

Park District of La Grange
536 East Avenue | La Grange, IL |
60525



2011-2021 Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan



Update Approved April 2014



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Executive Summary



Design Perspectives, Inc., in association with Public Research Group, LLC, was commissioned to prepare a ten year comprehensive park and recreation master plan for the Park District of La Grange (“the Park District”). The Park District’s last planning document was prepared in-house in 2000. The previous planning document focused heavily on land acquisition and park planning because the District did not have a centralized recreation center at the time, and none was foreseeable. In 2007, the Park District opened the doors to a 78,000 square foot Recreation Center, with an added maintenance facility and extra expansion space. The Recreation Center was a game changer for the Park District.

This new master plan is more comprehensive in nature and addresses many areas for improvement and growth. This will be accomplished with well defined goals and objectives based in part by a detailed community needs assessment, staff visioning, board visioning, and public input. The District plans to take large strides to improve leadership, recreation programming and capital improvements. The litigation surrounding Gordon Park, which lasted over three years, negatively affected the Park District and the community as a whole. The court case is successfully finished and the Park District is ready to focus its energies on the future and to advance the mission of the Park District in a meaningful way.

The community needs assessment provided valuable public opinion. Five techniques were used to solicit public opinion: mailing surveys to a random sampling of residents, a random sampling of telephone surveys, numerous email blasts giving the broader community a chance to answer the survey, a computer kiosk was placed in the lobby for walk up opportunity to answer the survey, and finally, a public meeting was held for verbal feedback. Separate staff and Board visioning sessions were held to elicit candid feedback from within the District, and finally the Park District’s affiliate organizations were invited to attend a meeting to provide feedback about their relationship with the Park District, as well as their needs and hopes.

Respondents were supportive and generally satisfied with the Park District. The primary reason that respondents cited for not participating in services and programs at the Park District is that the Park District does not offer them. Many of these responses referred to the Park District’s lack of a fitness center and a public pool. On the other hand, 36% of the respondents said they used the parks and facilities weekly. While there was a general willingness to pay more taxes for park amenities, the Board of Commissioners has indicated a strong preference against asking the taxpayers for a rate increase or for referendum moneys unless tied to a specific project which would generate revenue for the future. The Board, staff and community agree that maintaining and improving existing parks and facilities should be the primary focus of the Park District in the coming years.



Based on the visioning exercises and the community needs assessment, the major recommendations for this plan include:

- Continue to improve the relationship between the Board and the staff.
- Maintain all facilities and parks in the best possible condition.
- Complete the OSLAD grant improvements at Gordon Park.
- Complete the Township grant improvements at Denning Park.
- Develop a system for boosting program participation levels and lowering class cancellations, by careful program planning, increased marketing, and frequent solicitation of customer feedback.
- Advance park improvements throughout the Park District, making renovations or improvements to all 10 parks in the next 10 years.
- Develop strategic alliances and partnerships with local governments, businesses, affiliates, school districts and neighboring park districts for the effective use and leverage of Park District resources.
- Build out a fitness center in the undeveloped area of the Recreation Center to fill the needs of the residents and provide an additional revenue source for the operations of the Park District.
- Continue to seek out public and private grants for the funding of major capital projects.
- Seek to sell the 2.82 acres of underutilized land in the northwest corner of Gordon Park and use the proceeds to fund capital improvements, increase capital reserves, and possibly purchase other land for more immediate park purposes.
- Continue to investigate opportunities to provide a community pool option in La Grange.
- Become our residents' primary source of fitness and programming.
- Reduce the percentage of revenue attributable to real estate taxes to 65% in the first five years.

These plans are to be viewed as a blueprint for the future rather than a contract. Goals and objectives are vital for success. The Park District's Management by Objectives (MBO) process will help prioritize the timing of the goals within the 5-year time frame. It is recommended that this plan be reviewed at the end of the first five years and revised if necessary.



1 Introduction

The Rationale for Planning

The State of Illinois embraces comprehensive planning as a tool to help make Park Districts more effective. As a result, Illinois park districts are among the most successful; winning almost 40% of the Gold Medal Awards for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management sponsored by the National Recreation and Park Association. Planning is a major criterion for winning the Gold Medal Award.

Comprehensive planning allows park and recreation agencies to meet the needs of the public in several significant ways. The process of comprehensive planning involves Board self-evaluation and visioning, staff self-evaluation and goal setting, and extensive opportunity for public feedback and input in the planning process. The convergence of this information provides the Board and staff a report card, a reality check and motivation for developing new goals and plans that will advance the mission of the District.

As an arm of the state, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources requires park districts to submit comprehensive master plans in order to be eligible for grants. Grant funding is awarded based on the total number of points an agency receives compared to other applicants. Points are awarded based on how current the plan and how much public input are gathered to create the plan. Consequently, in order to be competitive in the grant process, a professional comprehensive plan is essential.

Even if DNR didn't require them, comprehensive plans are a good idea for park districts. Comprehensive planning requires that the public has a say about the services the District will provide, and gives the Park Board a snapshot view of how the public feels about the quality and quantity of services provided. The park staff then has the information it needs to act on those sentiments.

The comprehensive planning process is designed to establish commonalities between the public, the Park Board and staff that identifies what the public wants, which of those wants the Board is in a position to fund, and how the staff will make the Board's priorities a reality. Plans are tools for maintaining democratic governance as well as blueprints for success.

Previous Planning Efforts

The PDLG's most recent comprehensive master plan was adopted on June 30, 2000, as the 2000 Open Space Master Plan. The 2000 Plan replaced the 1993 Open Space Mater Plan study commissioned in October of 1993, which was the first plan adopted by this District.

The purpose of the 2000 study was "to assist the Park District of La Grange in expansion of its park system, acquisition of land, recreation planning, and the effective utilization of existing park and facilities owned and leased by the district." The 2000 plan was by design an extension of the 1993 plan, relying on many of the initiatives identified in 1993. The later plan was intended to act as a guide for the years 2000 through 2010. The 2000 plan was developed in-house by the Director Matt Ellmann, with the assistance of Superintended of Parks Dean Bissias, Superintendent of Recreation Bruce Baum, and Office Manager Lisa Bruni.

The 2000 plan recommended specific improvements to every park in the system. The plan was extremely ambitious, illustrating the need for much work to be done, but did not identify funding sources for the improvements. The District put a referendum on the ballot asking voters for the funds needed to build a recreation center and pool in Denning Park in 2002, but that referendum was voted down by the residents, leaving the District without an adequate administrative office, no revenue stream, and looking for ways to bring healthy programming to its residents. The District spent several years trying to build an alliance with the Richport YMCA for the purpose of building a shared recreation center, and this effort was also unsuccessful.

In 2004, Dean Bissias, then Interim Director of the District, was looking for space to expand the maintenance facilities of the District, and found the Burke Beverage Building, a 125,000 square foot beverage distribution facility was for sale. After a short negotiation period, the District went to the voters requesting \$6,900,000.00 to purchase and renovate the building into a 78,000 square foot Recreation Center, plus a maintenance facility, and extra room for future expansion.

The opening of the Recreation Center in November of 2006 changed everything for the District. For the first time, all of the District's offices, and most of the programming, was operated out of the same building, creating increased efficiencies, opportunities for new and improved programming, a renewed sense of pride in its employees and a gathering place for the community. In addition, the operations have been profitable, with program revenues exceeding program expenses every year since the opening.

Purpose of the Plan

Given the PDLG's progress since the last plan and the changes in the community's desires and expectations, a new planning process is needed. While the population has remained stable, La Grange is a different place than it was in 2000. This plan is not to be considered a contract between the District and its residents, but rather a blueprint for decision making over the next ten years. It is recommended that the plan be reviewed at the end of five years, to determine if the District is on track with its ten year plan, and what changes might be needed to improve the plan.

Planning needs to be flexible, thoughtful, comprehensive, dynamic and realistic.

1. **Flexibility:** Creating flexibility in the planning process gives the District the ability to react to emergencies or changes in circumstances that are substantial enough to affect the normal course of business. Flexibility also gives the District the ability to react to reasonable requests from the community about its changing needs and desires. Even more important, building flexibility into the plan permits the Park District to take advantage of opportunities for partnerships, grants, and strategic alliances with businesses, affiliates or other public entities.
2. **Thoughtful:** Planning also needs to be thoughtful. It is important to balance the interests of active and passive users when designing improvements and renovations in the parks. Because land is a scarce resource in a fully developed community like La Grange, it is important to make maximum use of the space we have to provide recreational activities for people of all ages and all abilities, and to make sure the parks and facilities are appropriate for a variety of interests. Careful planning will also give thought to the safety of our residents using the parks and traveling to get there. Finally, planning needs to consider the costs of renovating and maintaining the renovations over the long-term.

3. **Comprehensive:** While not everything in the plan can be done at once, planning needs to consider what our residents desire and need, along with what is available in the surrounding communities. Thought needs to be given to sharing and leveraging our resources with those in the surrounding communities, so that the larger community benefits for the smallest cost. Planning also needs to be done in the broader context of the Village of La Grange, police, fire, public works and other governmental entities, because what we do at the Park District often affects other public officials, businesses and communities.
4. **Dynamic:** The Park District's plans need to be dynamic enough to take advantage of opportunities when the economy is prospering, and be helpful to residents and frugal when there are contractions in the economy as well. The plans need to be dynamic enough to respond to changing recreation trends, and changing demographics of our users as well. Consequently, this 10-year plan should be reviewed and possibly updated at the end of 5 years; accounting for all that was accomplished in the first five years, and assessing whether or not we will be on track to meet the remainder of our goals in the second 5 years, or whether new or different opportunities or challenges warrant a modification of the second half of the plan.
5. **Realistic:** While Daniel Burnham, the great planner for the City of Chicago would have advised us to "make no small plans", the Park District Board and staff are keenly aware of the financial constraints by which we operate. The Park District adheres to a balanced budget process, and routinely exceeds its projected net revenue numbers on an annual basis. The litigation surrounding Gordon Park was a burdensome drain on the capital reserves of the Park District. Yet the lack of available funds today should not hamper our long term planning. By creating master plans for parks, we avoid spending money presently on items that will not be included in the long term plans of the parks. It allows us to be creative with financing and fund raising and a long term vision for a park will allow the District to attack the plan in smaller manageable phases which will ultimately complete the larger plan.

Furthermore, it helps to have a long term plan completed and ready when grant opportunities arise that are designed to fund projects of that nature. By being prepared, it becomes more likely that the District can take advantage of available grants for funding all or part of a project within the plan.



2 Community Demographics

Population Characteristics

A demographic profile of population characteristics, including population age and economic conditions, including average income and the value of residential housing property is a useful tool in understanding the needs of the community. Since the 2010 twenty-year census data was not available at the time this was written and the United States Bureau does not provide population estimates for special district governmental units, other sources of data must be identified that will aid in demographic analysis.

The Census does provide basic population statistics on an annual basis, but not a breakdown of age, income and residential property values. Based on the July 1, 2009 Census estimates, the population of the Village of La Grange declined slightly between the period of 2000 and 2009, from 15,608 to 15,186 people. This decline is a function of two demographic conditions.

The Village of La Grange is a land-locked community, with no place to grow and, like many communities in the United States, as young people move out their parents remain. That is not to say there is a mass exodus of young people, but rather to offer an explanation of why many suburban communities like La Grange have shown slight population declines in the past decade.



Figure 1

To understand the characteristics of the people that live within the Village of La Grange, 2000 Census data can be used to compare their income to other benchmarks. One benchmark is the proportion of males in the household to females. Comparing the percentage of females in Village of La Grange households to those in the entire U.S. Census and Illinois households, La Grange percentages are slightly higher.

Females in Household

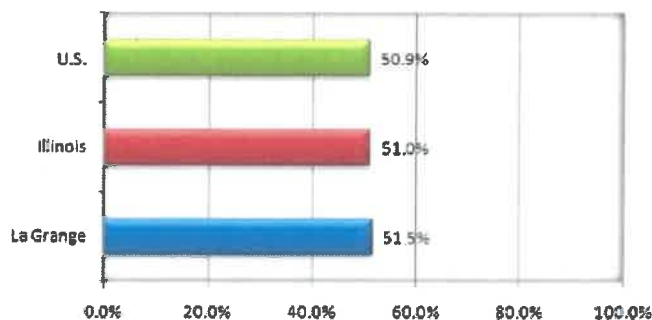
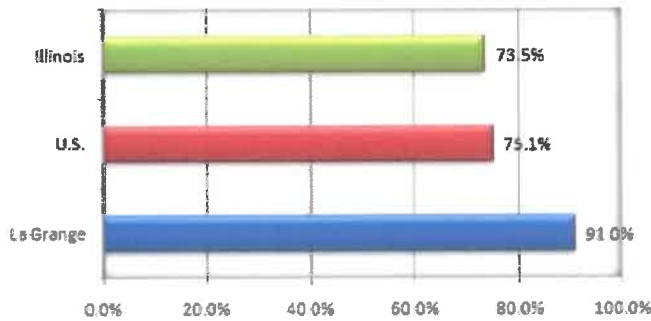


Figure 2

The table shows that La Grange households are comprised of 51.5% females compared to 51.0% in Illinois and 50.9% in the United States. The finding does not show that La Grange is significantly much different in terms of there being a higher percentage of females in households than the state or national average. But the finding shows there are differences.

