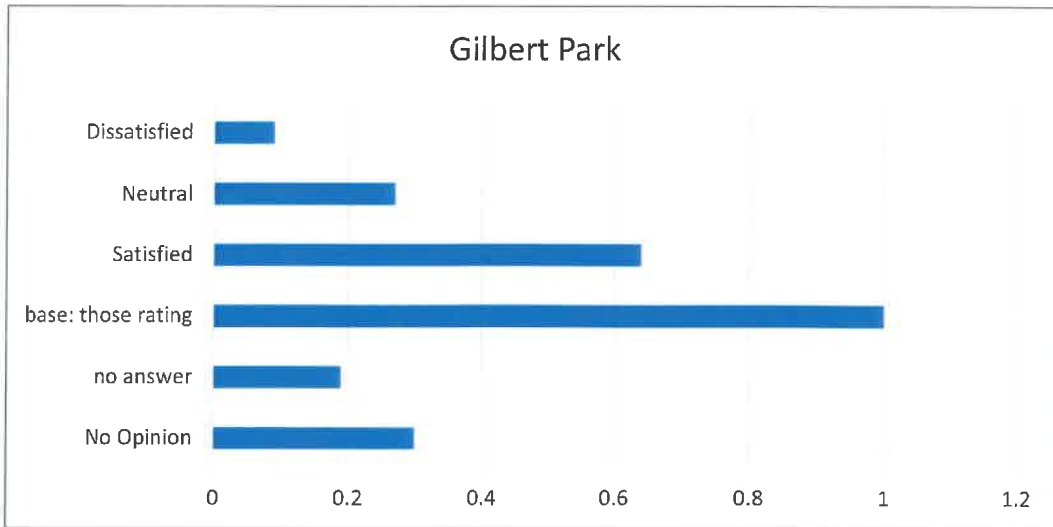


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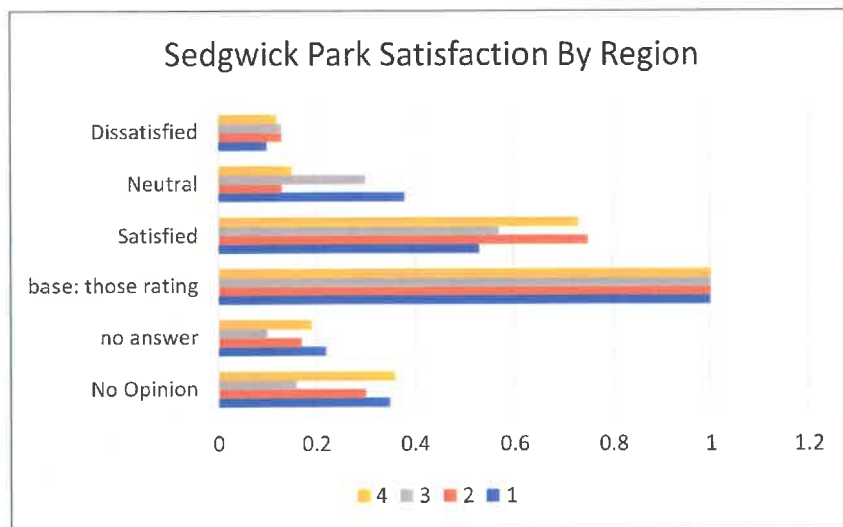
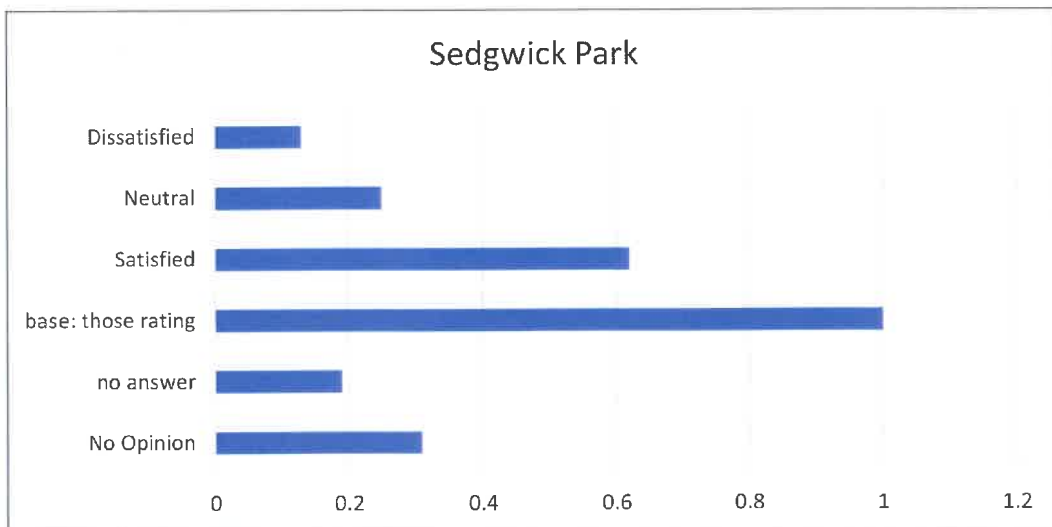


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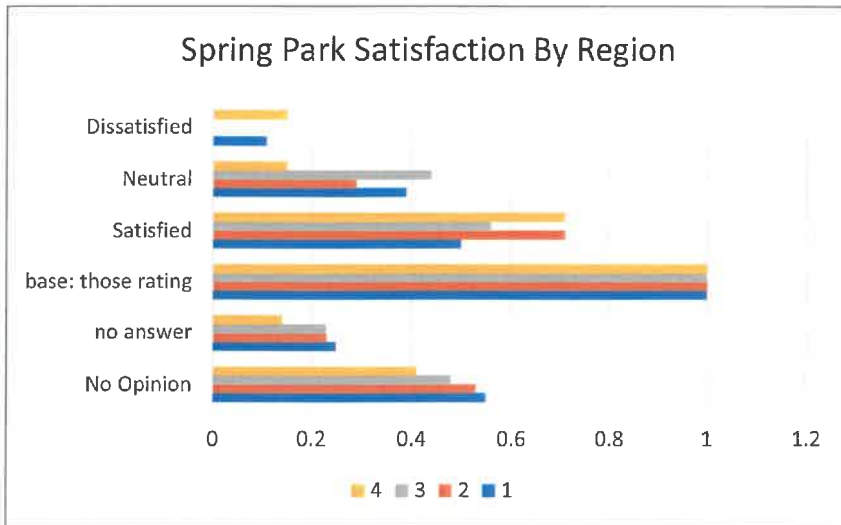
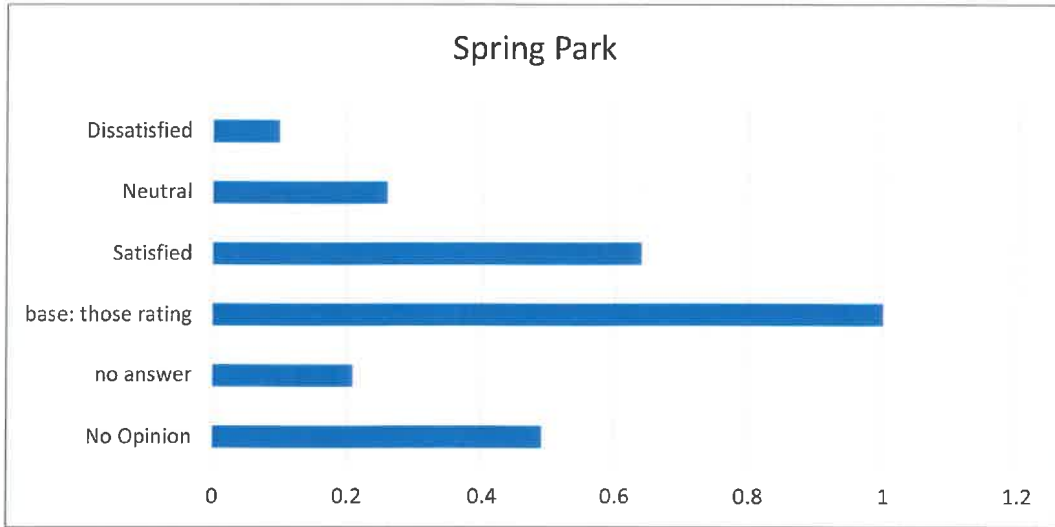


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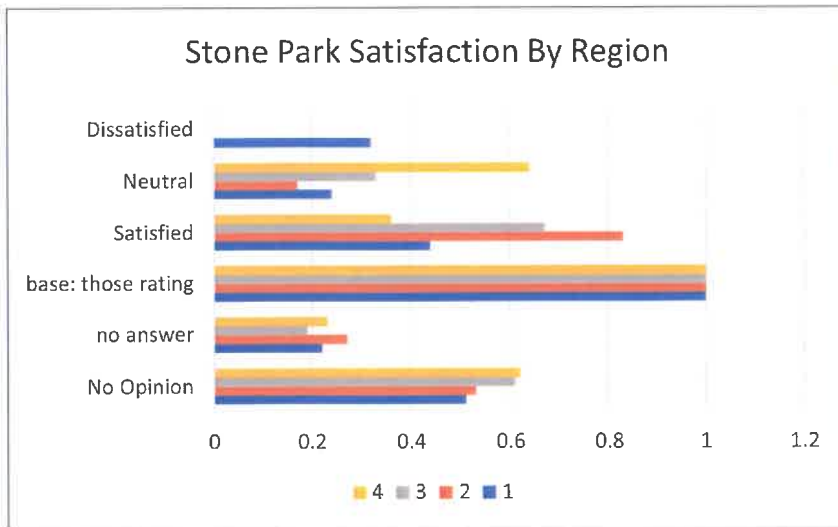
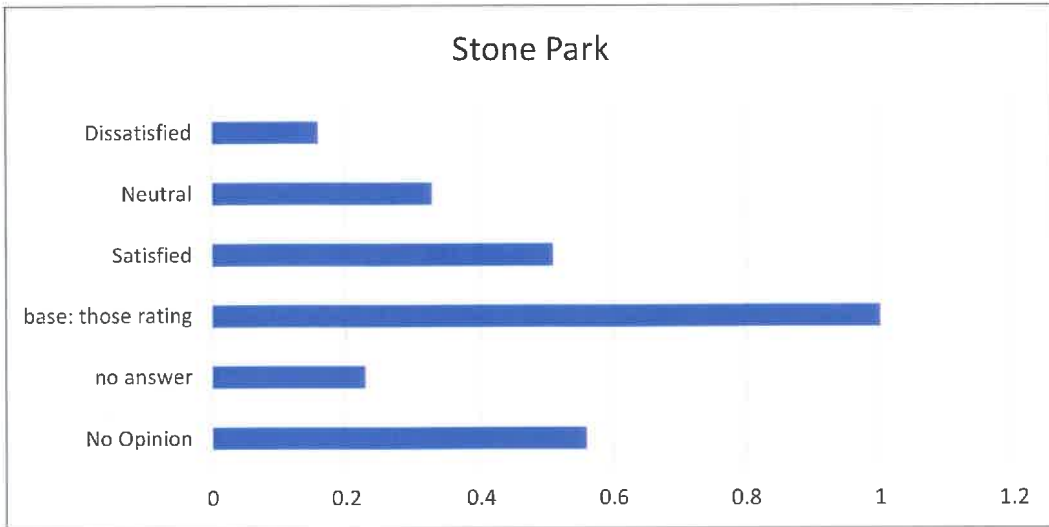


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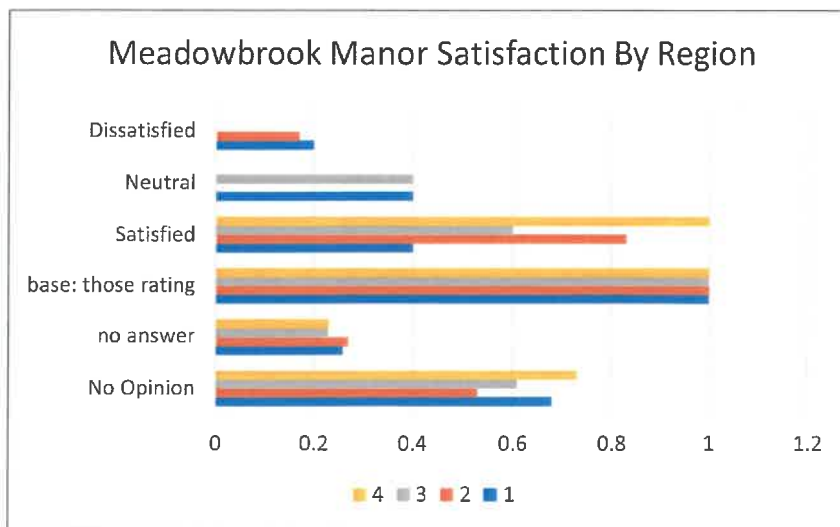
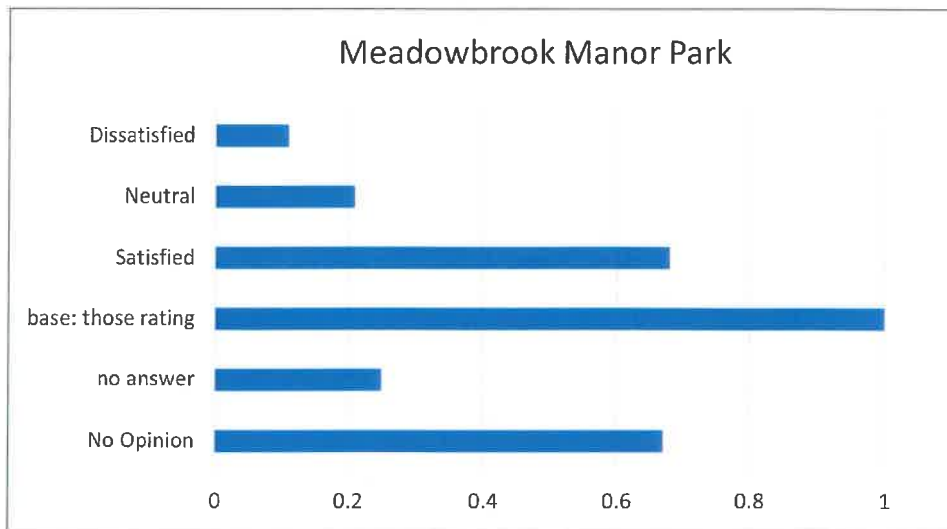


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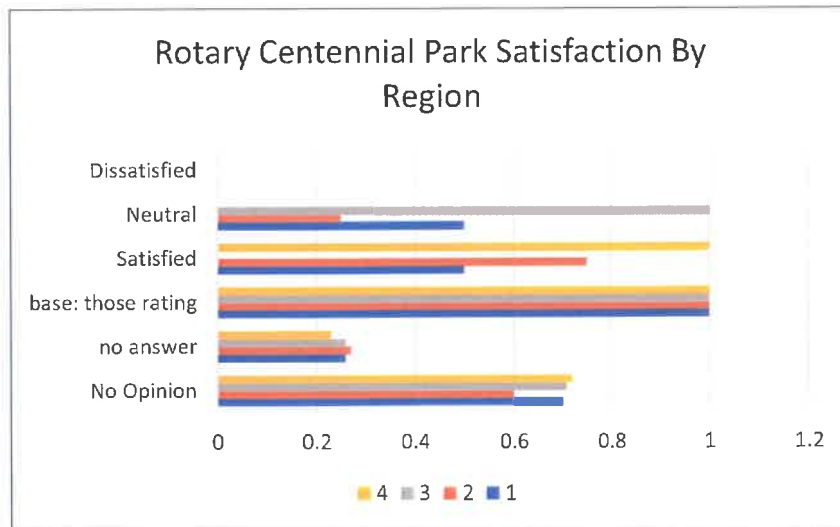
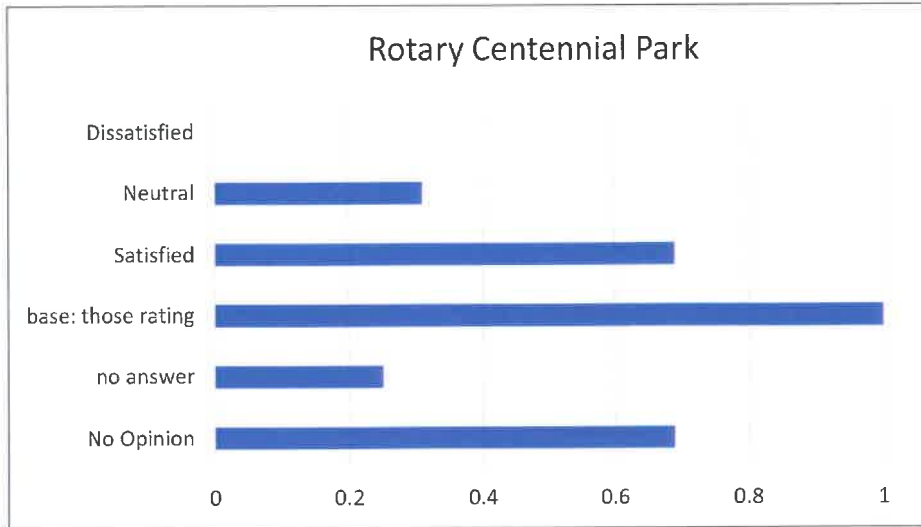
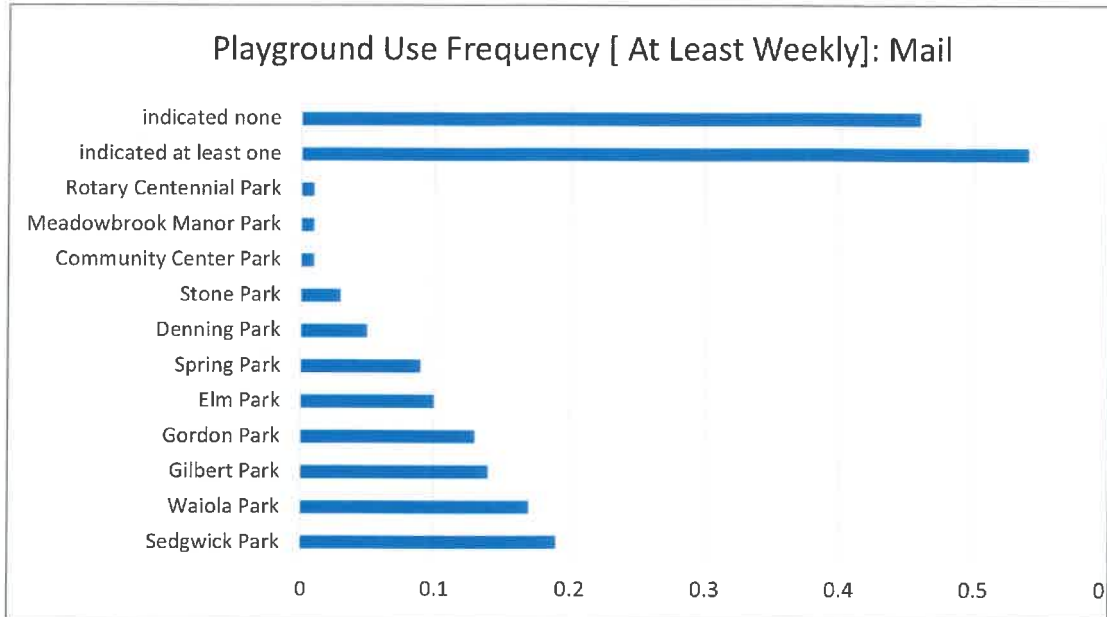


Table 005: On Average Satisfaction with District parks and playgrounds.

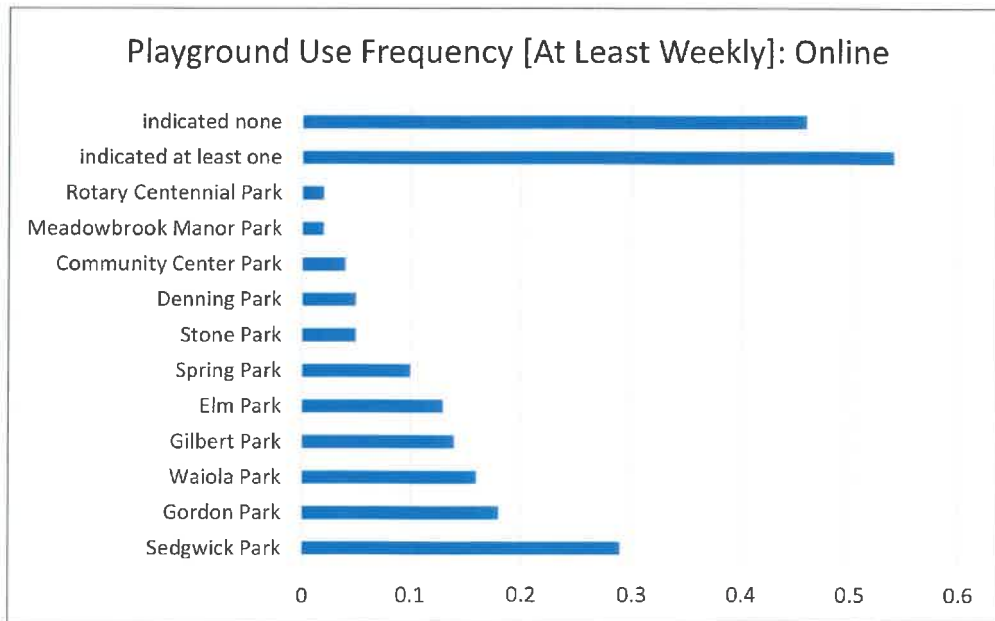
**T017: Playground Use Frequency**

**5. Frequency of District Park and Playground Use: At Least Weekly Summary**

Data Tables - Mailed Respondents

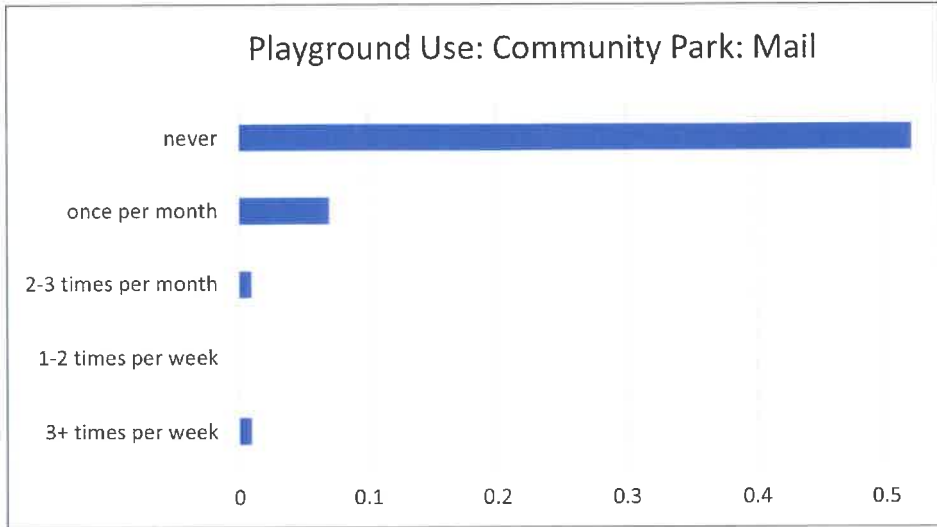


Data Tables - Generic Link Questionnaire Respondents



**T020: 5. Frequency of District Park and Playground Use: Community Center Park**

Data Tables - Mailed Respondents



Data Tables - Generic Link Questionnaire Respondents

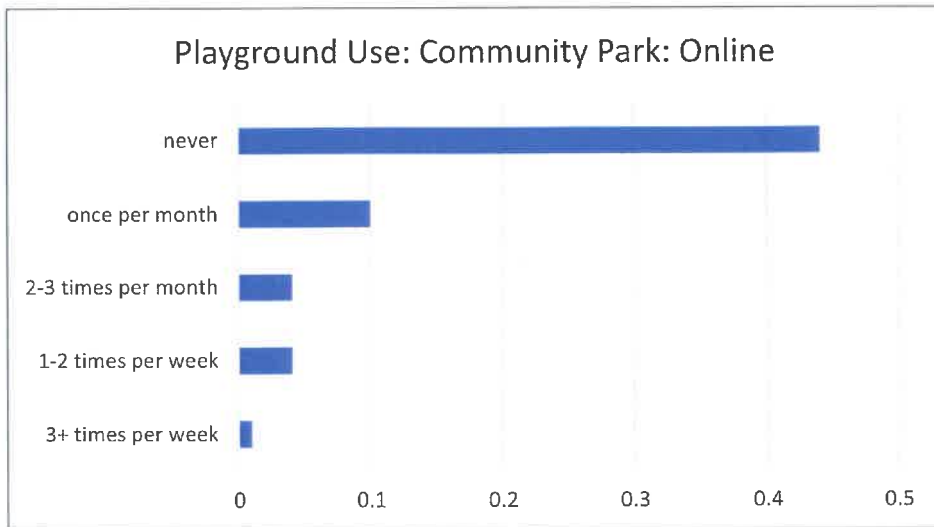
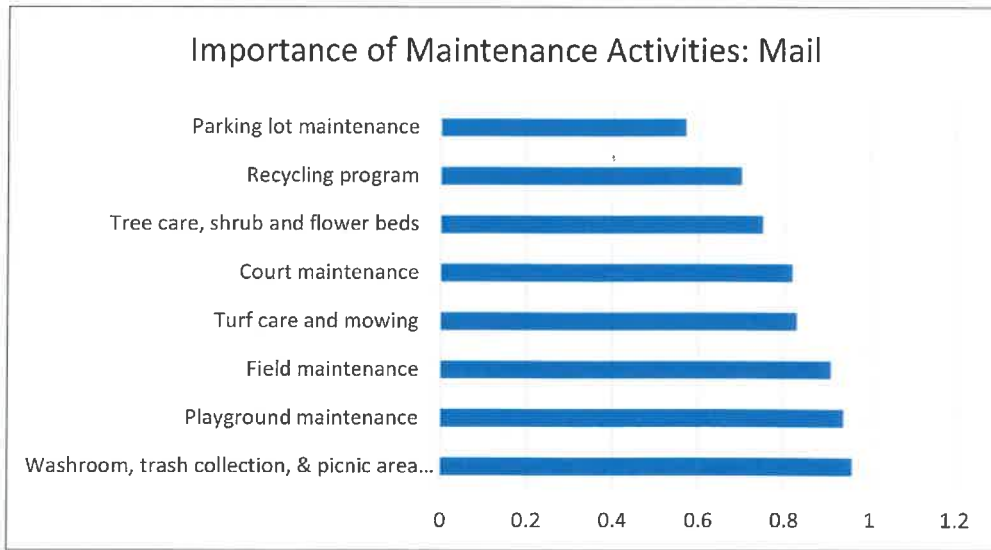


Table 020: Frequency of Playground Use: Community Center Park. Community Park was identified by respondents as very low on the satisfied with District Parks and Playgrounds, so PRI reviewed to investigate, using available survey information, the possible cause for such a low satisfaction rating.