La Grange differs from state and national averages in its ethnic composition. In terms of the percentage of the population that identified themselves as Caucasian in the 2000 Census, the Village of La Grange had a higher percentage of Caucasian people residing there than did the State of Illinois or the United States average.

Caucasians in Households



The graph shows that the Village of La Grange has a higher percentage of Caucasian households than the national average.

Figure 3

Average Age

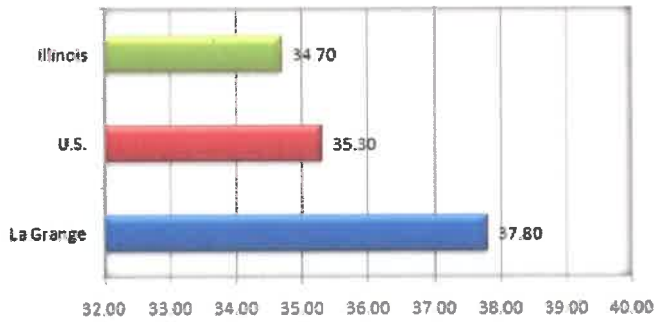


Figure 4 shows that, for the 2000 Census estimates, the median age of the Village of La Grange is older than the national average at 37.8 years of age, compared to 34.7 for the State of Illinois and 35.3 for the entire United States.

Figure 4

The Park District of La Grange and the Village of La Grange boundaries are not coterminous. It could be argued that, because their boundaries are not exactly the same, the Census data for the village may not apply to the Park District. However, based on analysis of the 2000 demographic data from the surrounding communities, the village data is similar. Surrounding communities have practically the same demographics that La Grange does.

One final demographic consideration needs to be made; that of median household income. The graph to the right makes that comparison. The graph shows the median income of La Grange households to be 72% higher than the state average and 91% higher than the national average.



Figure 5

History

Park Districts in General

Much can be learned about the current condition of an agency by reviewing its history, and the history of Illinois park districts in general. The first organized park commissions in Illinois were formed in 1869 in Chicago. They were the South Park District, Lincoln Park District and the West Park District, organized under legislative efforts of John Cornell, a prominent Chicago attorney.

Cornell was fascinated with the early successes of the Central Park Commission in New York building a world class park. Through his observations and relationship with Frederick Law Olmsted, Cornell came to believe that a special district dedicated only to parks and recreation would have more success than trying to accomplish the same in a department of the city.

Cornell also learned the political lessons of the dissolution of the Central Park Commission in 1868. He saw how an urban political machine could come to covet the jobs and other benefits a park district could provide. To prevent that from happening in Illinois, Cornell's legislation creating park commissions had the caveat that if a park district were dissolved, its fixed assets would revert to the local school district rather than city government.

As a result, park districts in Illinois became vehicles for sheltering parks and recreation services from municipal governments and as a vehicle for protecting natural resources, as had been the original concept in New York, but with additional protection from take over. By 1921, there were 22 park districts in Chicago and more than 25 downstate, thanks in part to legislation authorizing them throughout the rest of the state in 1893.

Park District of La Grange History

The Park District of La Grange has developed slowly since 1929:

April 18, 1929: Citizens of La Grange, IL approve the formation of a park district by a vote of 345 to 222. La Grange Village President Walter P. Saunders was responsible for drawing up the proposal and picked five men to run for commissioners of the Park District: E.E. Barrett, B.E. Gordon, Arthur B. Hall, W.E. Keller and Charles L. Rice. All were successfully elected.

November 26, 1929: The Board authorizes the Sites Committee, who pursued the acquisition of four pieces of land: Shawmut Park (Gordon Park), Eastview Park (Sedgwick Park), Waiola Park and Gilbert Park. The appraised cost of the four areas was \$316,000.

September 1, 1936: A delegation of citizens requests that a swimming pool be constructed, with an estimated cost of \$20,000. Nearly two years later, the Board decided to postpone the final consideration to an unnamed date. (1st request for public swimming pool)

January 4, 1938: The Park District acquires five additional acres for Eastview Park (currently named Sedgwick Park) for \$5,000.

April 15, 1952: A resolution allowing Helicopter Air Service, Inc. to build a helicopter pad in Eastview Park for air-mail delivery and pickup is approved. The company would continue to use Eastview Park as a heliport until September 6, 1966.

April 16, 1957: Due to the fact that some of the tax money for the La Grange Park District was accidentally sent to the Village of La Grange Park, the Park District officially changes its name to the Park District of La Grange.

April 15, 1969: Robert Sedgwick presides over his last meeting as a member of the Board of Commissioners. As a member of the board for 23 years (22 of those serving as president), Sedgwick was the longest-serving elected official in the history of the Village of La Grange. To honor Sedgwick's service to the La Grange community, Eastview Park is renamed Sedgwick Park in September.

January 20, 1970: The Board authorizes the purchase of three lots and started condemnation proceeding on another, all located on Sawyer Avenue in La Grange. In June of 1971, funds for the purchase and development of the lots are approved, and Sawyer Park (now Rotary Centennial Park) becomes PDLG's fifth park, the first one added since the Park District's inception.

October 16, 1973: Shawmut Park is renamed as the Bert E. Gordon Park. Gordon was one of the original commissioners for the Park District and served on the Board for 18 years, with his last three being as president.

March 19, 1974: The Park District purchases five acres on the 4900 block of Gilbert Avenue from William S. Denning for \$200,000.

September 27, 1975: Two referendums -- the sale of \$1,950,000 in bonds and an increase in property taxes by .05% -- in order to construct a swimming pool and recreation building in West Side Park (Denning Park) are defeated by a 3 to 1 margin. (2nd attempt to build swimming pool).

January 6, 1979: The Park District of La Grange moves into its headquarters at 4903 Gilbert, a converted ranch house. Prior to this facility, the Park District offices were located at the La Grange Police Headquarters at 300 W. Burlington.

September 6, 1979: Special committees representing the Village of La Grange, the Park District of La Grange and the La Grange Playground and Recreation Commission agree on the terms for a merger of the Park District and Recreation Commission. Trustees approved the ordinance on September 24 and the District became a park and recreation district on October 17.

January 1992: The Park District purchases a 1-acre parcel of land located at 4925 Gilbert Ave. in order to extend Denning Park. The property had contained a small house, which the Park

District allowed the La Grange Fire Department to use for training exercises prior to its demolition.

September 20, 1995: After four years of negotiations, the Village and the Park District reached a land swap agreement giving the Park District 72,000 sq. ft. of land adjacent to Elm Park in exchange for a strip of land behind Denning Park to widen Mason Dr., and land at Gordon Park for the purpose of building a new water tower, and additional commuter parking.

November 7, 1995: By a vote of 1,558 to 1,317, La Grange residents supported the Park District's referendum to purchase and develop the Spring Avenue tot lot. Previously, the Park District leased the location from School District 105, but after the school district decided not to renew the Park District's lease in 1993, residents requested the Park District pursue the purchase of the property. The Park District bought it for \$540,000 in January 1996.

April 29, 1996: The Park District approves Babe Ruth Baseball's proposal to build a baseball shed in Sedgwick Park. The shed would be used to house a scoreboard, loudspeakers and lights for use during the Babe Ruth tournament and would be used for equipment storage during the offseason.

October 8, 1997: Elm Park opens to the public.

April 15, 1997: The Board votes in favor of hiring Management Learning Laboratories of Champaign, to conduct a community-wide survey about parks and recreation in La Grange.

October 1998: A seven-member needs assessment task force is formed to help examine the Park District's future regarding facilities, space and programming needs.

March 1999: The Board approves a construction of a half-mile long pathway along the perimeter of Sedgwick Park.

May 20, 1999: The needs assessment task force presents its findings and recommendations to the Board. The major finding was that the Park District was facing a serious space shortage, recommending the construction of a community recreation center with an outdoor water park or swimming pool, a divisible gym space equal to three full-sized basketball courts, an indoor multi-lane running track, and one large and two small multipurpose rooms.

December 4, 2000: The Board unanimously votes to postpone discussions for a recreation center and a pool until 2002, in order to pursue discussions with the Rich Port YMCA and the La Grange Field Club for the possible development of the recreation center and outdoor pool.

January 12, 2001: The Park District receives a \$558,100 Open Spaces and Land Acquisition grant from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to cover half the cost of acquiring two parcels of land to expand Denning Park.

February 12, 2001: The Village of La Grange approves the Park District's request for a 24-by-48 foot modular office facility to be located in Denning Park, with a maximum use of 24 months. The modular office was proposed to help the Park District move staff and records out of the administration building in preparation of a new facility.

September 18, 2001: The Board approves Denning Park as the site for the proposed construction of the recreation center and leisure pool. The following March, referendums to help

finance the construction -- a \$9.3 million bond and an 8-cent tax rate increase -- are defeated by community votes of 3,455-to-1,951 and 3,484-to-1,889, respectively.

April 1, 2003: A \$260,000 referendum to repair and resurface tennis courts at Sedgwick Park, Gilbert Park and Spring Park is approved by a 1,176 to 866 vote.

December 7, 2003: 45 volunteers help complete a National Hockey League-size ice rink at Gilbert Park. A former staple of the Park District's winter offerings, the construction of the rink marked the first time in eight years that the rink was resurrected in Gilbert. The rink was opened in January.

February 14, 2004: To help commemorate its 75th Anniversary, the Park District holds Winterfest at Gilbert Park. Community members had the opportunity to ice skate, dine on cookies and hot chocolate, watch the construction of an ice sculpture, and play games.

July 8, 2004: The Board unveils a proposal to lease 4.5 acres of Gordon Park to the Rich Port YMCA in order to construct a new YMCA recreation facility, as well as an 8,000-10,000-square-foot gym for the Park District's use. Feedback from the community was mixed, with concerns about the Park District being too constricted with the plan's non-compete clause, as well as not being able to rent out its gym space to outside groups. The proposal eventually fails.

January 6, 2005: The Board hires Wheaton, IL, based Planning Resources to create a master plan.

January 24, 2005: The Board votes in favor of placing a referendum on the April ballot pursuing the purchase and renovation of the 125,000-square-foot Burke Beverage building on East Avenue to create a 76,000-square-foot recreation center and a 13,000-square-foot maintenance facility. The for-sale building was discovered by Executive Director Dean Bissias while looking for prospective maintenance facilities.

April 5, 2005: By a tally of 2,078 to 1,995, community members approve a \$6.9 million referendum, authorizing the sale of bonds for the purchase and renovation of the Burke Beverage building to transform it into a recreation center.

April 21, 2005: The Board approves La Grange Little League's plan to build a new storage and concession facility at Sedgwick Park.

June 17, 2005: The Rotary Club of La Grange donates \$10,000 -- the first part of a \$15,000 donation -- to the Park District to purchase new equipment for Sawyer Park. Thanks to the gift, the park would eventually be renamed as Rotary Centennial Park.

September 12, 2005: The Board unanimously approves the construction of a recreation center at 536 East Ave -- the final approval needed in order to officially begin construction of the facility.

September 18, 2006: The new Park District of La Grange Recreation Center opens.

October 19, 2006: The Park District announces that the Chicago White Sox Academy will be leasing space in the new recreation center to run a satellite instructional center.

August 18, 2007: The Park District enters into an agreement to sell 2.82 acres of land at Gordon Park to Atlantic Realty Partners, who were the winning bidder for the YMCA property. They proposed to combine the land and build a mixed retail/residential development on the property.

December 1, 2007: Online registration is introduced to Park District patrons.

December 2, 2008: A lawsuit is filed by an 18-member citizen group attempting to stop the Park District's sale of the property.

February 16, 2010: The Park District is awarded a \$508,000 grant by Lyons Township to be used to redevelop Denning Park, including the reshaping of a drainage ditch, moving the entrance to match Lyons Township High Schools, installing three multi-use fields, and a new playground.

Projections for Growth

As a land-locked community, the Park District of La Grange does not expect that its boundaries or population will grow in the foreseeable future. There may, however, be changing demographics or trends that will need to be taken into consideration.