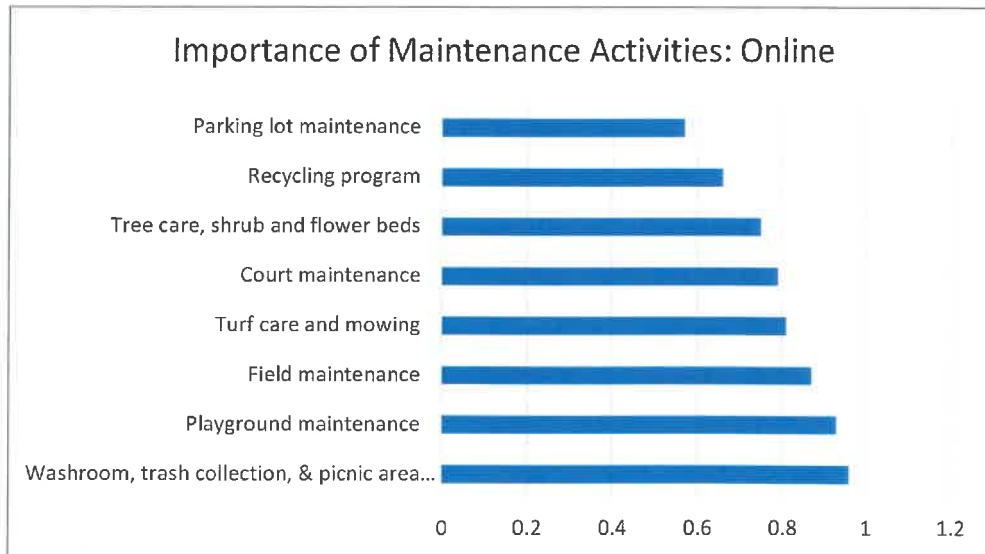
**T030: Importance of Maintenance Activities**

**6. How important are the maintenance activities in PDLG,s parks and facilities?  
(rated 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale where 5 = Very Important and 1 = Not at all important)**

**Data Tables - Mailed Respondents**



**Data Tables - Generic Link Questionnaire Respondents**



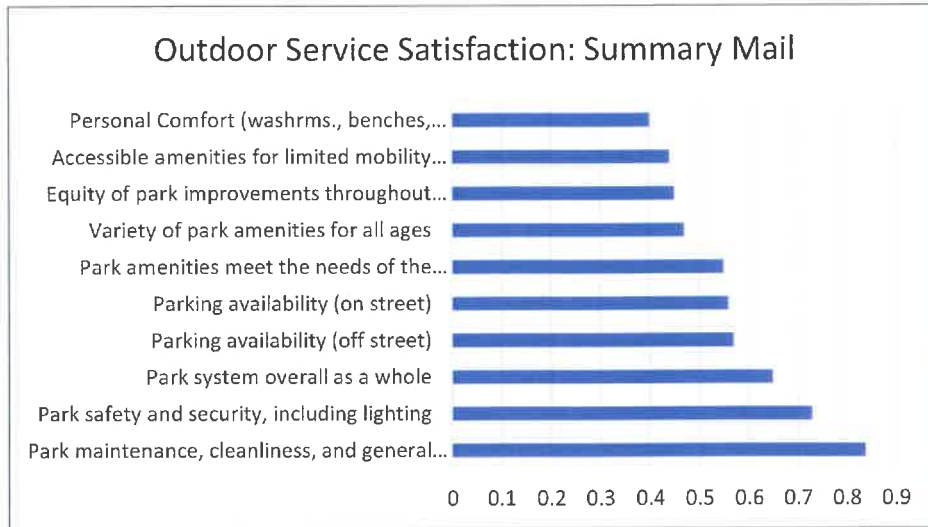
**Table 030: Summary of Importance of Maintenance Activities. The responses between the two survey methods were practically identical in ranking of maintenance with washrooms, trash collection, and picnic area cleaning being the most important.**

**T040: Satisfaction with District Outdoor Services: Satisfied Summary**

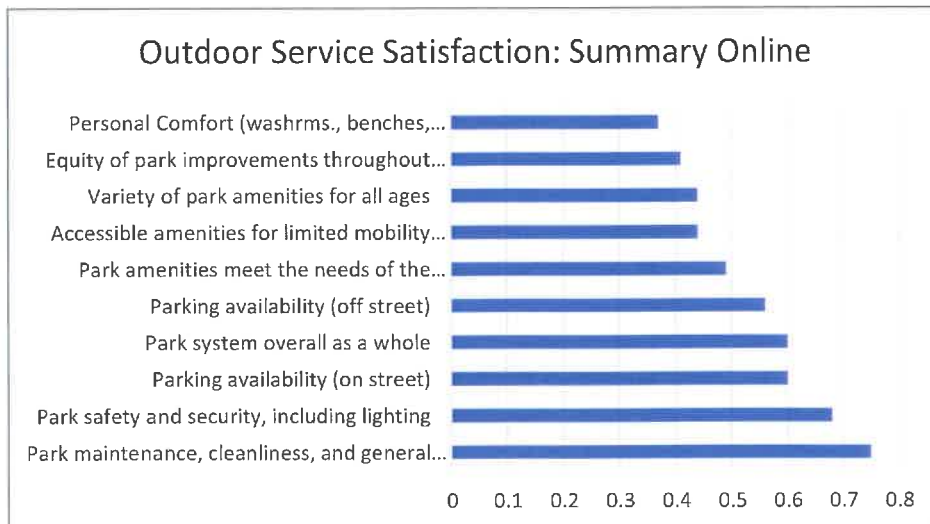
**7. On a scale of 1 - 5 (5 being the best), how would you rate the following for OUTDOOR parks & facilities?**

**(Satisfied Summary (rated 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale where 5= Very Satisfied and 1=Not at all Satisfied))**

**Data Tables - Mailed Respondents**



**Data Tables - Generic Link Questionnaire Respondents**

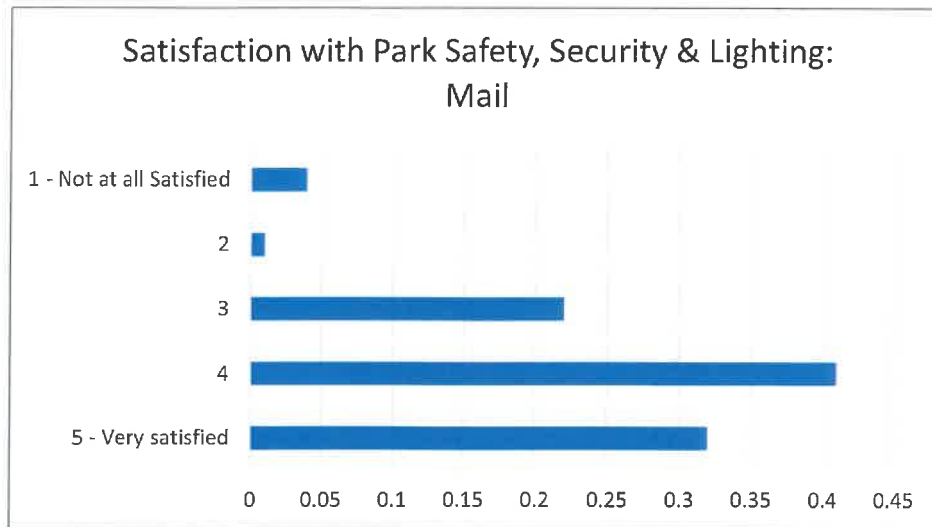


**Table 040: Outdoor Service Satisfaction: Both survey methods were identical in satisfaction with the top two categories. Satisfaction with Overall park system maintenance was slightly higher by Mail respondents (65%) versus Online respondents ((60%). PRI investigated this category since both Community and focus group meetings identified park maintenance as a District strength.**

**T043: Satisfaction with District Outdoor Services: Park Safety and Security, including Lighting**

**7. On a scale of 1 - 5 (5 being the best), how would you rate the following for OUTDOOR parks & facilities?**

Data Tables - Mailed Respondents



Data Tables - Generic Link Questionnaire Respondents

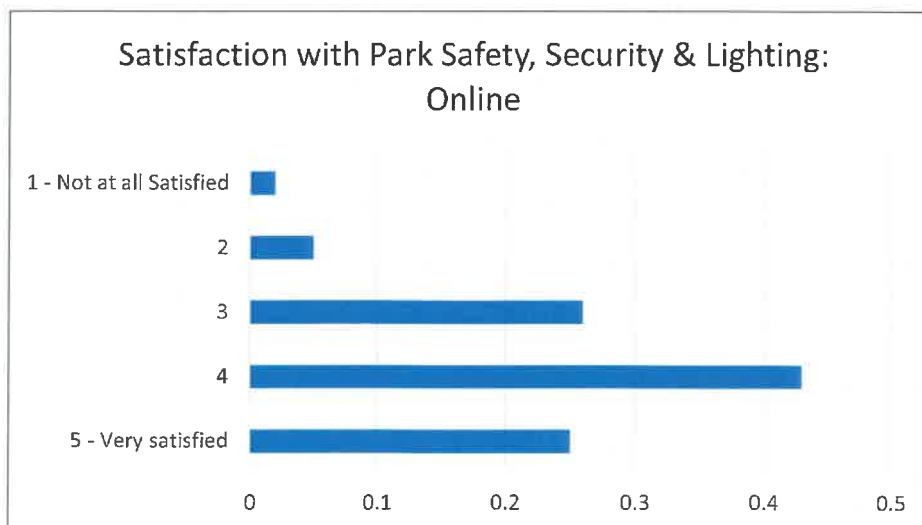
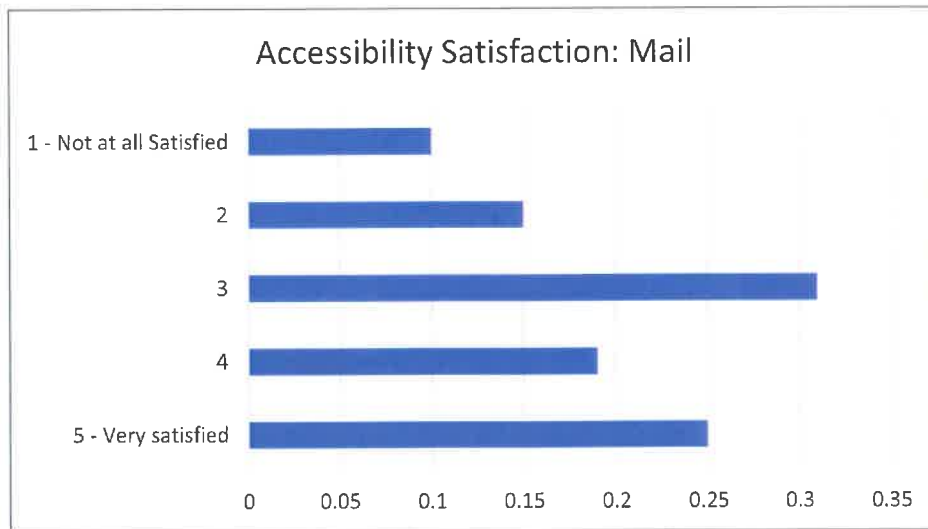


Table 043: Satisfaction with Park Safety, Security & Lighting was reviewed because Community and focus groups indicated attendees were very satisfied with park safety and security. This is generally consistent with the Community-wide survey responses where Mail Survey (73%) and Online (68) while the Mail survey had the highest (32%) very satisfied.

**T045: Satisfaction with District Outdoor Services: Accessibility Amenities for Limited Mobility Park Patrons**

**7. On a scale of 1 - 5 (5 being the best), how would you rate the following for OUTDOOR parks & facilities?**

Data Tables - Mailed Respondents



Data Tables - Generic Link Questionnaire Respondents

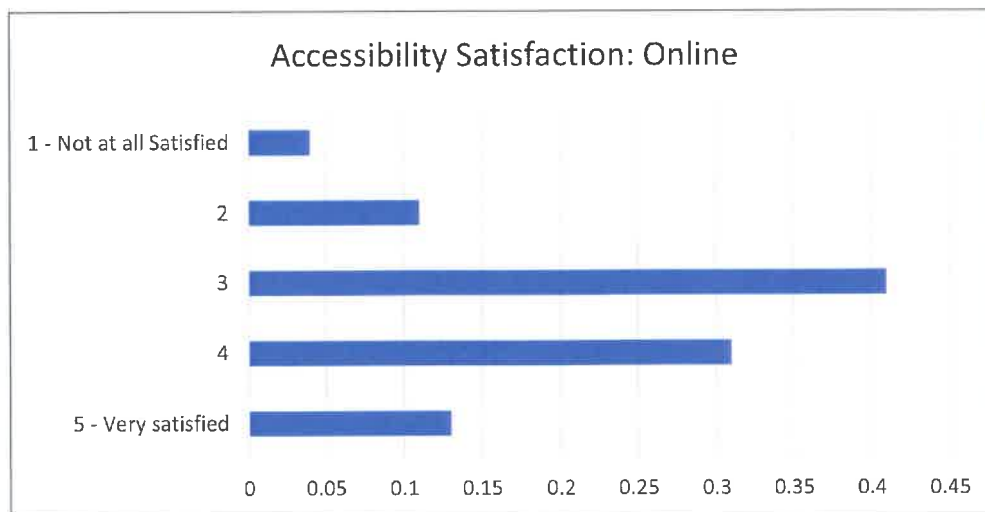
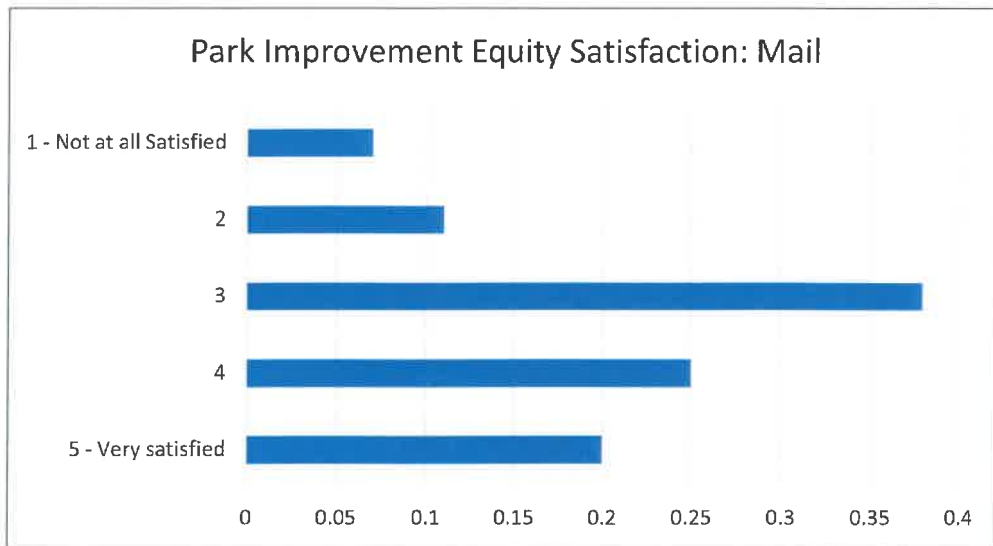


Table 045: Satisfaction With District Outdoor Services: Accessibly Amenities for Limited Mobility Park Patrons. Mail respondents identified Accessibility as one of the top 3 Values for the District, while accessibility fell to fourth in the Online respondents. Mail survey respondents were very satisfied (25%) versus (13%) for Online respondents, however both survey methods were identical for Satisfied or Very Satisfied at 44%.

**T046: Satisfaction with District Outdoor Services: Equity of Park Improvements Throughout the District**

**7. On a scale of 1 - 5 (5 being the best), how would you rate the following for OUTDOOR parks & facilities?**

Data Tables - Mailed Respondents



Data Tables - Generic Link Questionnaire Respondents

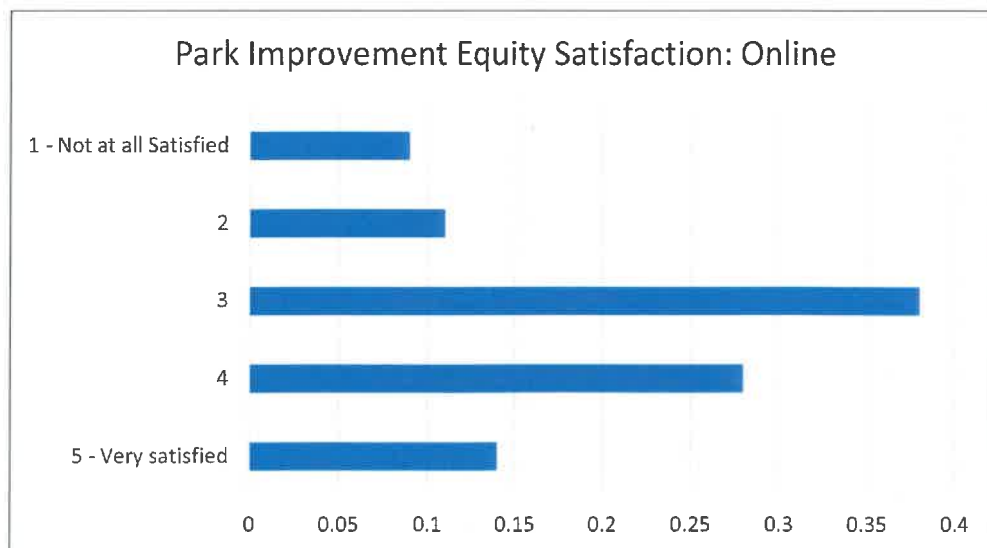
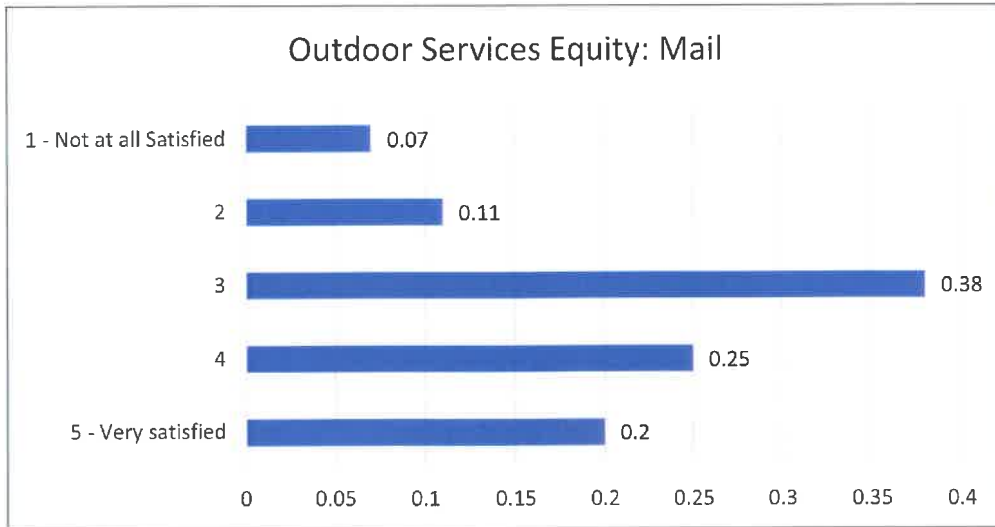


Table 046: Satisfaction With District Outdoor Services: Equity of Park Improvements Throughout the District. Throughout the focus and community group meetings a common theme surfaced there was significant “inequity” in park improvements throughout the District. Parts of the District received significantly more park improvements when compared to other areas. The survey question asked if respondents were satisfied with Outdoor Services Equity of Park Improvements throughout the District. It appears while 45% of Mail Respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the equity of park improvements throughout the District, and 42% of Online Respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the equity of park improvements throughout the District. We did not feel this was a significant difference between the two survey methods.

**T047: Satisfaction with District Outdoor Services: Park System Overall as a Whole**  
**7. On a scale of 1 - 5 (5 being the best), how would you rate the following for OUTDOOR parks & facilities?**

Data Tables - Mailed Respondents



Data Tables - Generic Link Questionnaire Respondents

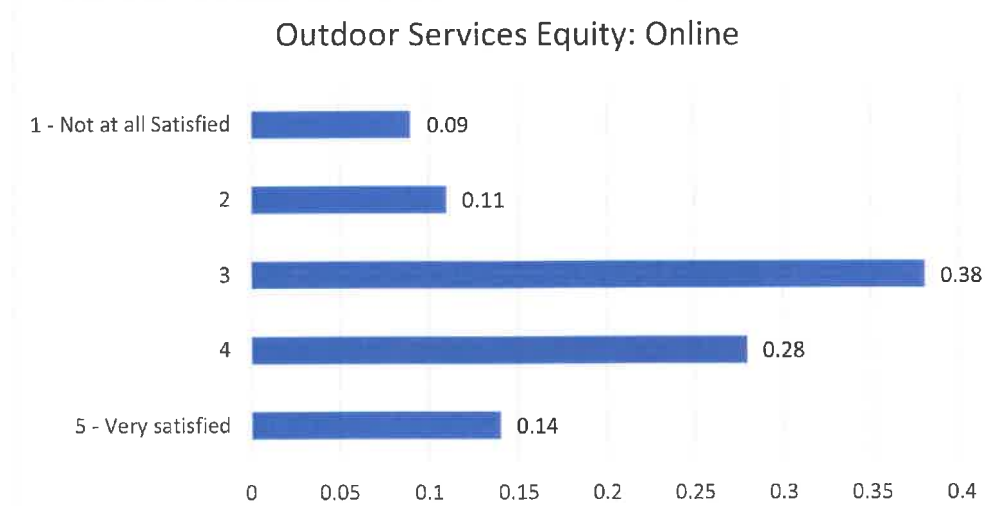
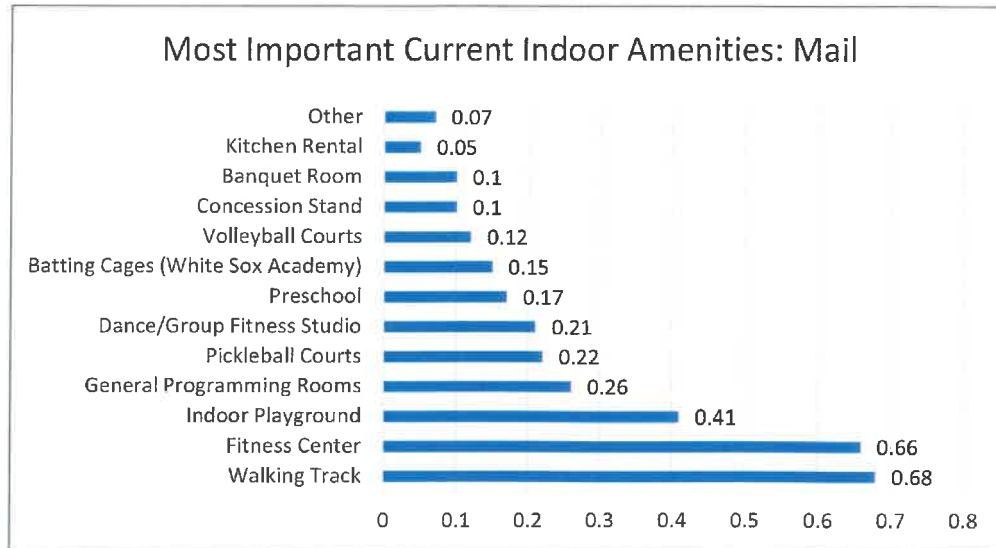


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**T052: Important Current Indoor Amenities**

**8. What CURRENT INDOOR amenities are MOST IMPORTANT to you and members of your household? Choose your top five.**

**Data Tables - Mailed Respondents**



**Data Tables - Generic Link Questionnaire Respondents**

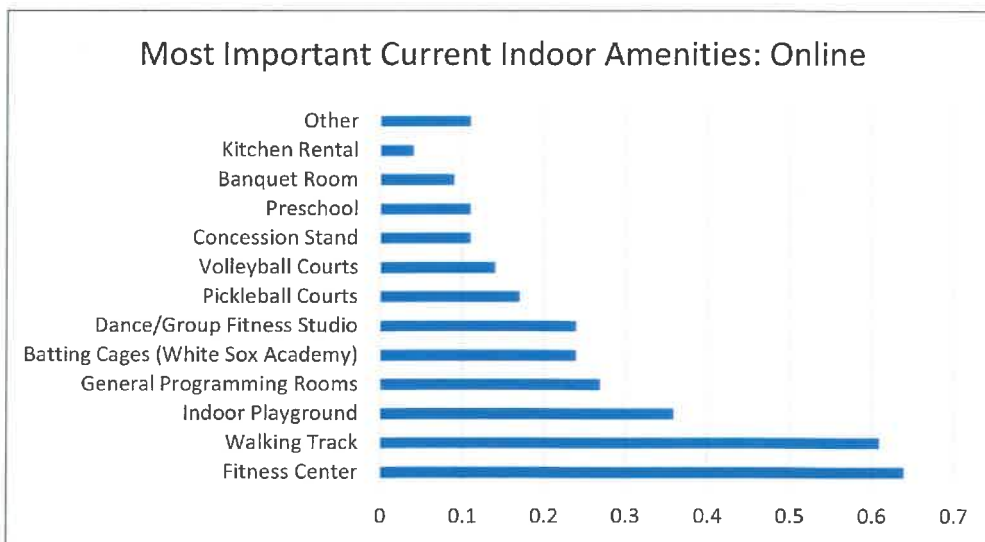


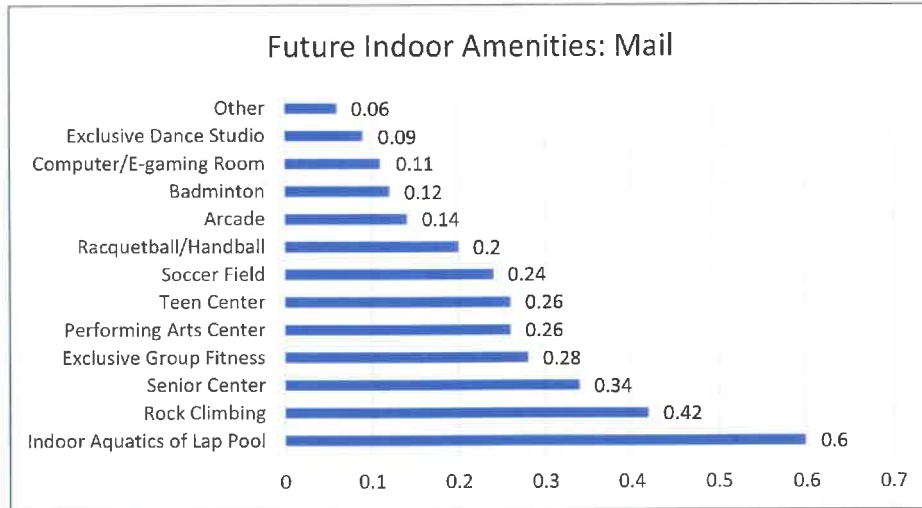
Table 052: Important CURRENT INDOOR ACTIVITIES It is important for the District to get feedback from residents on their interest and the importance of current indoor amenities as their satisfaction can indicate whether the District should continue to offer existing amenities.

The Walking Track and Fitness Center were #1 and #2 in both the Mail and Online Surveys, followed by Indoor Playground and General Programming Rooms. The comparison between Mail and Online shows Pickleball favored by more Mail than Online respondents while Batting Cages (White Sox Academy) favored by more Online than Mail respondents. Preschool was also favored 17% Mail over 11% Online respondents.

**T053: Future Indoor Amenities**

**9. What NEW INDOOR amenities would you and members of your household like to see in the Park District? Choose your top five.**

**Data Tables - Mailed Respondents**



**Data Tables - Generic Link Questionnaire Respondents**

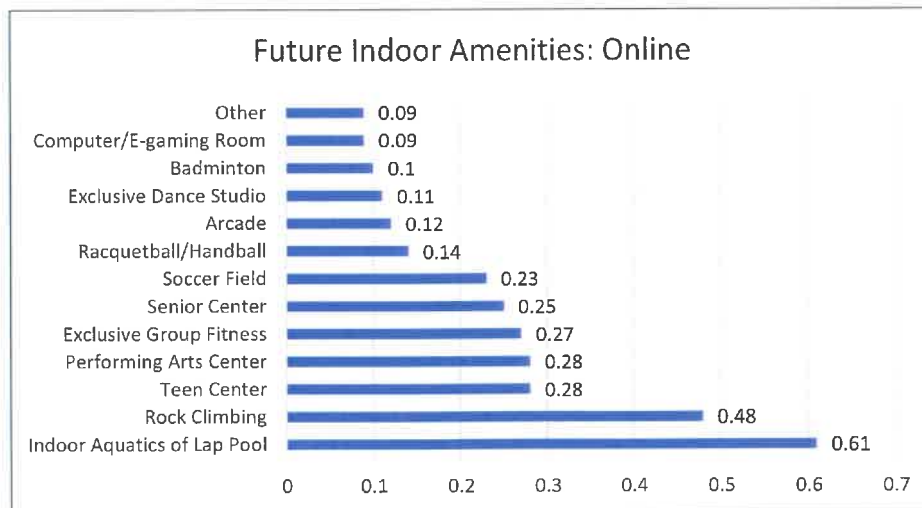


Table 053: Important FUTURE INDOOR ACTIVITIES Testing the interests of residents for Future Indoor Activities is also critical to determine where the District should consider focusing their resources for new program offerings.