Depending upon the estimates from the 2010 Census which should be available in late 2011 or early 2012, it will be important to see how the community has changed since 2000. If the median community income continues to be strong, that would be a favorable indication that the Park District of La Grange can expect to grow its services because its residents are in a position to be able to afford them.

However, if the 2010 Census shows that the population of the Park District of La Grange is aging, that will be an indication that services the District offers need to change. Changing those services are the subject of this study, and the extensive data gathering techniques employed in this plan should provide indications of how they should change.



3 Current Operations

Organizational Structure of the Park District of La Grange

A. Policy Makers

The Board of Commissioners is the primary policy maker of the Park District. The Board consists of 5 elected members. The President and Vice President are offices elected internally by the Board on an annual basis. The Board is also responsible for appointment of a treasurer, secretary, attorney and a representative to the SEASPAR board. The Board also hires and evaluates the Executive Director.

The Board meets monthly at regularly scheduled meetings; typically on the second Monday of the month, and according to its bylaws, is responsible for the following:

1. Adopting ordinances and resolutions, which help guide the operations of the District
2. Adopting Board Policy Manual and amending it as needed
3. Providing direction to staff by way of annual MBO's, capital budget workshops, goal setting and feedback to proposals
4. Analyzing and making decisions to buy and sell land, facilities and capital items
5. Entering into agreements with affiliates, local governmental entities, major sponsorships, licenses, etc.
6. Analyzing and approving the annual budgets for capital expenditures and general operations
7. Working with staff to develop long term goals for the District

B. Administrative Staff

The administrative staff is led by the Executive Director who oversees all aspects of the operation of the District. Job functions include:

1. Currently, Dean Bissias, the Executive Director acts as Secretary to the Board
2. Overseeing the daily operation of the Park District
3. Overseeing each department, supervising department heads
4. Developing budgets
5. Drafting agendas for the meetings
6. Suggests resolutions, ordinances and policies for the effective operation of the District
7. Suggests changes to the Board Policy Manual based on changes in the law
8. Oversees the Safety Committee
9. Serves as the SEASPAR representative
10. Represents the District at all PDRMA insurance meetings, IPRA and IAPD meetings
11. Is a member of NPRA and attends annual conferences
12. Acts as a liaison between the Village of La Grange and the District
13. Is a member of several local organizations including Kiwanis, the South Suburban Chamber of Commerce and LGBA (La Grange Business Association) in his official capacity
14. Negotiates or oversees negotiation of contracts and agreements
15. Is the Open Meetings Act officer and the FOIA officer for the District

C. The Financial Department

The Financial Department is led by a Superintendent of Finance, currently Leynette Kuniej, and is responsible for all accounting and control activities of the District including accounts payable, accounts receivable, payroll, overseeing human resources, and budgeting. Ms. Kuniej works with the auditors and is the IMRF (Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund) agent for the District. The Superintendent also develops tax levies and budget ordinances, and manages the investments in cooperation with the Treasurer and the Executive Director.

D. The Facilities Department

The Facilities Department is run by the Superintendent of Facilities, currently Chris Finn. He has oversight responsibility for:

- 1. The front desk of the Recreation Center
- 2. Park and facility rentals
- 3. Maintenance of all facilities
- 4. Capital improvements to facilities and parks
- 5. Scheduling of parks and facilities

He also works with the District's affiliate organizations and is a member of the La Grange Business Association (LGBA).

E. The Recreation Department

The Recreation Department is led by the Superintendent of Recreation, currently Laura Gallagher. She has oversight authority for:

- 1. Programming and special events including the Easter Egg Hunt, Family Fest and the Halloween Party and several smaller events
- 2. Early childhood programming, including preschool, athletics and fitness programs
- 3. Marketing of programs
- 4. Event sponsorships
- 5. Program brochures

The Superintendent of Recreation also chairs the Safety Committee, is the alternate representative to SEASPAR and attends LGBA meetings.

F. The Parks Department

The Parks Department is led by a Park Foreman, currently Claudia Galla. She oversees maintenance of the parks, and works with the Superintendent of Facilities on the scheduling of parks and needed maintenance and preparation for the various uses. Ms. Galla also has oversight responsibility for:

- 1. Vehicles
- 2. Trees
- 3. Flowers
- 4. Turf and fields
- 5. Snow removal



Park District of La Grange Organizational Structure Chart

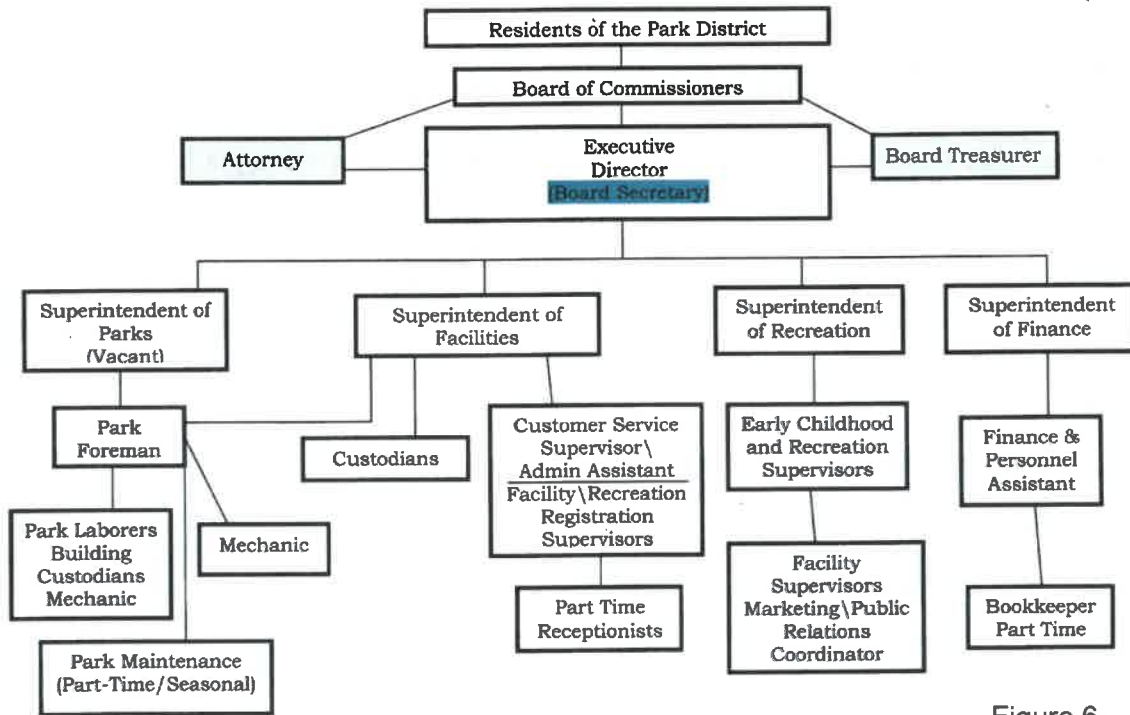


Figure 6

The Financial System

The Park District of La Grange's financial system is theoretically under the management of the Superintendent of Finance and the Board Treasurer, but in actuality, it is part of every senior manager's responsibilities. Each manager participates in the budgeting process and is charged with staying within their budget. The financial success of the District as a whole depends on each manager's vigilance in monitoring the revenue and expenditures generated by their department. Financial reports are generated monthly and on an as requested basis to assist the managers in their decision making.

A good place to begin analysis of the PDLG financial system is the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) prepared by the Superintendent of Finance and audited by Knutte & Associates, P.C. This report is different from some other park districts' annual reports in that it adheres to additional reporting standards as promulgated by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB).

Since 1995 the Park District of La Grange has submitted their CAFR to the Governmental Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada for review and has been awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting. The Certificate of Achievement is a prestigious national award, recognizing conformance with the highest standards for the preparation of state and local government financial reports. The award is based on the ability of the Park District to present an easily readable and organized comprehensive annual financial report that satisfies all applicable legal requirements and generally accepted accounting principles. The Certificate of Achievement is only valid for one

year. However, the Park District of La Grange has received a Certificate of Achievement for the last fifteen consecutive years (fiscal years ended 1995-2009). It is fully expected that the most recent CAFR will also receive this award.

The auditors of the report are Knutte & Associates, P.C. of Darien, Illinois. It is their responsibility to express an opinion on the financial statements based on their audit. The audit is conducted in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that they plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. The Independent Auditors' Report applies only to the year under audit. No reportable conditions have ever been outlined in the Independent Auditors' Report.

Included in the CAFR are two government wide financial statements, the Statement of Net Assets and the Statement of Activities which present an overview of the Park District as a whole. Financial reporting at this level uses a perspective similar to that found in the private sector with its basis in full accrual accounting. The Statement of Net Assets presents information on all of the Park District's assets and liabilities, with the difference reported as *net assets*. Over time, increases or decreases in net assets may serve as a useful indicator of whether the financial position of the Park District as a whole is improving or deteriorating. The Statement of Activities presents changes in the Park District's net assets during the current fiscal year. All current year revenues and expenses are included regardless of when cash is received or paid.

Analyzing the financial position of the Park District of La Grange, based on the April 30, 2010 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR), at the end of the fiscal year, total net assets of the Park District of La Grange were \$10,908,498. Of this amount \$7,382,189 was invested in capital assets, net of related debt and the balance was unrestricted.

The Statement of Activities for the fiscal year ended April 30, 2010 shows an increase in net assets of \$482,420 or 4.6% over the previous fiscal year. This increase was realized in spite of substantial legal bills which were incurred during the last two fiscal years. The trend over the last six years (when this statement was first implemented) has been an increase to net assets.

The Strength of the Financial Position of the Park District

This analysis shows that the recreation fund is being managed in a business like fashion, with most of the recreation program operating expenses being covered by program fees rather than taxes. These findings are important for a number of reasons.

One is that, based on earlier observations that the Park District of La Grange is a land-locked governmental unit with little expectation of growth in either population or housing units, if it is capable of growing its service levels, it must finance that growth with the additional revenues generated from program fees, not additional property taxes.

Because the PDLG standard operating procedures provide that most of the overhead and operating costs of providing recreation programs come from program fees, a strength of the Park District is that it has the expertise and ability to address expansion through program growth. Such is not the case for many districts in the area, particularly those that are more tentative about charging user fees.

Another indication of the strength of the financial position of the PDLG is that it has not gone out of its way to expend financial surpluses when they have been gathered. The ability of the Park District to retain the revenue surpluses generated in the recreation fund shows a level of discipline that many other districts have not shown. The result is, when a rainy day comes along such as the current delay in property tax revenue payments from the county, the Park District is in a position to weather the storm.

Weaknesses of the Financial Position of the Park District

Although one of the District's strengths is its available fund balances, it is also one of the District's weaknesses. The Park District of La Grange has sufficient balances to fund operations and its annual capital replacement plan, but it cannot continue to fund the Gordon Park litigation without making some sacrifices. In order to insure that the litigation process for Gordon Park could continue, capital asset additions and improvements have been restricted to projects which are necessary for safety reasons or to conserve the asset. This has stretched the useful life of some assets beyond what is practical or advisable. However, this approach was deemed necessary due to the escalating costs associated with the lawsuit and the desire to see the litigation through to its conclusion.

Major Administrative Initiatives

One project that received priority in the Park District's MBO and capital projects planning process was the renovation of Gordon Park. The District intended to fund the majority of the renovation through the sale of 2.82 acres in the far northwest corner of the park. The sale was expected to raise approximately \$6 million in cash, non-cash items and services. However, a group of residents sued the Park District challenging their authority to sell the land.

Because the lawsuit challenged the constitutionality of the Act giving Illinois park districts the right to sell property, the Park District of La Grange feels compelled to pursue the litigation to preserve its right and the right of all Illinois park districts to sell unnecessary and underutilized property. During the delay, the housing market collapsed and the developer is no longer interested in purchasing the property at the original price, eliminating the funding source for the renovation of Gordon Park and creating a significant financial drain on the Park District.

The Park District was awarded a \$400,000 matching grant from OSLAD in 2010 for the development of Gordon Park. The grant funding is available through the end of 2012 and the District will have to continue to evaluate how to best capitalize on this opportunity to redevelop their second largest park before the expiration date.

Another initiative involves the renovation of Denning Park. The District applied for and was recently awarded a grant from Lyons Township to be used for this renovation. Community and neighborhood meetings will be held to solicit public input on the redesign of the park.

The District continues its major initiative in defending the litigation mentioned above, and looking for creative ways to fund other capital projects and major initiatives.