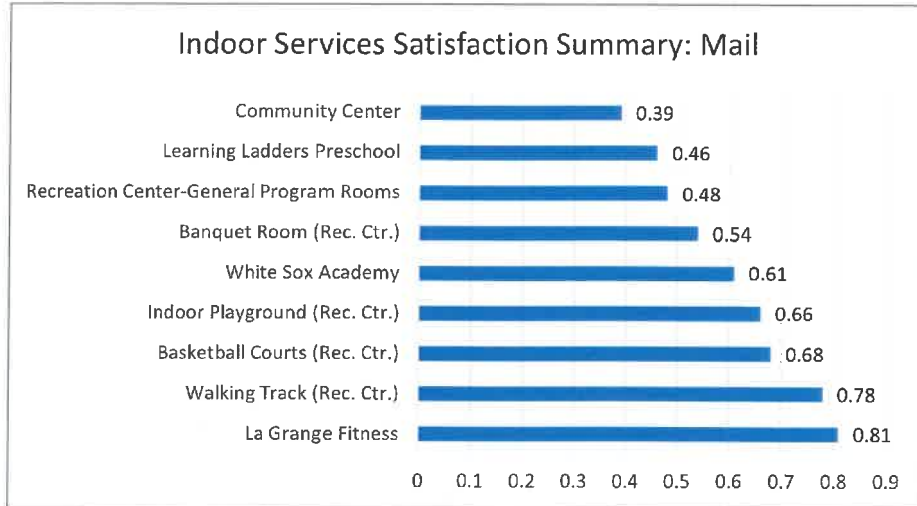
Over 60% of respondents in both Mail and Online surveys indicated Indoor Aquatics or Lap Pool was ranked highest for New Indoor amenities. This was consistent with both focus group and community open house meetings where aquatics or pool was frequently mentioned as being Most Important for District to offer.

A Senior Center was higher in the Mail Survey 34% than in the Online Survey 25% while the Online ranked Rock Climbing higher (48%) versus Mail Survey (42%). Most all of the remaining amenities were shuffled from top to bottom between Mail and Online Survey, however the percentages did not vary significantly between the two survey types.

**T054: Satisfaction with District Indoor Services: Satisfied Summary**

**10. On average, how satisfied are you with the following Park District of La Grange parks, indoor spaces and facilities, and how often do you or family members use them?**

Data Tables - Mailed Respondents



Data Tables - Generic Link Questionnaire Respondents

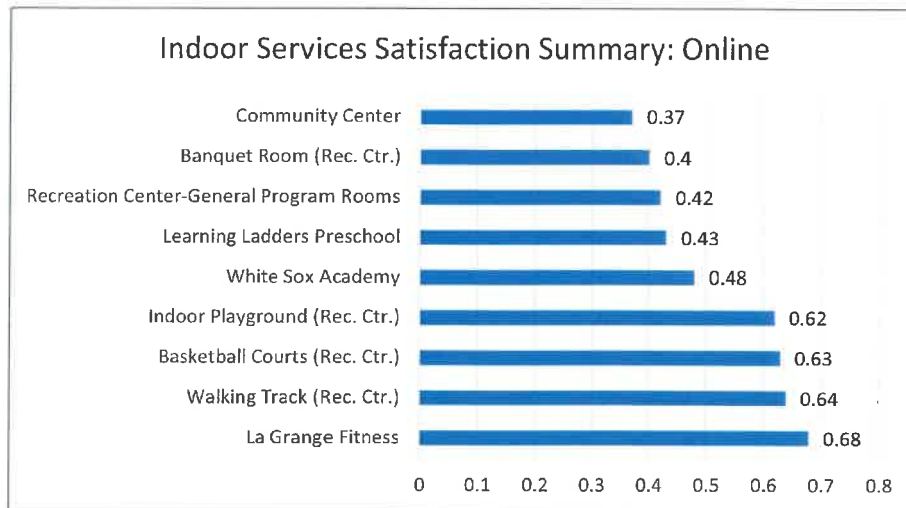
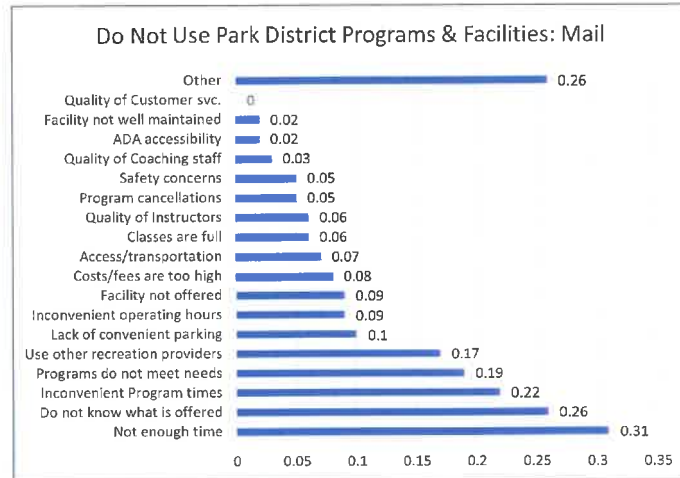


Table 054: Satisfied with District Indoor Services: Summary. There is a significant variance between the Mail (81%) and Online (68%) Survey respondents related to the LaGrange Fitness Center. This could indicate the District should consider additional study to identify specific areas of satisfaction/dissatisfaction that could be the root cause for such a variation. The top five ranked activities were consistent between the two survey methods where the bottom four activities shuffled slightly, however in both methods the Community Center was at the bottom. With less than four in ten respondents satisfied with the Community Center. The District might consider additional study to identify the specific root cause for dissatisfaction with the Community Center.

**T086: Reasons for NOT using District Programs and Facilities**

**12. What are the reasons that you and members of your household DO NOT use Park District of La Grange parks, programs, and facilities more often?**

**Data Tables - Mailed Respondents**



**Data Tables - Generic Link Questionnaire Respondents**

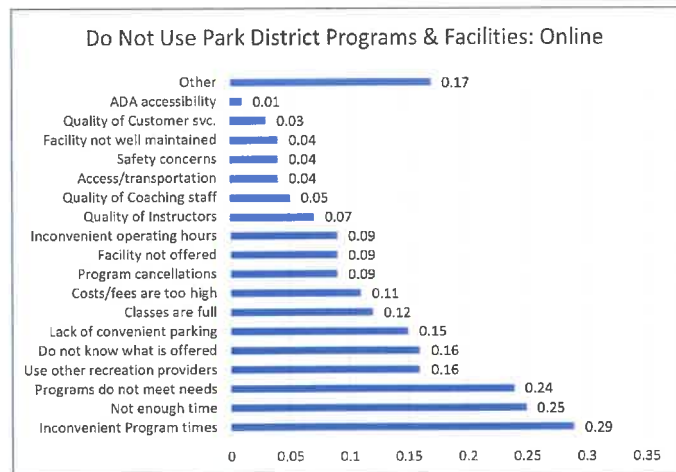


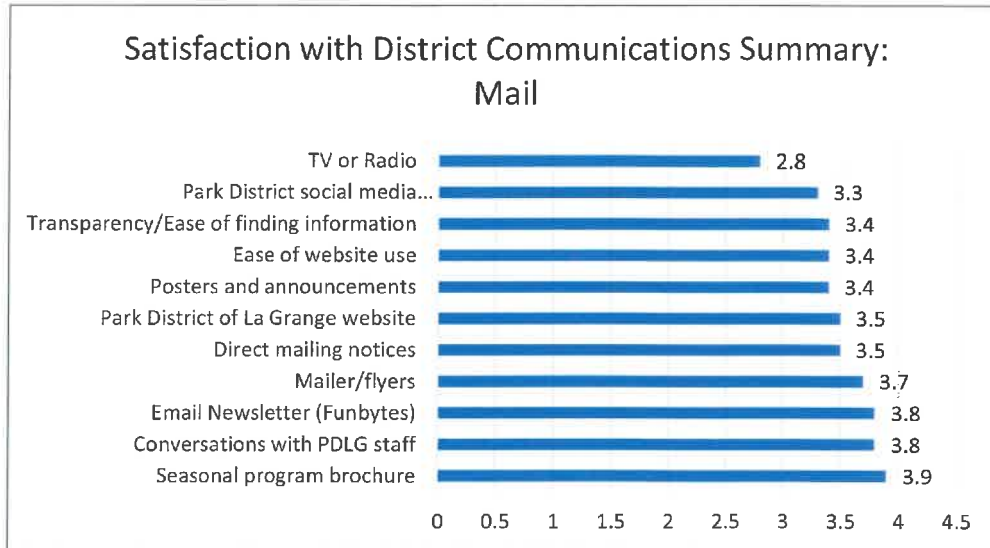
Table 086: Reasons for Not Using Parks/Programs/Facilities More Often. Available time/Not enough time has always been a significant reason for not participating in recreational activities. There is very little a District can do to change that premise other than to provide activities and opportunities that individuals would consider to “re-prioritize” their time to rank the recreational activity as more important than something they might currently be spending time on.

In reviewing the Mail Survey, the top reason for not participating was “Not enough time” while the next three are all reasons the District could potentially address to draw more participation, including “Do not know what is offered” this could be addressed by more aggressive marketing of all District programs and activities; “Inconvenient Program Times” could be addressed by investigating times programs are offered; “Programs do not meet needs” the District could further investigate the program interests of their residents.

Online respondents indicated “Inconvenient Program Times” as the number one reason they do not participate more often.

**T088: Satisfaction with District Communications: Mean Summary**  
**13. How would you rate the quality of park district communications?**  
**MEAN SUMMARY (5 = Very Satisfied;, 1 = Not at all Satisfied)**

Data Tables - Mailed Respondents



Data Tables - Generic Link Questionnaire Respondents

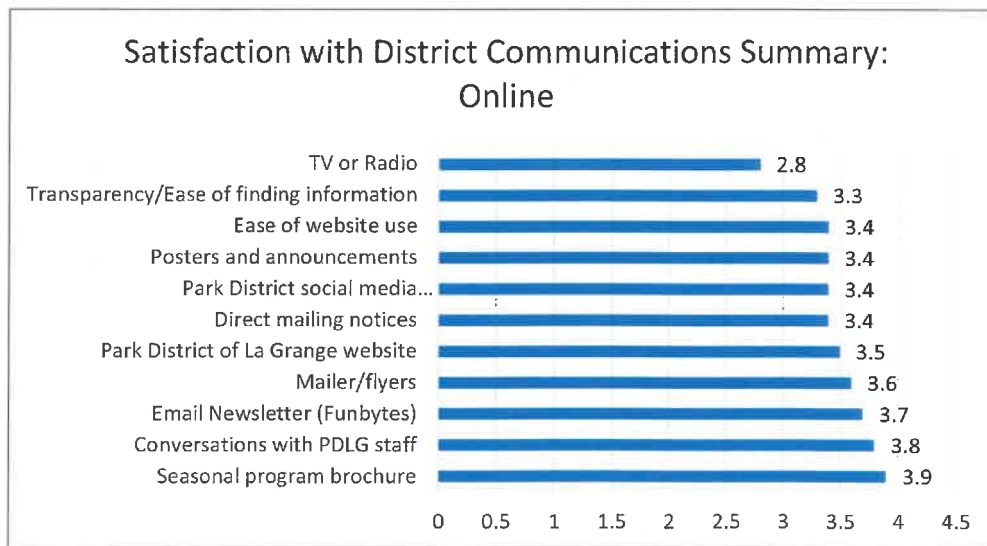
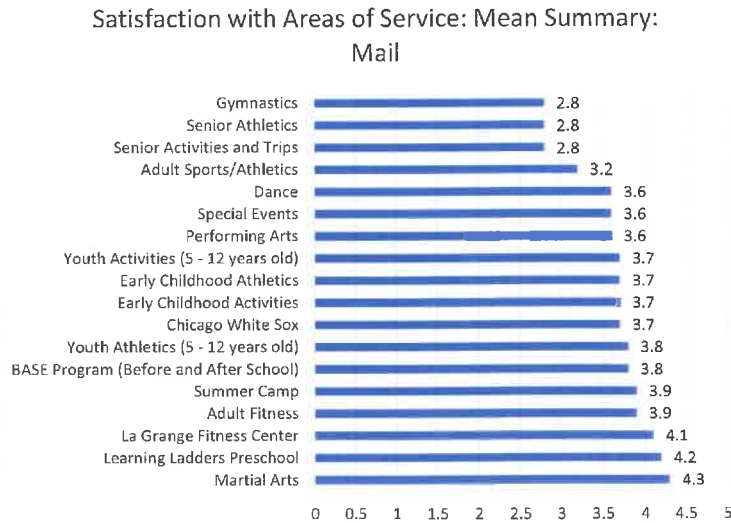


Table 088: Satisfaction with District Communications Summary. How effectively the District communicates with residents may be able to be measured with how satisfied residents are with the District Communication Efforts. There doesn't appear to be significant differences between the two survey methods for Satisfaction with the quality of District Communications. The respondents were asked to rank their level of satisfaction with eleven types of District Communications. All categories except TV or Radio rated above a 3.0 (neither satisfied or dissatisfied). The top four categories were consistent between surveys with the remaining seven categories nearly identical across the board.