Parks & Open Space Standards

It is common in the development of a comprehensive Park & Recreation Master Plan to explore the comparison of the Park District's existing outdoor recreation area features and total land acreage in relation to national and state wide recreation standards. These standards have become less relevant over the years as a goal because in many older communities, it is not feasible to meet the goal. The need for obtaining additional park acreage and/or new and improved outdoor park features is ascertained by data gathering from community surveys, public meetings and special interest groups.

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) developed standards have not been recently updated and within planning circles there has been discussion about moving away from standards such as those issued by NRPA. This is due to the wide range of local needs and the availability of suitable land for both open space preservation and the development of park and recreational facilities. The need to understand local conditions and preferences is becoming more important to planning than arbitrary standards.

For example, the current standards recommend that communities provide 10 acres of park land per 1,000 residents. The Park District of La Grange has approximately 15,000 residents. Based on this arbitrary standard, the Park District would need to provide 150 acres of park and open space to meet that standard. The current acreage for the District is 78.5 acres, leaving the District 71.5 acres short of that standard. Furthermore, it does not account for the vast Forest Preserve system surrounding La Grange, which is owned and operated by Cook County rather than local villages.

A more relevant analysis would compare how the Park District's facilities line up with the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). This document was updated in 2009 and is used to provide guidance for many units of government in open space preservation throughout the state. The statewide averages reflect existing conditions at a given point in time and are intended for comparison purposes rather than targets to be achieved. While they allow local units of government to see how they compare to other communities, they do not take into account the urban, suburban, or rural nature of the community as well as other important factors like community needs and desires.

SCORP Data

The Park District of La Grange's Park System

Consistent with the goals set out in the Open Space Master Plan of 2000, the Park District has made a conscience effort to provide a system of mini parks, neighborhood and community parks, each with facilities appropriate to its area of service and needs of the nearby residents. The Park District also strives to make maximum effective use of existing parks, and ensure that they are developed and maintained to enhance the natural character of the land, provide visual interest and present an attractive appearance to the community. Finally, the Park District is mindful of the need to provide diversified park features with maximum accessibility and safety for its users, while maintaining flexibility to meet changing needs and community preferences.

Using the SCORP data the table to the right compares amenities to the average park district in the State of Illinois. In terms of recreation features, the Park District has adequate coverage in many areas for traditional park elements like playgrounds, basketball courts and baseball fields, yet it is behind in creating some of the newer elements such as splash parks, skate parks, dog parks, or walking/biking trails. And there is no public community pool. This plan does include recommendations and plans for some of these features in the capital planning section.

Facility	Statewide Average	Park District of La Grange
Fishing Piers/ Docks	1 per 25,000	None
Aquatic Center/ Pool	1 per 35,000	None
Spray Grounds	1 per 34,000	None
Trails	1 mile per 6,000	0.25 mile per 6,000
Bike Trails	1 mile per 9,000	None
Nature Trails	1 mile per 18,000	None
Basketball Court	1 per 4,000	1 per 1,000
Baseball Fields	1 per 4,000	1 per 4,000
Softball Fields	1 per 7,000	1 per 7,500
Skate Parks	1 per 61,000	None
Soccer Fields	1 per 6,000	1 per 1,500
Football Fields	1 per 18,000	None
18-Hole Golf Courses	1 per 123,000	None
9-Hole Golf Courses	1 per 192,000	None
Frisbee Golf Courses	1 per 124,000	None
Picnic Shelters	1 per 5,000	1 per 4,000
Playgrounds	1 per 2,500	1 per 1,250
Dog Parks	1 per 134,000	None

Figure 7



RECREATION AREA FEATURES MATRIX																				
PARKS (Location)	FEATURES																			
	Average	Activity/Meeting Room	Administrative Offices	Park Maintenance Garages	Preschool	Playground	Picnic Shelter	Basketball Court	Softball Field	Baseball Field	T-Ball Field	Tennis Courts	Walking/Jogging Path	Sand Volleyball Court	Handball Court	Barbeque Grills	Open Play Area	Ice Rinks	Soccer Field	Parking Lot
Denning (4903 S. Gilbert)	10	X	X			X	X		1				X			X	X		1	1
Elm (Between Brainard & Stone)	2					X	3 (1/2)										X		1	
Gilbert (41st & Gilbert)	6				X	X	1/2				2	4*	X				X	1		1
Gordon (Ogden & Tilden)	17					X	2	4*		1	4*			3*			X		2	3
Waiola (47th & Waiola)	3.5					X	1			2		X					X		1	
Sedgwick (48th & 10th)	25	X				X	2		4			4*	X	3*		X	X		3	3
Community Center (200 Washington)	1	X				X	2*										X			
Stone (Bell & Stone)	.5					X	1/2										X			
Rotary Centennial (116 Sawyer)	.5					X														
Spring (53rd & Spring)	1					X											X			
Recreation Center (536 East Avenue)	6	X	X	X	X	X														2
Spring/Gurrie Schools (53rd & Spring)	8							2				3					X		1	1
	81	3	1	1	2	12	4	9	6	5	5	15	4	3	3	2	10	1	9	11

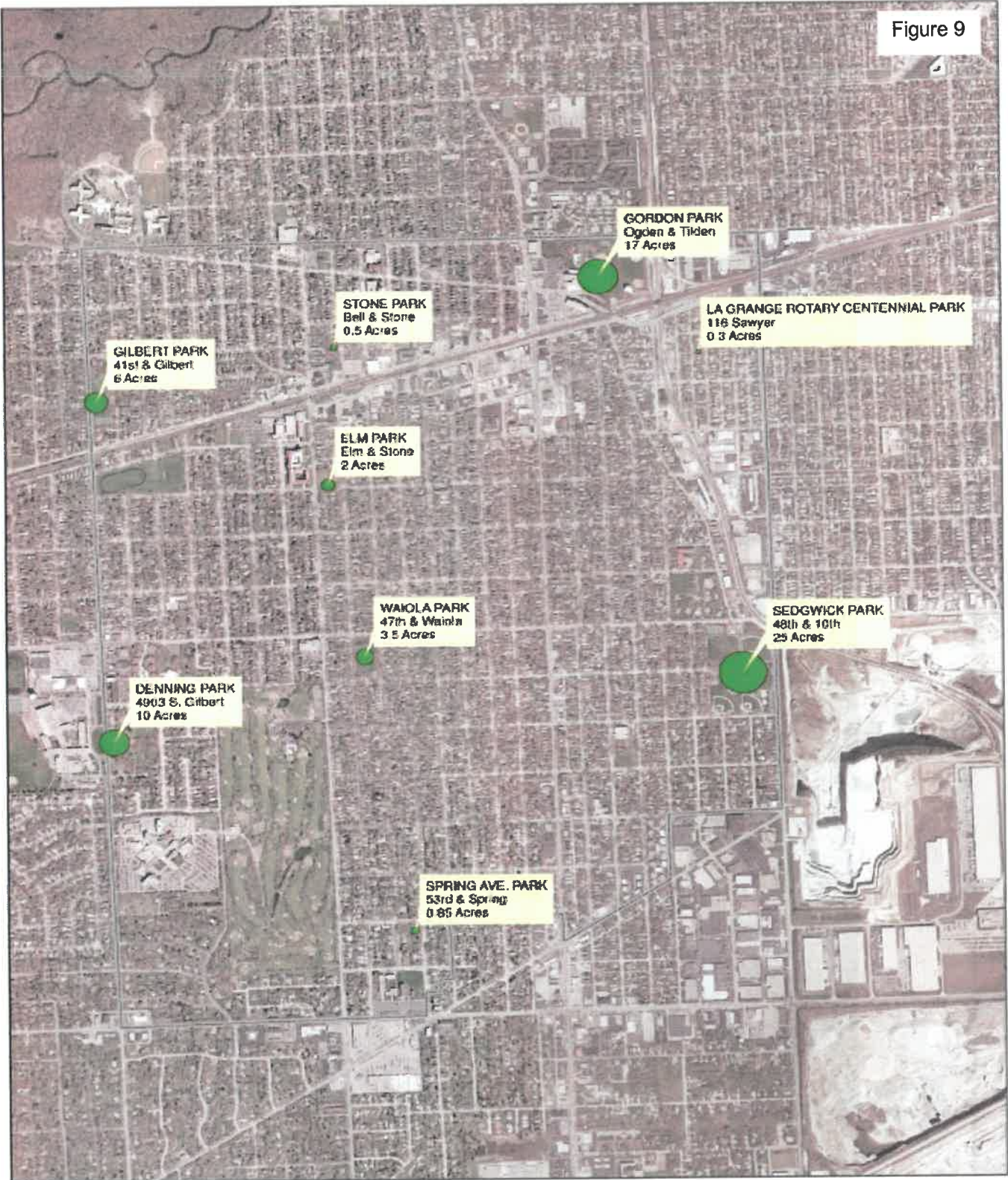
*Field and/or courts are lighted

Updated 4/2011

Figure 8

PARK DISTRICT OF LA GRANGE PARK LOCATIONS

Figure 9

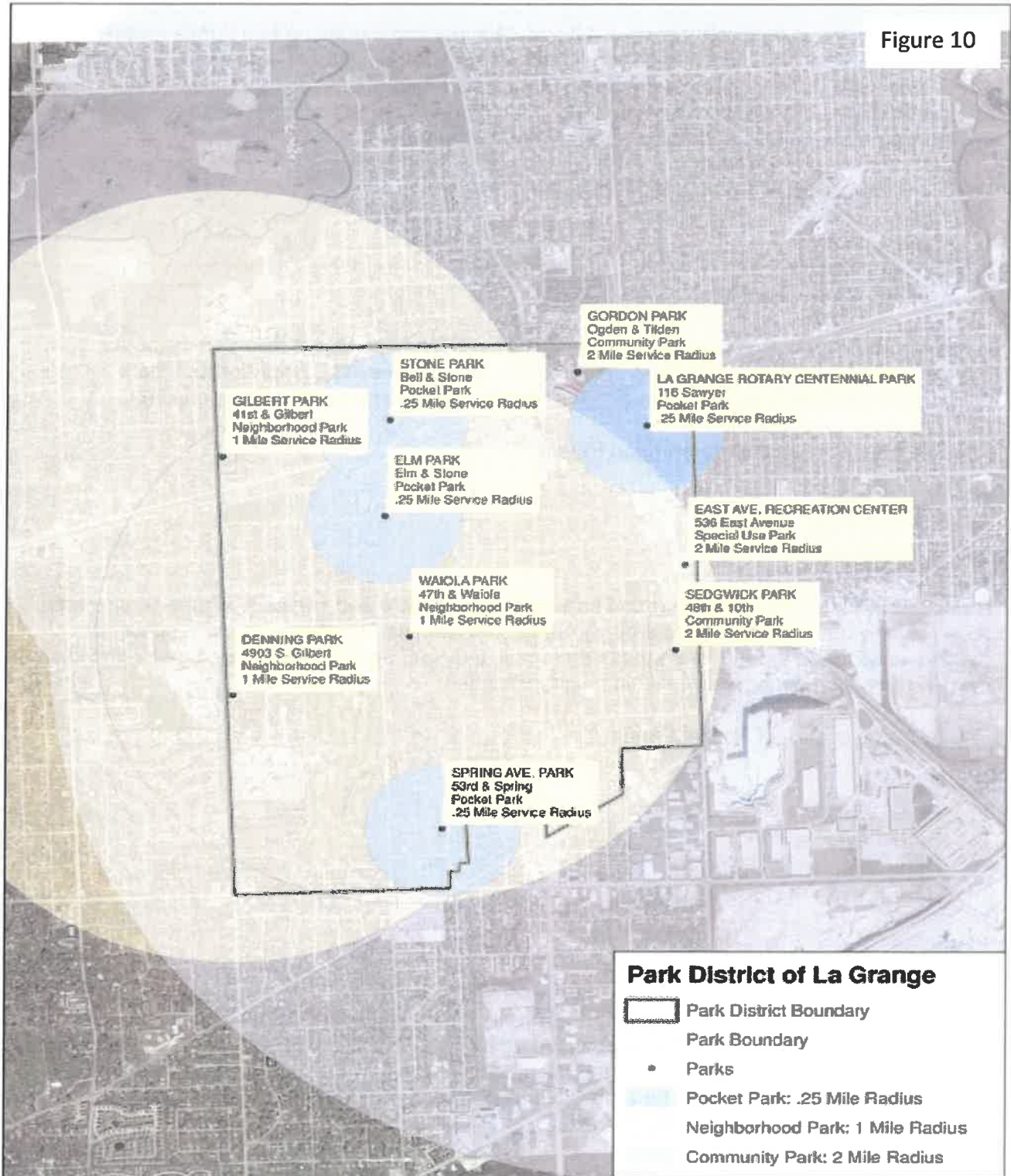


PREPARED FOR THE:
PARK DISTRICT OF LA GRANGE
LA GRANGE, IL.



PARK DISTRICT OF LA GRANGE LEVEL OF SERVICE

Figure 10



PREPARED FOR THE:
PARK DISTRICT OF LA GRANGE
LA GRANGE, IL.



Parks

A community park is generally between 10 and 49 acres and serves up to a 2 mile service area. The community park provides recreational facilities for a large segment of the town's population. These parks are usually developed to support intensive recreational opportunities for both active and passive uses. These parks are typically located on or near major roads, bike paths or multi-use trails to allow for accessibility to several neighborhoods.

The following is a list of Community Parks:

1. Gordon Park
2. Sedgwick Park
3. Community Center Park

A neighborhood park is generally between 1 to 9 acres and serves a 1 mile service area. Typical facilities are within walking distance of the service area. The neighborhood park provides for localized needs in both active and passive play spaces mostly for children.

The following is a list of Neighborhood Parks:

1. Waiola Park
2. Denning Park
3. Gilbert Park

A pocket park is a small neighborhood park less than an acre and serves a ¼ mile service area. It can usually only accommodate a playground for active uses or remain as open space for passive uses. Even though these parks are small, they can serve a useful purpose by providing drop-in recreation opportunities within neighborhoods.

The following is a list of Pocket Parks:

1. Elm Park
2. Stone Park
3. Spring Avenue Park
4. Rotary Centennial Park

Facilities

1. Recreation Center

The 125,000 square foot Recreation Center is the largest and most utilized facility in the Park District system. It encompasses the administrative offices, recreation department and maintenance department. Within the building there are 19,000 square feet of undeveloped space for future expansion for a possible fitness center and additional programming rooms.

2. Community Center

The Community Center is a multi-purpose building with a 1 acre park. It is used for an after school program for neighborhood kids and also for rentals. A few programs are run from the building as well.

3. **Denning Park Building**

The Denning Park building is a 1,225 square foot converted ranch-style house which was the former administrative office for the Park District of La Grange. It is now leased to CEP (Community Extension Project), a local non-profit organization which advocates for and mentors teens.

4. **Gilbert Park Building**

This building is a former ice skate warming shelter which houses our Learning Ladders Preschool.

5. **Sedgwick Park Building**

The Sedgwick building is a small multi-purpose building which houses a few recreation programs, summer day camps and some rentals.

6. **Gordon Park Buildings**

Gordon Park is home to three small maintenance buildings which are no longer used or useful for maintenance.

In light of the Park District's MBO process which systematically prioritizes the District's goals annually based on real time data as to available capital, grant opportunities, changing legal requirements and the urgency or opportunities available, this plan presents a blueprint for action.



Site Inventory & Analysis Park District of La Grange Needs Assessment

Park Name: La Grange Rotary Centennial Park

Park Location: 116 Sawyer Ave.

Park Size: 0.3 Acres

Acquired 1970

Park Type: Pocket Park

Core Park Amenities: Playground & picnic shelter

General Park Impressions: New playground was installed in 2006

- Picnic shelter is in good shape; could use more picnic tables
- Good tree canopy in the park

Future plans next 5 years: none

Future plans next 10 years:

- New pavilion
- New pathway





Site Inventory & Analysis Park District of La Grange Needs Assessment

Park Name: Denning Park

Park Location: 4903 S. Gilbert Ave.

Park Size: 12 Acres

Acquired: 1974, 1976, 1992, and 1999

Park Type: Neighborhood Park

Core Park Amenities: Playground, picnic shelter, open space, storage garages, soccer field, parking lot & walking trail

General Park Impressions: Expansive park with great tree canopy that has a lot of potential to offer improved & expanded recreation opportunities

- Youth Leadership offices on-site (rental)
- Concrete path around site
- Basketball goal next to storage garage, no court dimensions or play area
- Drainage issues on-site
- Shelter is in good shape
- Many areas of open space
- Two storage garages
- Picnic tables

Future plans next 5 years:

- District has applied for a local Township grant to address drainage problem, increase pathways and accessibility, and additional play areas

Future plans next 10 years: None





Site Inventory & Analysis Park District of La Grange Needs Assessment

Park Name: Elm Park

Park Location: Elm Ave. & Stone Ave.

Park Size: 2 Acres

Acquired 1995

Park Type: Pocket Park

Core Park Amenities: Playground, basketball shoot-around, sled hill & open space

General Park Impressions: Playground shows heavy use and is a bit outdated, has some weeds and landscape beds are now turf

- Basketball shoot-around has cracks and low spots
- One low spot with concrete patch
- Basketball shoot-around has cracks and low spots
- One low spot with concrete patch
- Sled hill has an area of erosion
- Broad leaf weeds growing in playground safety areas
- Park has concrete curbs around playground
- Anne Marcisz Memorial Pathway
- Nadine Troy Memorial

Future plans next 5 years:

- Remodel and improve Nadine Troy Memorial Garden
- Improve turf conditions on sled hill
- Address weeds condition in playground area

Future plans next 10 years:

- Repave and color coat basketball shoot-around
- Replace playground





Site Inventory & Analysis Park District of La Grange Needs Assessment

Park Name: Gilbert Park

Park Location: N. Gilbert Ave. & 41st St.

Park Size: 6 Acres

Acquired 1932

Park Type: Neighborhood Park

Core Park Amenities: Playground, half-court basketball court, lighted tennis courts, preschool building, picnic shelter, shuffle board courts & walking/jogging trail

General Park Impressions: Park offers different forms of recreation to its users

- Small half-court basketball court
- Playground has telephone pole support cable running in it as well as weeds growing
- Lighted tennis courts are in good condition
- Small parking lot
- Park supports two Little League fields
- Two small soccer fields or one large one
- Park supports one outdoor ice rink during winter months weather permitting
- Narrow asphalt pathway with cracks and weeds & lights along path
- Preschool building is on-site
- Park has some well-established shade trees
- Park could use a cleanup of trees and brush in park north of small parking lot

Future plans next 5 years:

- Repave pathway
- Add second ice rink

Future plans next 10 years:

- Replace playground





Site Inventory & Analysis Park District of La Grange Needs Assessment

Park Name: Gordon Park

Park Location: Ogden Ave. & Tilden Ave.

Park Size: 17 Acres

Acquired 1930

Park Type: Community Park

Core Park Amenities: Playground, former maintenance building, hand-ball courts, softball fields w/ lights, tee-ball field, basketball courts, tennis courts w/ lights, parking lot, open space & picnic shelter

General Park Impressions: A large park that needs major renovations to improve the quality and usability of the park

- Northwest area of park has extreme slope due to topography

Future plans next 5 years:

- Park is scheduled for major improvements
Plans are for:
 - New soccer/football field
 - New concession stand
 - New pavilion
 - New playground
 - New splash pad
 - New skate spot
 - New butterfly garden
 - New drainage system
 - New pathway with workout stations along the way
 - Elimination of two baseball fields, two tennis courts and two basketball courts

Future plans next 10 years:

- Phase Two of Redevelopment Plan
 - Additional pathway with workout stations
 - Replacement of ball field lights





Site Inventory & Analysis Park District of La Grange Needs Assessment

Park Name: Sedgwick Park

Park Location: 10th Ave. & 48th St.

Park Size: 25 Acres

Acquired 1930

Park Type: Community Park

Core Park Amenities: Playground, baseball fields w/ lights, tennis courts w/ lights, sand volleyball courts w/ lights, soccer fields, concession building, basketball courts, activity/ meeting room, parking lots, batting cages & loop trail

General Park Impressions: Very active oriented park with many forms of recreation present

- Basketball court has cracks and is missing a backboard and goal
- Baseball fields are kept in good shape
- Crushed limestone loop trail, some areas of erosion
- Lighted tennis courts are in good shape
- 3 parking lots plus on-street parking to the south
- 1 sand volleyball court missing net, angled posts and no defined edge
- 2 Little League baseball fields
- 2 Babe Ruth size baseball fields
- Full size soccer field
- Mid size soccer field

Future plans next 5 years:

- Replace playground
- Move or replace basketball courts
- Improve turf conditions on mid-size soccer field

Future plans next 10 years:

- Replace fence surrounding prep field
- Replace fence surrounding senior baseball field
- Replace ball field lights on senior field





Site Inventory & Analysis Park District of La Grange Needs Assessment

Park Name: Spring Avenue Park

Park Location: Spring Ave. & 53rd St.

Park Size: .85 Acres

Acquired 1995

Park Type: Pocket Park

Core Park Amenities: Playground & picnic shelter

General Park Impressions: Nice pocket park that is tucked away from the street offering protection for kids while playing

- Park has a good street presence
- Shelter & picnic area are in good shape
- Playground edging is recycled materials
- Seat walls along edge of playground made of retaining wall bricks
- Playground transfer module is on opposite side from concrete path
- Small open space play area on south side of park

Future plans next 5 years: none

Future plans next 10 years:

- Replacement of playground
- Landscape improvements





Site Inventory & Analysis Park District of La Grange Needs Assessment

Park Name: Stone Park

Park Location: Stone Ave. south of Bell Ave.

Park Size: 0.5 Acres

Acquired 1985

Park Type: Pocket Park

Core Park Amenities: Playground, picnic area and half-court basketball court

General Park Impressions: Park could use reorganization of special elements

- Basketball court is in good shape, could use some striping
- Picnic tables are placed in grass under trees

Future plans next 5 years:

- Resurface and color coat basketball court

Future plans next 10 years:

- Replace playground





Site Inventory & Analysis Park District of La Grange Needs Assessment

Park Name: Waiola Park

Park Location: Waiola Ave. & 47th St.

Park Size: 3.5 Acres

Acquired 1930

Park Type: Neighborhood Park

Core Park Amenities: Playground, full-court basketball court, tee-ball fields, soccer field, small storage building & walking/jogging trail

General Park Impressions: Spacious Park with significant tree canopy throughout the park

- Basketball court is in good condition, slightly narrower than standard
- Playground equipment is older, poles on swing set are sagging
- Tee-ball field backstop is in good shape
- 1 portable tee-ball field
- Large area in center of park for open space play or soccer use
- Narrow asphalt loop trail with few cracks, steel edging & lights along path
- Memorial Tree's with plaques
- No designated parking areas; street parking only

Future plans next 5 years:

- Resurface and color coat basketball court

Future plans next 10 years:

- Repave pathway around park
- Sidewalk replacement surrounding park





Site Inventory & Analysis Park District of La Grange Needs Assessment

Park Name: Community Center

Park Location: 200 Washington

Park Size: 1 Acre

Acquired 1992

Park Type: Neighborhood Park

Core Park Amenities: Playground, two full-court size basketball courts

General Park Impressions: Local neighborhood park which caters to the local community

- Medium size facility with full kitchen used for many local events and rentals
- Playground with swings
- 2 full-size lighted basketball courts
- Small open play area

Future Plans next 5 years:

- Resurface and color coat basketball court
- Replacement of north exterior doors of facility
- Replacement of fence surrounding the park

Future Plans next 10 years:

- Sidewalk replacement on east side of the park
- Replacement of playground



The Park District of La Grange Recreational Programs

The Park District has a current population of approximately 15,000 residents. The hallmark of any highly successful Park District begins and ends with substantial core recreation program offerings and providing a sustainable revenue stream back to the agency.

The previous master plan addressed several key attributes that surrounded recreation programming. First, the majority of recreation programs took place in facilities neither owned nor controlled by the Park District. The facility capacity was a major issue that has been addressed. The second was the split between tax revenue and fees and charges. The past split mark was 78% tax and 22% fees and charges. The goal was to move closer to a 50/50 split and have the recreation programs contribute more successfully to the Park District's bottom line.

None of this can be accomplished without effective programming. It is of utmost importance to understand the needs of the community when seeking to provide effective programming. The purpose of completing a recreation department review and a program strategy of the Park District of La Grange is to evaluate current recreational offerings by collecting programming information. It is then the goal to develop a strategy to improve both attendance numbers and profitability. However, in many recreation agencies, classes are run regardless of enrollment. This can result in participant, staff and instructor frustration as well as low or negative revenue and poor customer satisfaction.

Public Research Group conducted a review of an entire year's worth of programming sessions, starting in fall 2009 and ending in summer 2010. Analysis of the programming focuses on three primary areas. First, they looked at how the Park District compares to other local agencies. Second, they reviewed the profitability of the recreation fund. Lastly, they reviewed the class offerings and made notes about participation levels, cancellation rates and how creative class offerings are being received by the community.

The table below summarizes a number of agency statistics against that of other park and recreation agencies.