**T101: Satisfaction with Areas of Service: Mean Summary**  
**14. The Park District of La Grange offers programs for all age groups and household types. What is your household's overall satisfaction with the current recreation programs, facilities, and staff in each of the following areas?**  
**MEAN SUMMARY (5 = Very Satisfied;, 1 = Not at all Satisfied)**

Data Tables - Mailed Respondents



Data Tables - Generic Link Questionnaire Respondents

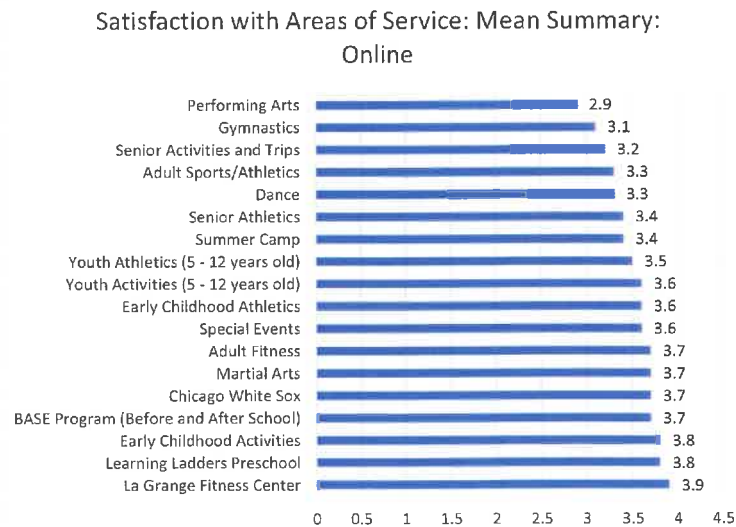
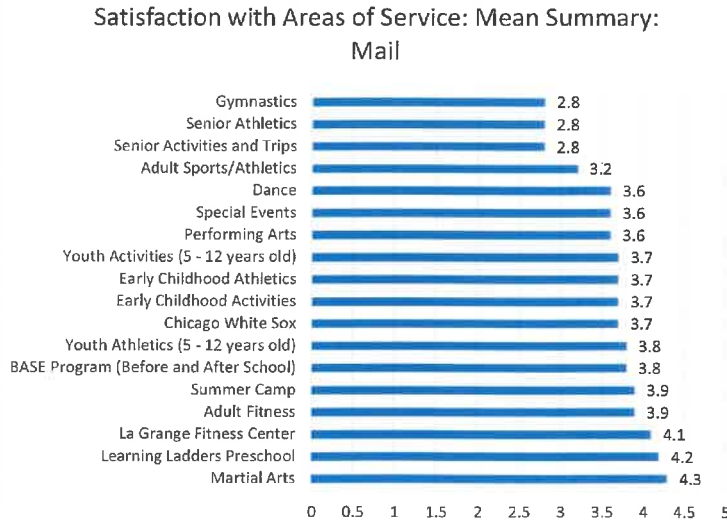


Table 101: Satisfaction with Areas of Service: Mean Summary. When reviewing the Mail Survey respondents, all activities except Senior Activities and Trips, Senior Athletics, and Gymnastics are above the mean. There are significant differences between Mail and Online responses for Marital Arts and Performing Arts. The top three activities for each survey method are consistent.

**T120: Frequency of Recreation Program Participation**

**15. In how many recreation programs offered by the Park District of La Grange have you or members of your household participated during the past two years (Pre-COVID 19)?**

Data Tables - Mailed Respondents



Data Tables - Generic Link Questionnaire Respondents

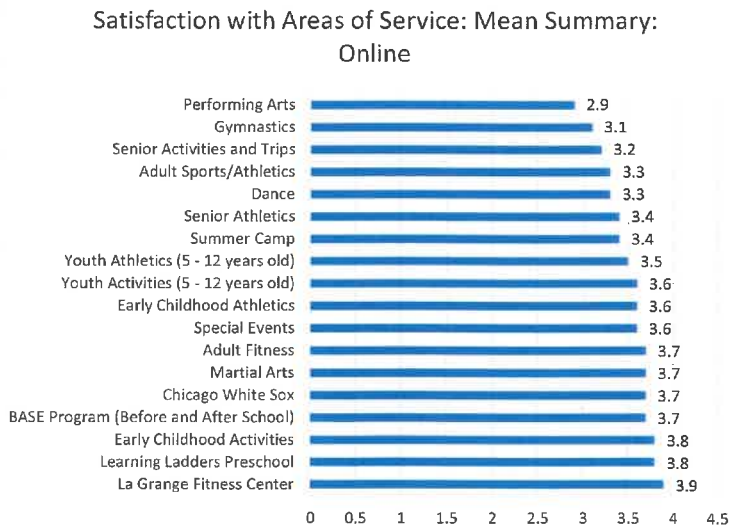
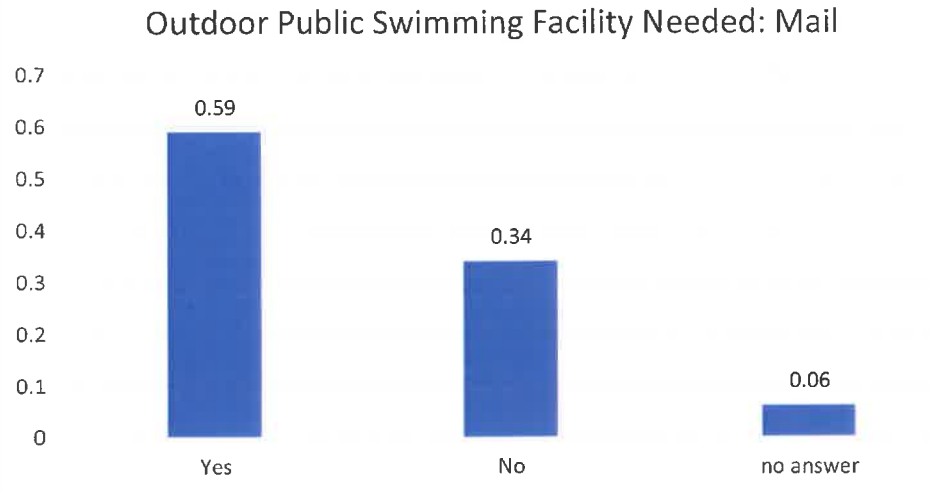


Table 120: Frequency of Participation. The significant differences between the two survey methods here are between Mail None 35% and Online None 19%. This may be attributed to the fact the Mail Survey recipients were “randomly” selected while the Online survey didn’t meet the same level of “randomness”. The District could investigate the over 1/3 of respondents that do not participate in District programs as a possible untapped market.

**T127: Proportion Who Think Outdoor Public Swimming Facility is Needed**  
**23. Do you think an outdoor public swimming facility is needed within the Park District of La Grange?**

Data Tables - Mailed Respondents



Data Tables - Generic Link Questionnaire Respondents

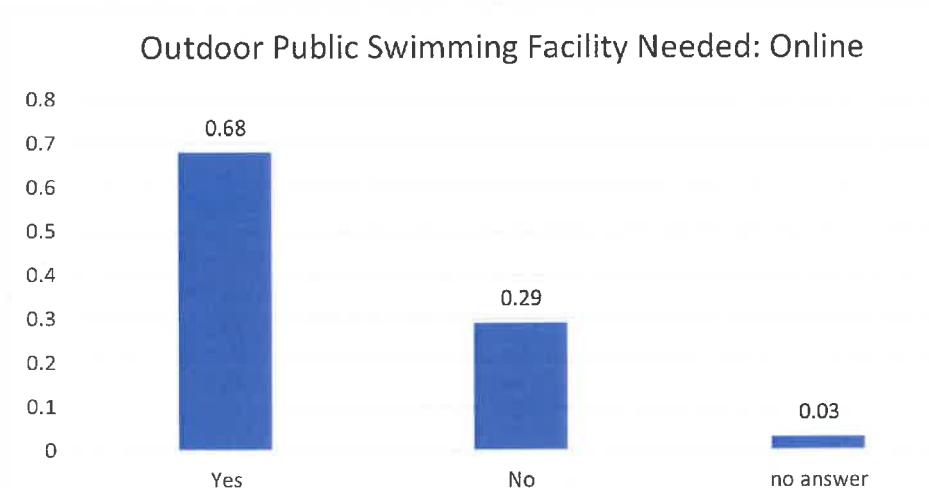


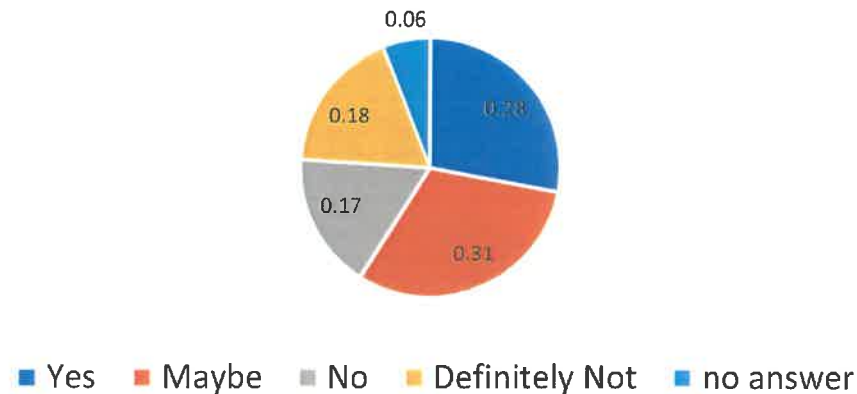
Table 127: Proportion Who Think Outdoor Public Swimming Facility is Needed. A very common thread at the focus groups and community survey was the perceived need for outdoor public swimming. This question was developed to quantify general sentiment for an outdoor public pool facility. The Mail Survey, as a random survey shows there is overwhelming response to the question that an outdoor swimming facility is Needed.

**T128: Support for a Tax Increase to Fund Outdoor Swimming Pool**

**24. Would you support a tax increase to fund development and construction of a new outdoor swimming pool?**

Data Tables - Mailed Respondents

Support for Tax Increase to Fund Outdoor Swimming Pool: Mail



Data Tables - Generic Link Questionnaire Respondents

Support for Tax Increase to Fund Outdoor Swimming Pool: Online

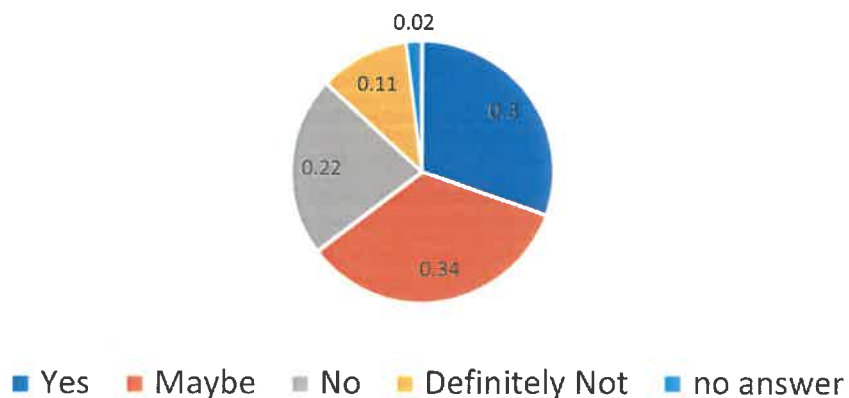
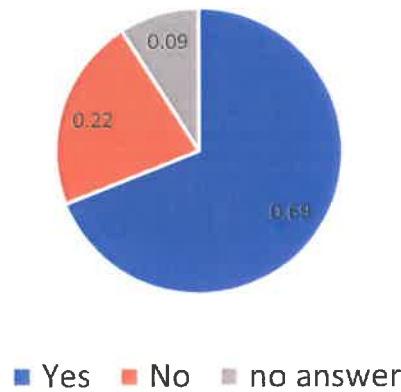


Table 128: Would you Support a Tax increase to fund development and construction of a new outdoor swimming pool. The random Mail Survey indicates that 59% of respondents either would or maybe support a tax increase to fund development and construction of a new outdoor swimming pool, While 66% or respondents answered maybe, no, or definitely not. This is not a significant difference and would warrant additional investigation and likely an additional more targeted community-wide survey before launching a Public Swimming Pool initiative.

**T129: Proportion Supporting Conversion of Tennis Court to Pickleball Court**  
**25. Pickleball is becoming one of the fastest growing recreation activities among varied age groups. Would you support the conversion of one of the district's tennis courts into a pickleball court?**

Data Tables - Mailed Respondents

Support Conversion from Tennis Court to Pickleball Court: Mail



Data Tables - Generic Link Questionnaire Respondents

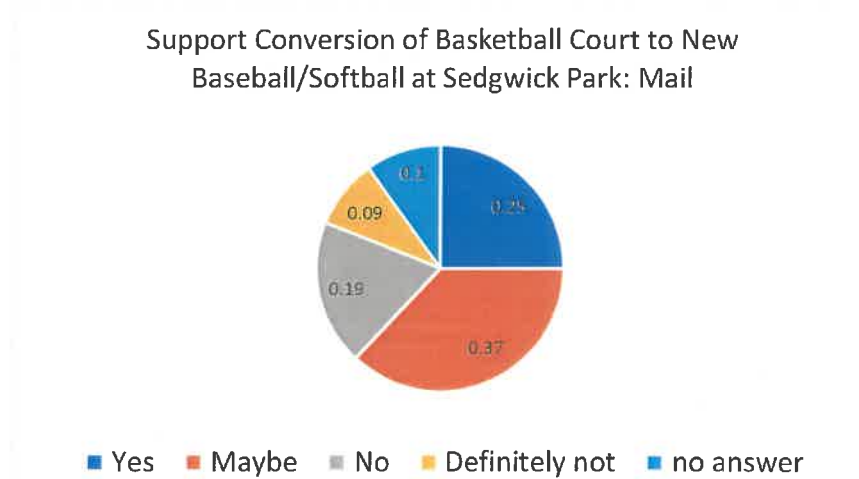
Support Conversion from Tennis Court to Pickleball Court: Online



Table 129: Support Conversion of Tennis Court to Pickleball Court. Pickleball is a fast growing recreational activity among varied age groups. The PDLG Staff wanted to test the waters for support to convert some existing tennis courts to pickleball courts. No specific locations were offered as potential conversion sites, just a generic question to determine if conversion should be considered. Mail respondents supported conversion by more than a 3 to 1 ratio. The Online respondents also supported conversion by more than a 3 to 1 ratio.

**T130: Support for Removal of Basketball Courts for New Baseball/Softball Field 26. The community has expressed interest in adding a new baseball/softball field at Sedgwick for Little League. This would require removing the existing basketball courts. Would you vote in favor of the removal of the basketball courts at Sedgwick to accommodate the addition of a new baseball/softball field?**

Data Tables - Mailed Respondents



Data Tables - Generic Link Questionnaire Respondents

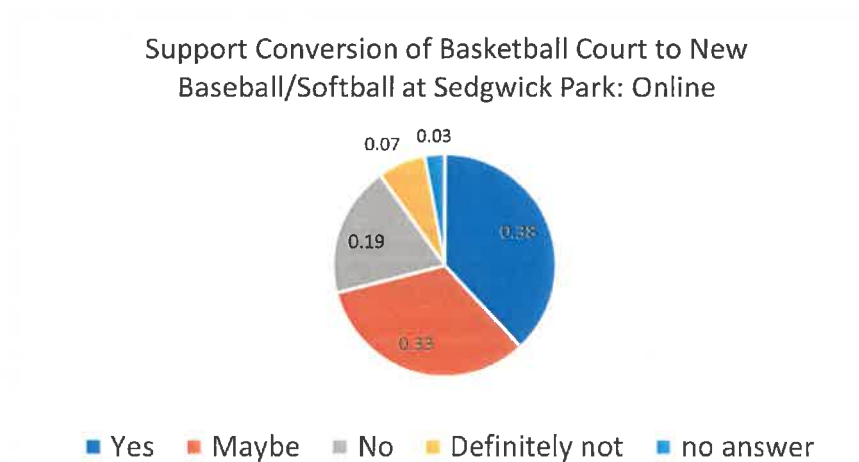


Table 130: Support Removal of Basketball Courts for new Baseball/Softball Field. The PDLG Staff wanted to test the waters for support to convert some existing basketball courts to baseball/softball fields at Sedgwick Park for Little League. 62% of Mail Respondents indicated they would or might support the basketball court conversion, while 65% indicated they might, would not, or definitely not support the conversion at Sedgwick Park. 71% of Online Respondents indicated they would or might support the basketball court conversion, while 59% indicated they might, would not, or definitely not support the conversion at Sedgwick Park. In our opinion this does not provide clear direction and would warrant additional investigation and study prior to initiating any conversion at Sedgwick Park.



**Chapter 6**

**RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION PLANS**

## ACTION & PRIORITY PLAN

The Action & Priority Plan is a living document and guide for recreation tasks, projects, and focus areas for the Park District of La Grange over the next ten years. The recommendations and considerations identified in this Comprehensive Master Plan are intended to provide guidance and direction to the Board of Commissioners that results in enhancing the quality of life for Park District of La Grange patrons as well as the community it serves.

Previous Sections of this Master Plan Report identified and detailed a variety of specific recommendations for the Park District of La Grange to undertake. Identified within this Section are the ways and methods the PDLG can implement the recommendations identified in this Comprehensive Master Plan. Items specified below represent conclusions developed during the comprehensive park master planning process. To successfully implement this Plan, the PDLG should take the following steps:

### 1. **Comprehensive Land Use Plan**

**Update** – Following the adoption of the Comprehensive Master Plan, the Plan should be incorporated into the Village of La Grange’s Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Master Plan provides policy guidance to ensure that the general land use, planning of parks and open space, recreational facilities and opportunities and the growth strategy of the Park District runs parallel with the Village’s growth and development.

### 2. **Maximize exposure and use of the PDLG Comprehensive Master Plan**

Once adopted, the Master Plan could be the single most important tool for achieving a quality park and recreation system requested by the community, and desired by the Park Board and staff. However, it will be up to District staff, Board, residents, and advocates to keep the Plan and its recommendations moving forward. Annual review of the Plan by the District Staff, Board members, and residents will allow

analysis of action item recommendations for park and facilities improvements, and program modifications to enhance the quality of the PDLG system. The District should measure success and base goals and objectives on unfunded projects and untouched recommendations. Additionally, to ensure “use” of the Plan, we recommend the following steps occur:

- District staff should be encouraged to review the Plan and while having electronic access to the Plan.
- Annually update major stakeholders on the Plan’s implementation and results
- Quarterly or semi-annually hold staff meetings to review the Plan’s progress and results.
- For agency transparency, the Comprehensive Master Plan should be posted on the District’s Website
- Review the plan regularly at monthly park board meetings.
- The PDLG should continue soliciting input from residents within the community inclusive of those who participate in park programs as often as possible. The District relies on community feedback to ensure the needs and desires of the residents are met through the parks, facilities, and programming that directly affecting them. Through continued engagement via open houses, program and activity surveys, focus group meetings, postcard and letter mailings, email blasts, social media engagement, website updates, and even direct communication with staff, the district regards public input as critical to the continued success of the District within the community.
- The Comprehensive Master Plan should guide the District over the next ten years in the decision making process, but remain a flexible tool. The Plan should be reviewed annually as part of the budget preparation

process to measure successes and challenges as the community changes. The District should take advantage of any unforeseen opportunities not identified in the plan and include them in the update.

- Throughout the year, the staff should develop a “Master Plan List” for new ideas and priorities that are generated and need to be incorporated in successive years. This Master Plan List is an organized way of maintaining a listing of ideas for future consideration.

**3. Policy Development Integrated with the Budget Process** – The District should develop a policy of including strategic capital elements from the Comprehensive Master Plan into its annual operating budget and in a 5-year capital improvement budget. As with the District’s operating budget and Capital Improvement Program (CIP), the Master Plan should be viewed as a working document that is annually reviewed and updated. A yearly updating allows the Plan to stay vibrant and current taking into account unforeseen events, changing conditions, new information, political decisions, opportunities etc. Integrating up-to-date Plan recommendations with the budget process ensures that the Master Plan recommendations can be implemented in a systematic and defensible manner. In this way, all elements of the Plan can eventually be implemented as well as be realized with a priority that reflects changing circumstances and actual community needs.

**4. Partnering Opportunities** - The PDLG budget is primarily funded through property tax revenues and user fees imposed from both Harrer Park and Oriole Park pool users, and the District’s recreational program participants. The District should actively investigate partnership opportunities with other governmental agencies, local businesses, and athletic affiliates to provide high quality services,

reduce the duplication of services and costs to residents, and ultimately meet the ongoing budget challenges facing the District over the next ten years. The Park District should provide support, financially or otherwise, to initiatives spearheaded by other agencies that are consistent with the Park District of La Grange’s Mission and Core Values. The District should continue to expand partnering opportunities with the Village of Morton Grove, the local School District(s), and local developers to help fund District programs and capital improvement projects. The PDLG should review each of the existing and formal intergovernmental agreements and update, as necessary.



## ACTION & PRIORITY PLAN *(continued)*

- 5. Site Specific (Individual) Park Master Planning** – A key recommendation of the PDLG Comprehensive Master Plan is to create site master plans or control plans for each of the parks within the District. These site-specific master or control plans should identify improvements that affect the aesthetics and curb appeal, access, and the physical character of each park while enhancing its recreational value. Park improvements identified must be carefully planned and strategically located to ensure that all individual park elements relate well to each other and ensure that the potential of each of these existing parks is maximized. The park master planning process provides another opportunity to engage the public from the surrounding neighborhood.

Therefore, it is recommended the PDLG:

- Engage the services of a landscape architect/park planning consultant with experience in the entire park planning process, and community familiarity.
  - For all proposed parks, work collaboratively with the landscape architect/park planning consultant in a master planning process to develop a master/control plan.
  - Prepare necessary final design contract documents and budgets for implementation including drawings, specifications and regulatory permits where required.
  - Implement construction
- 6. Monitor Plan implementation and update as needed** – District staff should periodically monitor how well the Comprehensive Master Plan is being implemented and whether needs are changing and decide if new strategies are needed to keep Master Plan implementation moving forward. Interactive display boards at district events, on-line questionnaires and suggestions boxes at community recreation center buildings are

some ways the District can solicit feedback on needed refinements and updates to the Comprehensive Master Plan. Annually, the Park Board should convene to measure the status of Master Plan recommendations, making adjustments to the Master Plan as needed.

- 7. Target Grant Opportunities** – While the majority of recommendations will be funded through traditional means, grant funding can be utilized to help offset the cost of certain projects and reduce the strain on the District's budget. Grant funding is an effective way to fund park improvements, both for capital projects as well as the maintenance and operations of these facilities. With public funding becoming increasingly tight in most jurisdictions, grants are also becoming more competitive; and decreasing in scale. For these reasons, it is important for the PDLG to make a concerted effort to apply for grants as competitively as possible. Gordon Park was renovated using Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) funds. Likewise the Fitness Center was funded in part by a PARC grant. Denning Park used a Lyons Township grant. As in times past, the District should consider the OSLAD and PARC Programs administered through the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), Land and Water Conservation (LWCF) Fund Program administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of Interior, and other grant opportunities through federal sources with a proven history in funding parks and recreation facilities
- 8. District-Wide Capital Improvements** – Existing parks and playgrounds throughout the District should be upgraded as facilities need to be replaced. The PDLG should engage the services of a landscape architect/park planning consultant to assist the District in the development of a playground replacement program that allows funding to be allocated well ahead

of replacement needs. Understanding the district is completely built-out and landlocked, as well as the results of the Community Interest and Opinion Survey, residents wish for the Park District to “take care of what we have” at this time. Therefore, the Park District should reinvest in existing park sites to address immediate universal access and ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) concerns. It will be critical for the District to manage community needs during this Present and Post Pandemic period – a community indoor pool is not a pressing priority at this time via the survey, but likely could become a top priority in the coming years as a result of climate change. This time frame may shorten based on input received from ongoing engagement opportunities and future Community Interest and Opinion Surveys.

Pedestrian linkages are also an important element to the continued success of the PDLG park system. Walking trails are one of the top requested recreation activities and the Park District should collaborate with the Village of Morton Grove administration and planning department, and the County and State Departments of Transportation to identify and expand existing trail connections as well as integrate paths into larger trail network. Through cooperative efforts and combined resources, these walking path and trail needs can be met benefiting the entire community in a greater way. It is important to note the impact that trails have within a community by allowing the residents more mobility between public spaces and neighborhoods.

- 9. Trending Recreation and Programming Opportunities** – the recreation market is constantly changing, as are the needs of the District’s staff and residents. To stay relevant and meet resident’s recreation programming needs, the PDLG must remain aware of changing interests in the community and in state and national trends. Providing current and in-demand



recreation offerings leads to a greater community participation and allows for resident satisfaction and reallocation of resources that may otherwise be used for less effective or declining options. To provide quality recreation services that align with resident needs and interest, the Park District should continue to engage the community to provide up-to-date options when updating and redeveloping parks, open spaces, and facilities, and when scheduling programs and special events.

Recreation Programming should be accompanied by the development of a strong marketing plan and public relations philosophy capable of selling the activities and facilities of the Park District to local residents and the community at large.

## ACTION & PRIORITY PLAN: PARK & FACILITY ENHANCEMENT



This section identifies a variety of tools available to implement the Comprehensive Master Plan goals. The following outlines the tools for enhancing and improving the PDLG's park and recreation system. The Comprehensive Master Plan proposes improvements to the District's existing parks, facilities, and programs for consideration based on the Planning Team's evaluation and input received during the planning process. Residents involved in the public engagement component of the CMP process repeatedly cited PDLG's parks and recreation facilities as a wonderful community asset. For this reason, it is important to ensure that a strategy is in place to maintain and/or enhance the existing parks and open space system.

The capital improvement recommendations outline and detail a road map for the PDLG for the next ten years. These recommendations

are also based on a general understanding of the funding opportunities that may be appropriate for future projects. The plan is meant to be flexible and remain nimble in the face of change to respond to future opportunities such as grants, donations, and partnerships. This plan will continue to evolve as opportunities arise. Projects that might be delayed will be incorporated into the remaining five years of the action plan.

During the planning process, the public was clear with a message to first "take care of what we have" in order to maintain and upgrade their recreation experience. Upgrading existing facilities to provide a community-wide "equitable" recreational experiences is the highest priority. The District's Capital Asset Replacement Plan (CARP) identifies annual appropriations for playground replacement, court resurfacing, ballfield and soccer field

refurbishment, landscaping and site furnishing upgrades and should be upgraded to reflect the Action & Priority Plan recommendations. The CARP facility improvements and maintenance upgrades represents a series of ongoing enhancements requiring capital dollars. It is critical for the Park District to continue to fund these on an annual basis to protect District resources. In general, all the PDLG parks are well maintained and in generally good condition. However, a program should be established to develop standardized Park District site furnishings. The use of consistent styles of furnishings will help brand the Park District.

The recommendations are divided into three priorities, with the first priority recommendations consisting of projects considered for implementation within the next two years. The implementation of the second priority recommendations should occur over the next two to four years depending on funding availability and opportunities, site conditions, public demands, and District growth. The third priority and fourth priority recommendations should be considered in the beyond ten-year planning period.

### 1. FIRST PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations identified as first priority should be initiated within the next two years. These priorities are deemed important because they represent current needs and initiatives, as well as initiatives relative to accessibility and public safety.

### 2. SHORT-TERM PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

The second priority recommendations should be implemented in a range of two to five years

Second priority recommendations present improvements considered to expand the use of the park, or replacement of park amenities that are still viable, but need to be scheduled for replacement (life-cycle period expiring during this cycle) within this planning period.

### 3. LONG-TERM PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations should be implemented in a range of five to ten years look beyond. These recommendations are typically more than five years from implementation unless funding opportunities make them viable sooner.