Figure 11

	Park District of La Grange	Midlothian Park District	Frankfort Square Park District	Burbank Park District
Number of Residents	16,539	13,821	18,000	28,000
Tax Rate	.354	.429	.480	.245
Indoor Recreation Facilities (used for programming)	5	2	4	2
Number of Parks	10	7	33	12
Park Acreage in System	67	59	706	102
Acres per Resident	.004	.004	.039	.004
Number of Recreation Programs	698	71	410	594
Full-Time Recreation Staff	4	1	4	2
Number of Leagues Using Parks	12	14	50	9
Annual Total Budget	\$3,905,522	\$1,300,000	\$3,200,000	\$3,100,968
Expenditures per Person	\$236.14	\$96.80	\$177.78	\$110.75

It is clear that the Park District of La Grange has the highest number of recreation programs offered, the highest annual budget, and the highest expenditures per person. These numbers need to be viewed in light of the Park District's draw from a number of surrounding communities who are not included in the number of residents, but are being served by PDLG.

It also needs to be noted that the total annual budget includes debt service payments of approximately one million dollars for the purchase and renovation of the Recreation Center. It is not clear whether the other districts' annual budget numbers also include debt service. If not, then that would place the PDLG's budget number more in line with that of the other districts.

A better indicator of performance may be found from program revenues and expenses.

Account	Fiscal Year to Date Actual		Difference	Annual Budget
	4/30/2010	4/30/2009		4/30/2010
Recreation Fund				
Program Revenues	\$777,747	\$820,644	\$(42,897)	\$918,466
Program Expenditures	\$436,312	\$483,405	\$(47,093)	\$570,873
Surplus	\$341,435	\$337,239	\$ 4,196	\$347,593
Profit Margin	44%	41%		38%

Figure 12

In fiscal year 2010, the Recreation Fund showed a profit margin of 44% while the budget goal was a 38% profit margin. This current year percentage is also an improvement over the prior year which was at 41%. Although program revenues were down from one year to the next, the mix of programs that actually ran was more profitable for the District.

A further breakdown by type of program can be seen in the table below.

Actual for FYE April 2010

	Revenue	Expenditures	Profit	Profit %
Athletics	\$ 284,373	\$ 163,782	\$ 120,591	42%
Fitness	55,917	39,904	16,013	29%
Special Interest & Social	53,019	32,984	20,035	38%
Special Events & Trips	8,775	7,596	1,179	13%
Performing Arts	33,806	25,898	7,908	23%
Arts & Crafts	10,059	6,844	3,215	32%
Day Camps	80,788	52,172	28,616	35%
Preschool	39,025	23,423	15,602	40%
Recreation Center Usage	177,202	48,606	128,596	73%
Miscellaneous	34,783	35,103	(320)	-1%
	\$ 777,747	\$ 436,312	\$ 341,435	44%

Figure 13

Again, it is clear that athletic programming and Recreation Center usage is a significant revenue generator for the Park District.

Finally, the previous goal of moving closer to a 50/50 split from tax revenue to program fees and services from the prior master plan still appears to be a challenge. From the April 30, 2010 financial statements, the total revenue is at approximately \$4,000,000. The split is 75/25 tax revenue to program fees. A 60/40 split might be a more reasonable target, and even so, this is a tough task with no aquatics, golf course or fitness center facilities to drive significant revenues. The addition of a fitness center could have the potential to add \$500,000 or more into the revenue stream.

The last type of analysis performed on the recreation programming was to review class offerings and chart participation levels, cancellation rates and how creative class offerings are being received by the community. The following tables illustrate the findings:

Overall Program Cancellations

Season/Year	Full	Open	Cancelled	Wait List	Total Classes	% Cancelled
Fall '09	61	203	213	17	494	43.12%
Winter/Spring '10	68	232	195	19	514	37.94%
Summer '10	57	195	126	21	399	31.58%
Totals	186	630	534	57	1407	
Percentage	13.22%	44.78%	37.95%	4.05%		

Figure 14

Program Cancellation Time Cancellations

Weekday AM	Weekday Noon	Weekday PM	Weekend AM	Weekend Noon	Weekend PM	Total Cancellations
26	17	130	22	17	1	213
26	31	39	18	11	1	126
21	28	109	16	12	9	195
73	76	278	56	40	11	534
13.67%	14.23%	52.06%	10.49%	7.49%	2.06%	

Figure 15

For each program that the District offers a minimum and maximum participant registration number is established. Programs counted as full are those programs that met the maximum number of participants safely allowed for that program. Programs counted as open are those programs that achieved the minimum participant registration needed to operate the program. Any program that does not achieve the minimum participation level is cancelled. When a program is full and there is additional interest, a wait list of interested participants is maintained.

The program research indicates that over a full year of program offerings 37.95% of the programs offered were cancelled. The highest number of classes cancelled was in the fall session.

In reviewing the time concentrations of program cancellations, weekday evening classes were by far the biggest number at 52.06%. It is surprising that classes in the evening were not viewed as convenient as other offerings. One possible solution would be to push back class offerings later into the evening to let families gather for social time shortly after school activities and evening dinner.

A few interesting points to consider in looking at the Park District's recreational offerings is 1) the indoor space has been successful in allowing the District to control scheduling, particularly in terms of gymnasium use; during peak times in fall and spring, the recreation center operates at full capacity with the demand for more programs, 2) the marketing initiative has lead to small successes but could benefit from enhancements, 3) the classes that operate in a less than full enrollment is lost revenue to the Park District, and 4) the variety of program offerings that are cancelled appears to be an attempt to develop new classes. Offering new and different classes is a positive result of fresh thinking. This effort should be based more on research as to the actual needs and desires of the community versus creative thinking within the staff.

We would recommend the Park District develop market based initiatives to boost recreation program revenue by a minimum of 15% in the next 24 months. These points need to be addressed and altered to produce a Recreation Department that will meet the needs of the customer and produce a continued revenue stream to help expand and renovate parks and facilities. The profitability of the recreation program offerings on a percentage basis is good. The area of concern is the actual revenue generated and how to boost program income.



4 Community Needs Assessment

Methodology

As part of this 2011-2021 Comprehensive Master Plan for the Park District of La Grange, data was gathered from a wide variety of sources. The Public Research Group (PRG) hosted public meetings where residents of the District were invited to express their feelings about the Park District of La Grange and the direction they would like to see it go. To gather additional perspectives, PRG met with user groups that have relationships with the Park District of La Grange.

Surveys were administered at four levels. A mail survey was sent out to a random sample of 2,000 households within the Park District of La Grange. The 2,000 households were drawn from the approximately 5,800 households of the District, representing 34.5% of the community. Of the 2,000 surveys, 447 were returned for a response rate of 22.4%.

A telephone survey was administered to a random sample of 400 Park District of La Grange households. The telephone sample households were a separate database from the mail sample. In total, 104 households responded to the telephone survey, a 26% response rate.

Due to their size and random method of selection, the mail and telephone findings are statistically generalizable to the PDLG population, +/- a margin of sampling error of 3.5%. The mail and telephone surveys, therefore, represent the most valid findings of the public needs assessment data gathering process.

The public and interest group meeting process provided a level of depth that the mail and telephone surveys did not provide. To supplement the data gathered from the meetings, the data gathering process for this master plan also included email blasting of the survey to all Park District of La Grange patrons who provided their email addresses to the Park District and the posting of the survey on the website. In addition, the Park District maintained a computer in the lobby of the Recreation Center so that people without computers in their homes could participate.

The website and office survey was viewed by 531 people, of which 72 started the survey and 51 completed it. The email survey link was opened by 103 people, started by 93 of them and completed by 76.

The online and email survey respondents were self-selected, not randomly selected, nor were they controlled for residency. While the electronic survey responses were limited to one started survey per computer, the findings from the responses cannot be generalized to the entire population of the residents of the Park District of La Grange. While not scientifically representative, information gathered via email responses, public and interest group meetings, and internet web site survey responses provide supplemental data which can add a layer of depth to the findings provided by the mail and telephone surveys.

The online and email data provides an understanding of how people who were motivated to go out of their way to complete the survey feel about Park District initiatives. Throughout this chapter, their feedback will be compared to randomly collected survey data to contrast the views both groups expressed.

The findings for the mail, telephone, online, and email surveys are presented in tabular, graphical and chart formats. The analytical tools used for quantifiable data are one-sample and independent sample means testing, frequency distributions, and an occasional correlation.

For qualitative data, the responses to open-ended questions are presented in tables that summarize the survey respondents' answers to questions. When possible, responses to open-ended questions are presented in the body of this chapter, but when they interfere with the flow of the chapter are presented in the Appendix of the plan.

Survey Demographics

Survey question 19 asked whether the respondents were female or male. It is typical in social science research that responses to telephone surveys tend to be overwhelmingly female because females are more inclined to answer the phone than males.

This study controlled for female responses in the script of the telephone interview by asking the person who answered the call to put the youngest male in the household over 18 on the line to answer the questions. The script also had the effect of reducing the average age of respondents.

The mail, online and email surveys had no such ability to control the gender of respondents, as the following graph shows.

The graph shows that the telephone script accomplished its goal of increasing the percentage of male respondents. Exactly 50% of the telephone survey respondents were females. However, 65% of mail survey respondents were females, as was 56% of online and 71% of email respondents.

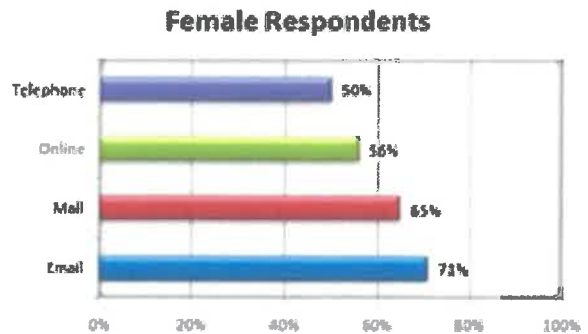


Figure 16

According to the 2000 Census for the Village of La Grange, 51.5% of the population was women, suggesting that the mail, online and email responses were skewed as originating from women. Most social science researchers agree that, for questions about household behaviors, the provision of factual information about which activities members of the households participate in is not affected by the gender of the respondents. But opinions about facility improvements and tax increases may be affected, which is why this study will split findings by gender whenever there are important differences.

Considering the age demographics of telephone and mail surveys, question 20 asked the ages of those in the household, beginning with the respondent. Based on the responses to question 20, the average age of the respondents was computed. The percentage of households with senior citizens over 65 years of age and children under 18 years of age was then determined with the creation of new variables. The following table shows the average age of mail and telephone survey respondents.

Average Age of Mail & Telephone Respondents

Respondent	Number Responding	Average Age
Telephone	99	55.1 Yrs
Mail	420	53.7 Yrs

Figure 17

The table shows that the average age of telephone respondents was 55.1 and of mail respondents was 53.7 years of age. The findings suggest that, in spite of the telephone script to ask for the youngest mail over 18, the average telephone respondent's age was still higher than the average mail survey respondent.

Both were higher than the 2000 Census data, which showed the median age of the Village of La Grange to be 37.8 years of age. However, the average (mean) age is different than median (middle) age by definition of the two statistical terms. The Census median age considers all ages in the household, whereas the average age of the survey respondents almost never included respondents under 18.

Although this survey considered only ages of respondents 18 or older, the data is not inconsistent with Census figures considering those of all ages.

Age can be used as a correlation variable to determine if there are relationships between age and some of the questions in the survey. Whenever age is a determinant, this study will consider its importance.

In terms of senior citizens residing in the household, the 2000 Census estimates showed that 24% of La Grange households had a senior of 65 years of age or older residing within. The following table shows the percentages of mail and telephone respondent households that contained senior citizens 65 or older.

Percentage of Households with Seniors

Respondent	Number Responding	Proportion of Households with Senior Citizens
Telephone	99	24%
Mail	420	23%

Figure 18

The table shows that the percentage of telephone and mail survey households that had senior citizens was nearly the same as the percentage of households in the 2000 Census, about 24%. The findings suggest that the mail and survey data is representative of the entire population of the Village.

The importance of separating households into two groups, those with seniors and those without seniors, will be demonstrated in the analysis of a few important survey questions. Recreational behavior is one issue, and support for the development of the Park District of La Grange is another. When appropriate, comparisons will be made.

Considering the percentage of households that had children under the age of 18, the following table compares mail and telephone respondent households.

Percentage of Households with Children

Respondent	Number Responding	Proportion of Households with One or More Children
Telephone	99	41%
Mail	420	50%

Figure 19

The table shows that 41% of telephone and 50% of mail survey respondents' households reported having children under 18 living within. Comparatively, 39.2% of 2000 Village of La Grange Census households reported having children under 18 years of age living within.