The Action and Priority Plan lists projected costs of the improvements by park name. The Action & Priority Plan also details schematic costs, priority level, and includes a concise action strategy for each project providing a site-by-site listing of the proposed capital needs. The following Capital Cost Summary totals all parks by First Priority, Short-Term Priority, and Long-Term Priorities. All priorities should be reviewed annually and addressed during the budgeting cycle. Dollars are estimated based on 2022 dollars; no attempt is made to adjust future dollars for inflation or changes in the construction market. Likewise, while the Plan contains multiple recommendation in each prioritization category, significant follow-up work will be required for various projects identified including additional research to determine the feasibility of the project at that time.

**Gilbert Park**

1	Furnish and install port-a-potty and permanent port-a-potty screen	10,000
1	Repair and resurface existing tennis courts, color coat, and striping	200,000
1	Replace existing tennis court fencing to include ADA required double access.	68,000
2	Reorient basketball standard to eliminate overshoots, resurface and restripe	38,000
2	Prepare accessible path to the basketball court from the internal walking path	3,000
2	Create landforms with shrubs and ornamental vegetation at basketball court	25,000
3	Reconfigure parking lot, resurface, restripe and add concrete perimeter curb	70,000
3	Paver drop-off location for preschool attendees at reconfigured parking lot	38,000
3	Partner with Kids Around the World and replace existing play apparatus	175,000

**Capital Cost Summary**

First Priority	Short-term Priority	Long-term Priority	Total
\$ 278,000	\$ 66,000	\$ 283,000	\$ 627,000

**Elm Park**

1	Furnish low growing shrubs, groundcovers and perennials at park sign`	1,800
1	Improve turf conditions on sled hill	20,000
1	Resurface the basketball court surface, color coat, and stripe	48,000
2	Pave accessible path and aprons to all bench locations	10,000
2	Unify bench seating throughout the park	15,000
3	Replace existing, expand and install new "themed" play apparatus	225,000

**Capital Cost Summary**

First Priority	Short-term Priority	Long-term Priority	Total
\$ 69,800	\$ 25,000	\$ 225,000	\$319,800

**Stone Park**

1	Furnish and install port-a-potty and permanent port-a-potty screen	10,000
1	Furnish low growing shrubs, groundcovers and perennials at park sign`	2,500
1	Resurface the basketball court surface, color coat, and strip	48,000
2	Work with a professional planner to develop a site master plan for Stone Park	70,000
3	Update and replace playground equipment with "themed" play layout	185,000
3	New playground area to be contained by a concrete barrier curb	40,000
3	Replace the trees that were removed from the park site	30,000
3	Furnish and install new drinking fountain near playground	15,000
3	Install ornamental gazebo with asphalt shingles	50,000
3	Furnish and install new perimeter landscaping to control southern views	25,000

**Capital Cost Summary**

First Priority	Short-term Priority	Long-term Priority	Total
\$ 60,500	\$ 70,000	\$ 345,000	\$ 513,500

**Community Center Park**

1	Work with a professional planner to develop a site master plan for the park	70,000
1	Create secondary entrance from the playground to the basketball courts.	40,000
1	Furnish and install port-a-potty and permanent port-a-potty screen	10,000
1	Furnish new park sign with low growing shrubs, groundcovers and perennials	25,000
1	Remove 5' of basketball surface along Washington Ave. add landscaping	55,000
1	Resurface existing basketball court surface, color coat, and stripe	80,000
2	Replace fence along westside of park with new 5' ht ornamental fence	78,000
2	Replace fence along north and east perimeter with 6' ht board on board fence	90,000
3	Coordinate with ComEd-replace Cobra Head fixtures/pole with low profile type	45,000
3	Coordinate with Village to provide striped ADA parking stalls at Washington St.	500

**Capital Cost Summary**

First Priority	Short-term Priority	Long-term Priority	Total
\$ 280,000	\$ 168,000	\$ 45,500	\$ 493,500

**Denning Park**

1	Relocate port-a-potty, install permanent port-a-potty screen at play area	10,000
1	Remove dead trees and add more understory deciduous trees	40,000
1	Work with a professional planner to develop a prairie landscape for the ditch	55,000
2	Create a pollinator prairie within Drainage Ditch – install native plants	135,000
2	Create a master plan and redevelop the community garden area	250,000
3	Redesign and reconfigure concrete drop-off – repair and reseal parking lot	185,000

**Capital Cost Summary**

First Priority	Short-term Priority	Long-term Priority	Total
\$ 105,000	\$ 385,000	\$ 185,000	\$ 675,000

**Gordon Park**

1	Address soccer field “wear and tear” turf issues	30,000
1	Repair maintenance access cantilever gate	750
2	Install trees throughout the park and at the playground area	50,000
2	Install evergreen trees and deciduous shrubs in the vicinity of the splash pad	15,000
3	Enhance existing butterfly garden – install additional plants and fertilize	8,500

**Capital Cost Summary**

First Priority	Short-term Priority	Long-term Priority	Total
\$ 30,750	\$ 65,000	\$ 8,500	\$ 104,250

**Meadowbrook Manor Park**

*No Improvements needed at this time.*

**Capital Cost Summary**

First Priority	Short-term Priority	Long-term Priority	Total
\$ 0,000	\$ 0,000	\$ 0,000	\$ 0,000

**Rotary Centennial Park**

1	Install low growing shrubs, groundcovers and perennials at park sign	2,000
1	Remove and dispose of fence along Sawyer Ave.	3,000
1	Replace perimeter fencing with new 6' black vinyl coated chain link fence	85,000
2	Work with a professional planner to develop a site master plan for the park	70,000
2	Update and replace playground equipment with "themed" play layout	160,000
2	New playground area to be contained by a concrete barrier curb	40,000
2	Furnish and install drinking fountain near playground	15,000
2	Furnish and install ornamental gazebo near park entrance and playground	50,000
2	Furnish and install perimeter landscaping throughout the park	30,000

**Capital Cost Summary**

First Priority	Short-term Priority	Long-term Priority	Total
\$ 90,000	\$ 365,000	\$ 00,000	\$ 455,000

**Sedgwick Park**

1	Address soccer field "wear and tear" turf issues	30,000
1	Replace picnic tables, benches and litter receptacles with current standards	25,000
2	Work with a professional planner to redevelop the playground apparatus area	90,000
2	Update and replace playground equipment with "themed" play layout	275,000
3	Pave walking paths throughout park and include specialty paving areas	350,000
3	Add landscape planting islands within the 47 <sup>th</sup> Street and 48 <sup>th</sup> Street parking lot	90,000

**Capital Cost Summary**

First Priority	Short-term Priority	Long-term Priority	Total
\$ 55,000	\$ 365,000	\$ 440,000	\$ 860,000

**Spring Avenue Park**

1	Install low growing shrubs, groundcovers and perennials at park sign	2,500
1	Remove and dispose of fence along Spring Ave. and 53 <sup>rd</sup> Street	4,500
1	Replace perimeter fencing with new 6' black vinyl coated chain link fence	125,000
2	Work with a professional planner to develop a site master plan for the park	70,000
2	Update and replace playground equipment with "themed" play layout	175,000
2	New playground area to be contained by a concrete barrier curb	45,000
2	Furnish and install gazebo/pavilion near park entrance and playground	50,000
2	Furnish and install perimeter landscaping throughout the park	30,000

**Capital Cost Summary**

First Priority	Short-term Priority	Long-term Priority	Total
\$ 132,000	\$ 370,000	\$ 00,000	\$ 502,000

**Waiola Park**

1	Furnish Porta-potty screen around the port-a-john	10,000
1	Hire a consultant to develop a Master Plan and Bid specs for new Play Area	75,000
2	Replace existing play apparatus with new "themed" play layout	200,000
2	Provide concrete containment curb around the new playground area	12,000
2	Furnish and install gazebo/pavilion near park entrance and playground	60,000
2	Install new half-court basketball surface with new basketball standard	48,000

**Capital Cost Summary**

First Priority	Short-term Priority	Long-term Priority	Total
\$ 85,000	\$ 320,000	\$ 00,000	\$ 405,000

**610 East Ave Property (Undeveloped Park Site)**

Currently collaborating with architect consultant and community to develop a plan and budget for the development of this site.

**Capital Cost Summary**

First Priority	Short-term Priority	Long-term Priority	Total
\$ TBD	\$ TBD	\$ TBD	\$ TBD

**Summary of Priority Costs:**

- First Priority – \$1,186,050.00
- Short-term Priority – \$2,199,000.00
- Long-term Priority - \$1,532,000.00

## FINANCING THE PLAN

The long-term vision for the Park District of La Grange contains a 10-year plan of prioritized implementation actions. If executed, the PDLG will reach its desired future. Implementation by level of priority and importance guarantees that the Park District is responding incrementally to the community's needs and desires. This does not necessarily mean that this Comprehensive Master Plan will serve all needs and desires of the community for the entirety of the next 10 years. However, it is intended to specify direction for implementation actions prioritized in the near, short term- and long-term future. The accomplishment of all the projects as outlined in this Plan will require a prolonged and dedicated effort. The Park District will require additional financial resources over and above those which it currently receives from Park District general and capital improvement funds, grants and other revenues at present.

Because funding is the predominant prerequisite essential to implement any of the recommended actions, this Plan identifies a series of possible funding sources which may be useful in achieving the recommended action items in the most cost-effective way conceivable. Due to possible limitations of funding, it is recommended to pursue external sources when possible. A list of those potential sources available to the PDLG are highlighted below:

- **Illinois Department of Natural Resources** – The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) administers several grants programs to assist park districts, municipalities and other public agencies provide public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. The programs operate on a cost reimbursement basis to a government or non-for-profit organization. Park districts and local governments can receive one grant per program per year with no restrictions on the number of local governments that can be funded for a given location. IDNR grants are organized into three categories:
  - Open Space Land Acquisition and Development (OSLAD)
  - Boat Access Area Development (BAAD)
  - Illinois Trails Grants Program
- **Open Space Land Acquisition & Development (OSLAD)** – The OSLAD program awards up to 50 percent of project costs up to a maximum of \$750,000 for acquisition and \$400,000 for development/renovation of recreational facilities such as playgrounds, outdoor nature interpretive areas, campgrounds and fishing piers, park roads and paths, and beaches. IDNR administers five grant programs to provide financial assistance for acquisition, development, and maintenance of trails that are used for public recreation use.
- **Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)** – The federal Land & Water Conservation Fund program (LWCF) is a program with similar objectives to the OSLAD program and is also managed by IDNR. LWCF Grants are available to park districts, municipalities, county governments, and school districts to be used for outdoor recreation projects. Projects require a 50 percent match. All projects are taken under perpetuity by the national Park Service and must only be used for outdoor recreational purposes.
- **Park & Recreational Facility Construction Grant Program (PARC)** – Park Districts, and municipalities can be awarded up to \$2.5 million per project for acquisition, development, construction, rehabilitation, architectural planning, and installation of capital parks, recreation, and open space facilities.
- **Public Museum Capital Grant Program** – Public museums can apply for up to \$750,000 to develop new and updated exhibits, expand facilities, renovate buildings, and improve infrastructure. The matching funds requirement is determined by the museums' attendance rates.



## FINANCING THE PLAN *(continued)*

- **Recreational Trails Program** – The federal “Recreational Trails program” (RTP). Was created through the National Recreational Trail Fund Act (NRTFA) as part of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA). This program provides funding assistance for acquisition, development, rehabilitation, and maintenance of both motorized and non-motorized recreation trails. By law, 30% of each States’ RTP funding must be earmarked for motorized trail projects, 30 percent for non-motorized trail projects, and the remaining 40 percent for multi-use (diversified) motorized and non-motorized trails, or a combination of either. The RTP program can provide up to 80 percent federal funding on approved projects and requires a minimum 20 percent non-federal funding match.
- **Illinois Bicycle Path Program** – The Illinois Bicycle Path program is a grants program administered by IDNR that provides funding assistance up to 50% to acquire and develop land for public bicycle path purposes. Funded by a percentage for vehicle title fees, maximum grant awards are limited to \$200,000.
- **Public Private Partnership** – Public-Private Partnerships are already a key component of the PDLG recreation System. The Park District partners with local nonprofits and other community organizations to hold non-profit events in the park; maintain existing parks; or work to develop new parks as is necessary. The non-government entity can provide funding to the District to upkeep and improve specifically designated parks. The District should strive to maintain existing and establish a new partnership to help improve district facilities and programs.
- **Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Grant Program** – Park agencies, municipalities, and local governments can apply for financial assistance for the development of local urban and community forestry programs/ activities must help to establish, manage, conserve and preserve the urban and community forests from inner city to associated public lands.

The possible funding scenarios identified in this Plan sets up the model for implementation of future capital projects and it is recommended that the Park District continue to apply for such grants to help it implement the Action & Priority Plan and leverage the local matching dollars as far as possible.

### PLAN CONCLUSION

The Park District of La Grange Comprehensive Master Plan was developed over the course of 12 months to reflect and address the parks and recreation needs of the community. Throughout the planning process, residents and key stakeholders provided input through one “Meet the Planners” introduction session, two hybrid in-person and on-line Public Issues & Opportunity Open House Meetings, six Community Focus Group sessions, a Park Board of Commissioners Engagement meeting, a Recreation Programming Staff Perspectives session, and a Rediscover Fun 2022-2032” Community Needs Survey (statistically valid) and an on-line survey with identical questions for those households not selected randomly. This in-depth participatory process led to the development of the Comprehensive Master Plan which presents a thorough understanding of the wants, needs, and aspirations of the PDLG today and into the future. Through intentional implementation of this Plan, the Park District will continue to provide a high quality of life for its residents and attract regional visitors.



**APPENDIX**

## SOURCES

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

- Village of La Grange
- National Recreation & Park Association
- Illinois Park & Recreation Association
- Illinois Association of Park Districts
- Illinois Department of Natural Resources
- Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP)
- U.S. Census Bureau
- Council of American Survey Research Organizations
- Trust for Public Land
- U.S. Forest Service
- La Grange Daily News
- Patch
- Oak Brook Park District
- Westchester Park District
- Community Park District of La Grange Park
- Burr Ridge Park District
- Elmhurst Park District
- ReadEx Research
- Wikipedia