One explanation for the higher mail survey percentage of households with children is that demographics have changed in the past 10 years. That won't be known, though, until the 2010 Census data is published in 2011 or 2012. Another explanation is that mail survey respondents may have been more motivated to return their surveys in higher percentages because their children were users of Park District services and they wanted to express their opinions about the Park District.

This study will also find occasion to separate findings by households with and without children, where there are important differences.

Familiarity with the Park District of La Grange

Question 2 asked if respondent households have heard about the Park District of La Grange. The following table shows the responses of the combined mail and telephone data.

Familiarity with the Park District

Respondent	Number Responding	Percentage
Familiar with the Park District	542	90%
Not familiar with the Park District	542	10%

Figure 20

The table shows that 90% of the randomly selected mail and telephone survey respondents said they were familiar with the Park District of La Grange.

Question 3 asked how respondents had heard about the Park District. Choices provided were newspaper articles, emails, Park District program brochures, Park District mailings, the Park District website, word of mouth, or from other sources.



To compare electronically (online and email) and non-electronically (mail and telephone) data, the online and email data was merged into one file, just as the mail and telephone data has been. The reason for the merging of online and email data is that both sets are more similar than they are dissimilar. The following graph makes the comparison.

How Have You Heard About the Park District?

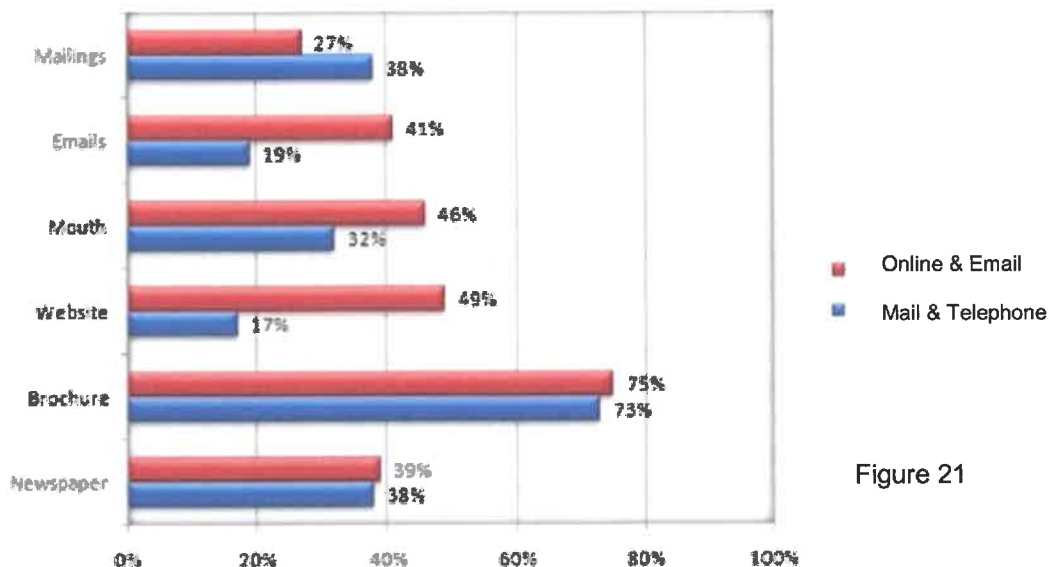


Figure 21

The graph shows that 38% of mail and telephone respondents heard about the Park District of La Grange via newspaper articles compared to 39% of online and email respondents. Another close comparison is that 73% of mail and telephone respondents and 75% of online and email respondents heard about the Park District through the program brochure. A more significant difference can be found in the percentages of those who heard about the Park District through emails or by visiting its website. 49% of online and email respondents heard about the District through the website and 41% through emails, compared to 17% and 19% of mail and telephone survey respondents respectively. This finding is intuitive, considering the means by which respondents answered the survey.

Word of mouth as a medium was cited by 32% of mail and telephone respondents compared to 46% of online and email respondents. And as would be expected, more mail and telephone respondents heard about the Park District through traditional Park District mailings: 38% compared to 27% of online and email respondents.

The responses to question 3 shows the reliability of the survey instrument in this study because the online and email respondents are much more tuned into electronic media than the average residents of the Park District. The findings might suggest that electronic communication is the wave of the future for the Park District of La Grange.

One test of that hypothesis is correlation, as the following tables test.

Correlation of Age of the Respondent with Website Usage

		Age of Respondent	Website
Age of the respondent	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1	-.267(**) .000 517
Website	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.267(**) .000 517	1 546

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Figure 22

Correlation of Age of the Respondent with Email Communication

		Age of Respondent	Website
Age of the respondent	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1	-.279(**) .000 518
Emails	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.279(**) .000 518	1 547

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Figure 23

The tables correlate mail and telephone respondents by age and usage of the website and communication via email. The tables show a moderate correlation between age and each of the variables, suggesting that the younger a respondent was, the more likely they were to have heard about the Park District of La Grange through its website or emails. The findings support continued use of website and email communication. But findings in question 3 also indicate that other means of communication should not be abandoned.

Satisfaction

Question 4 asked survey respondents if they were familiar with the District, how they would characterize the overall satisfaction with the programs and services that the Park District of La Grange offers. Choices for answers were that they were very satisfied, moderately satisfied, neutral, moderately dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied.

The following table compares mail and telephone responses to the question.

Levels of Program & Service Satisfaction Comparing Telephone to Mail Response

Satisfaction Level	Methodology	Number Responding	Percentage
Very Satisfied	Telephone	104	35%
	Mail	442	24%
Moderately Satisfied	Telephone	104	38%
	Mail	442	37%
Neutral	Telephone	104	22%
	Mail	442	29%
Moderately Dissatisfied	Telephone	104	4%
	Mail	442	6%
Dissatisfied	Telephone	104	1%
	Mail	442	5%

Figure 24

The table shows that telephone survey respondents were slightly more satisfied than mail survey respondents. The difference might be due to the phenomenon called the “halo effect” in surveying, where telephone survey respondents tend to answer more positively to telephone interviewers than do mail survey respondents on a paper document. The theory is that telephone respondents don’t want to appear negative when a human interviewer is questioning them; for this reason the data was blended.

But, overall, the differences were not that significant, suggesting there is an overall level of satisfaction with the Park District. The following table shows the percentages when the mail and telephone survey data is blended.

Combined Mail & Telephone Responses to Question 4

Satisfaction Level	Number Responding	Percentage
Very Satisfied	546	26%
Moderately Satisfied	546	37%
Neutral	546	28%
Moderately Dissatisfied	546	6%
Dissatisfied	546	4%

Figure 25

Comparing the combined mail and telephone respondents to the combined online and email responses to question 4, the following graph shows the differences.

Overall Satisfaction with the Park District

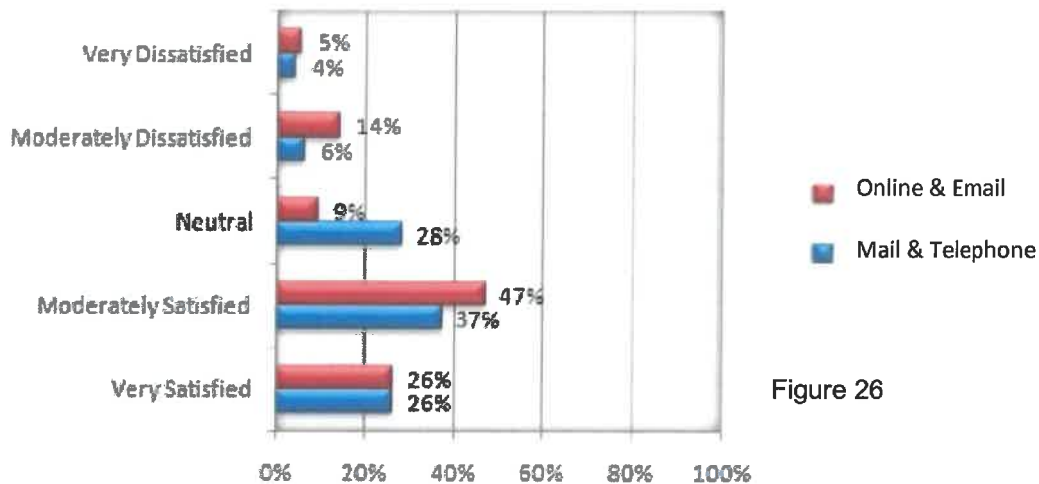


Figure 26

The graph shows that 26% of mail and telephone and 26% of online and email respondents were very satisfied with the Park District of La Grange. 37% of mail and telephone and 47% of online and email respondents were moderately satisfied. 28% of mail and telephone respondents were neutral compared to 9% of online and email respondents. 6% of mail and telephone respondents were moderately dissatisfied compared to 14% of online and email respondents. 4% of mail and telephone compared to 5% of online and email respondents were very dissatisfied.

The findings are consistent in that both data sets showed much more satisfaction with the Park District of La Grange than showed dissatisfaction. The difference was that mail and telephone respondents were more likely to be neutral than online and email respondents.

Question 5 asked how respondents would characterize their overall satisfaction with the parks and facilities of the Park District of La Grange, with the same choices of responses. The following table compares mail and telephone responses.

Levels of Park & Facility Satisfaction Comparing Telephone to Mail Response

Satisfaction Level	Methodology	Number Responding	Percentage
Very Satisfied	Telephone	103	35%
	Mail	443	25%
Moderately Satisfied	Telephone	103	43%
	Mail	443	39%
Neutral	Telephone	103	17%
	Mail	443	25%
Moderately Dissatisfied	Telephone	103	5%
	Mail	443	7%
Dissatisfied	Telephone	103	0%
	Mail	443	4%

Figure 27

The table shows a similar phenomenon occurred in question 5. There is a slight halo effect that telephone respondents are more satisfied than mail respondents. But overall, satisfaction levels are very similar, as is shown in the following table when mail and telephone survey responses are blended.

Combined Mail & Telephone Responses to Question 4

Satisfaction Level	Number Responding	Percentage
Very Satisfied	546	27%
Moderately Satisfied	546	39%
Neutral	546	24%
Moderately Dissatisfied	546	7%
Dissatisfied	546	3%

Figure 28

The following graph shows the differences when the mail and telephone responses are compared to the online and email responses for question 5.

Overall Satisfaction of Parks & Facilities

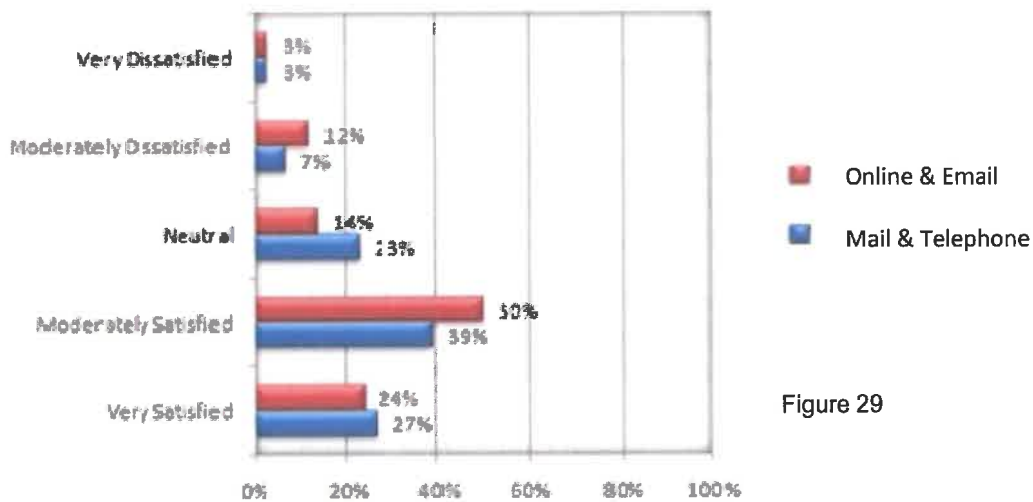


Figure 29

The graph shows that satisfaction levels for parks and facilities are practically the same when comparing them to satisfaction levels for programs and services. 24% of online and email respondents were very satisfied compared to 27% of mail and telephone respondents. 50% of online and email respondents were moderately satisfied, compared to 39% of mail and telephone respondents.

14% of online and email respondents were neutral as were 23% of mail and telephone respondents. 12% of online and email respondents were moderately dissatisfied compared to 7% of mail and telephone respondents. 3% of online and email and mail and telephone respondents were very dissatisfied.

Again, the main differences between the data sets was that more mail and telephone respondents were neutral than online and email respondents, and more online and email respondents were moderately satisfied.

Tabulating the activities pursued by those indicating they were 'Very Satisfied' in questions 4 and 5, the following table shows the results.

Participation in Recreational Activities				
Activity	Number Responding	Percentage of M&T Households	Number Responding	Percentage of O&E Households
Recreation center use	549	28%	132	51%
Walking/jogging	549	23%	132	37%
Fitness classes	548	13%	132	23%
Early childhood	549	11%	132	24%
Basketball	549	11%	132	21%
Special events	549	11%	132	18%
Summer day camp	549	8%	132	2%
Adult athletics	548	5%	132	6%
Pre-school programs	549	4%	132	11%
Martial arts	549	4%	132	7%
Trips	549	4%	132	4%
Dog obedience	548	3%	132	2%
Continuing ed classes	548	3%	132	3%
Volleyball	548	3%	132	9%
Art classes	549	3%	132	6%
Gymnastics	549	1%	132	3%
Day care program	549	1%	132	2%
Dance class	549	1%	132	6%
After school programs	548	0%	132	1%

Figure 30

The table shows that online and email respondents use recreational services in higher percentages than mail and telephone respondents. Since the findings from the mail and telephone surveys are generalizable within a plus or minus 3.5% margin of sampling error, it can be said that 28% of Park District of La Grange residents use the Recreation Center, but that

51% of online and email respondents were Recreation Center users. Likewise, a significantly higher percentage of online and email respondents used fitness classes, participated in basketball, walked or jogged for recreation, registered their children for early childhood development, or participated in special events.

Question 7 asked in which recreational activities did respondents or other members of their households participate at agencies other than the Park District of La Grange. The question also asked the reason for going elsewhere.

Participation in Recreational Activities Elsewhere

Activity	Number Responding	Percentage of M&T Households	Number Responding	Percentage of O&E Households
Fitness center use	549	40%	132	41%
Swimming	549	37%	132	56%
Walking/jogging	549	27%	132	41%
Fitness classes	548	25%	132	25%
Swim lessons	549	24%	132	44%
Basketball	549	9%	132	17%
Ice skating	548	9%	132	16%
Indoor tennis	548	9%	132	12%
Adult athletics	549	8%	132	21%
Gymnastics	548	8%	132	25%
Summer day camp	548	7%	132	17%
Dance class	548	7%	132	22%
Pre-school programs	548	7%	132	16%
Trips	548	6%	132	7%
Dog obedience	549	5%	132	6%
Early childhood	549	5%	132	14%
Continuing ed classes	549	5%	132	7%
Indoor soccer	548	5%	132	13%
Volleyball	548	5%	132	8%
Hockey	548	5%	132	7%
Art classes	548	5%	132	11%
Day care program	549	4%	132	6%
Special events	548	3%	132	13%
Racquetball	548	2%	132	6%
After school program	548	2%	132	10%
Martial arts	548	1%	132	3%

Figure 31

The table compares mail and telephone responses to online and email responses. The findings show that online and email respondents were much more likely to go to agencies other than the Park District of La Grange for recreational services. The highest percentage activities sought elsewhere were walking/ jogging for recreation, swimming, swim lessons, fitness center usage and fitness classes, which were also the ones that mail and telephone survey respondents reported going elsewhere to receive.

As mentioned earlier, the mail and telephone results can be generalized to the entire population of the Park District, within a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 3.5%. The mail and telephone responses indicate that there is a very large untapped market for fitness in the community. The online and email responses indicate that younger and more active residents are going elsewhere.

The implications of these findings will be considered in the goals and objectives section of this plan. But it is clear there are opportunities for the Park District to add services.

Question 7 also asked respondents the reasons they went to agencies other than the Park District of La Grange. The responses were generally consistent across the list of activities.

Walking/Jogging Why?

Reasons	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
PDLG doesn't offer them	72	13.1%	49.3%	49.3%
PDLG times not convenient	20	3.6%	13.7%	63%
PDLG too expensive	6	1.1%	4.1%	67.1%
PDLG location not convenient	20	3.6%	13.7%	80.8%
PDLG facilities not as good	14	2.6%	9.6%	90.4%
Relationship with other agencies	14	2.6%	9.6%	90.4%
Total	146	26.6%	100.0	
No-Response	403	73.4%		
Total	549	100%		

Figure 32

The highest percentage reason from mail and telephone survey respondents was that the Park District of La Grange didn't offer walking and jogging. Tied for second highest were that times and location for walking and jogging were not convenient.

Considering swimming, the following table shows that the public understands the Park District does not have a swimming pool.

Swimming Why?

Reasons	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
PDLG doesn't offer them	176	32.1%	86.7%	86.7%
PDLG times not convenient	1	.2%	.5%	87.2%
PDLG too expensive	1	.2%	.5%	87.7%
PDLG location not convenient	5	.9%	2.5%	90.1%
PDLG facilities not as good	3	.5%	1.5%	91.6%
Relationship with other agencies	17	3.1%	8.4%	100%
Total	203	37%	100.0	
No-Response	346	63%		
Total	549	100%		

Figure 33

The responses to swimming shows what would be expected. The Park District of La Grange doesn't offer swimming is the leading reason at 86.7%.

Swim Lessons Why?

Reasons	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
PDLG doesn't offer them	107	19.5%	85.6%	85.6%
PDLG times not convenient	2	.4%	1.6%	87.2%
PDLG too expensive	3	.5%	2.4%	89.6%
PDLG location not convenient	4	.7%	3.2%	92.8%
PDLG facilities not as good	9	1.6%	7.2%	100%
Relationship with other agencies	125	22.8%	100%	
No-Response	424	77.2%		
Total	549	100%		

Figure 34

The major reason for going elsewhere for swim lessons is the same. The Park District of La Grange doesn't offer them.



Fitness Center Use Why?

Reasons	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
PDLG doesn't offer them	98	17.9%	46%	46%
PDLG times not convenient	17	3.1%	8%	54%
PDLG too expensive	6	1.1%	2.8%	56.8%
PDLG location not convenient	10	1.8%	4.7%	61.5%
PDLG facilities not as good	34	6.2%	16%	77.5%
Relationship with other agencies	48	8.7%	22.5%	100%
Total	213	38.8%	100.0	
No-Response	336	61.2%		
Total	549	100%		

Figure 35

The leading reason for going elsewhere for fitness center usage was that the Park District of La Grange doesn't offer a fitness center. Respondents' relationships with other agencies and the belief that PDLG facilities aren't as good scored high percentages as well.

The findings suggest that if the Park District of La Grange decides to add a fitness center, it would need to have a nice facility and should be aware that customer loyalty to other agencies will need to be overcome. Note, however, that the YMCA community fitness center closed in 2007 and is operating out of a converted garage building until a new facility is built.

Fitness Classes Why?

Reasons	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
PDLG doesn't offer them	43	7.8%	32.3%	32.3%
PDLG times not convenient	35	6.4%	26.3%	58.6%
PDLG too expensive	6	1.1%	4.5%	63.2%
PDLG location not convenient	5	.9%	3.8%	66.9%
PDLG facilities not as good	13	2.4%	9.8%	76.7%
Relationship with other agencies	31	5.6%	23.3%	100%
Total	133	24.2%	100.0	
No-Response	416	75.8%		
Total	549	100%		

Figure 36

The reasons for going elsewhere for fitness classes were a little more evenly distributed than were the reasons for going elsewhere for swimming, swim lessons, and fitness center usage. The belief that the Park District of La Grange doesn't offer fitness classes, when they actually do, shows that there is an awareness issue that the District doesn't offer classes in connection with a fitness center.

Why respondents said they went to other agencies for pre-school programs is also examined. Of the mail and telephone respondents that went elsewhere for preschool programs, the following table shows why they went elsewhere.

Preschool Programs Why?

Reasons	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
PDLG doesn't offer them	14	2.6%	40%	10%
PDLG times not convenient	4	.7%	11.4%	51.4%
PDLG too expensive	3	.5%	8.6%	60%
PDLG location not convenient	7	1.3%	20%	80%
PDLG facilities not as good	7	1.3%	20%	100%
Relationship with other agencies	35	6.4%	100%	
No-Response	514	93.6%		
Total	549	100%		

Figure 37

The table shows that there is a perception in the community, expressed by mail and telephone survey respondents who go to other agencies for preschool programs, that the Park District of La Grange doesn't offer preschool programs at all. There also appears to be convenience, facility and loyalty issues that cause preschool participants to go elsewhere. By its nature the preschool customer population turns over frequently, so improved facilities and marketing would presumably have an immediate effect.



Park and Facility Usage

Question 8 asked respondents which parks or facilities they or members of their family visited in the last year. The following table shows the percentages of mail and telephone and online and email survey answers.

Park or Facility	Number Responding	Percentage of M&T Respondents	Number Responding	Percentage of O&E Respondents
Gilbert Park	548	47%	129	52%
Sedgwick Park	548	46%	129	60%
Waiola Park	548	42%	129	59%
East Avenue Recreation Center	548	37%	129	69%
Elm Park	548	29%	129	35%
Denning Park	548	26%	129	50%
Spring Avenue Park	548	22%	129	27%
Gordon Park	548	19%	129	38%
Stone Park	548	15%	129	28%
Community Center	548	7%	129	18%
Rotary Centennial Park	548	3%	129	5%

Figure 38

The table shows that online and email respondents were more likely to use La Grange parks and facilities than the average person in the community. For instance, 69% of online and email respondents said they used the (East Avenue) Recreation Center compared to 37% of mail and telephone respondents.

The findings in the table suggest a number of things. For one, the mail and telephone users can be projected over the entire number of households in the community to calculate the number of households that use each park and facility. And by calculating the number of visits members of mail and telephone respondent households said they utilized in question 9, park and facility attendances can be calculated.

These generalizeable findings can be used to prioritize where improvements should be made. That Gilbert Park is used by 47% of households and Waiola Park is used by 42%, but Gordon Park is only used by 19%, says a great deal about which parks are underutilized.



Frequency of Park & Facility Usage

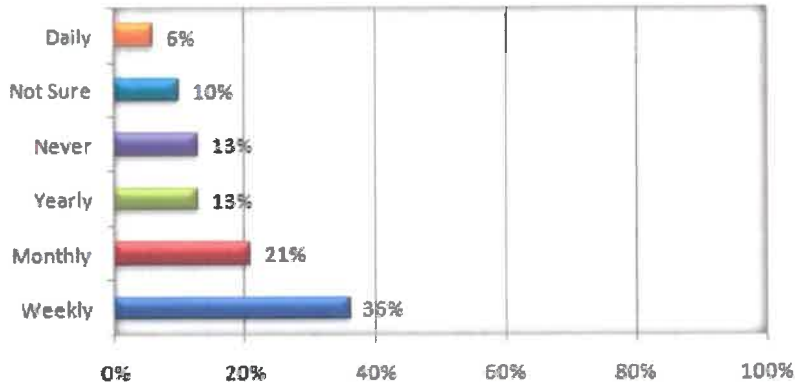


Figure 39

The graph shows that 63% of mail and telephone respondents said they used the park and facilities on at least a monthly basis. 13% of respondents said they never used La Grange parks or facilities, and 10% were not sure.

The response percentages suggest that Park District residents are very much engaged in using the District's services.

Online and email respondents were even more frequent users of Park District parks and facilities, as the following graph shows, comparing online and email responses to email and telephone.

Comparing Frequency of Usage

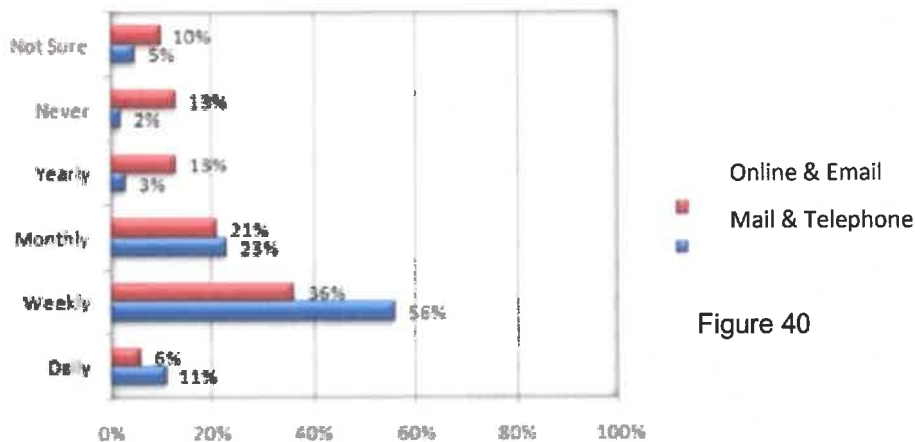


Figure 40

The difference is that 90% of online and email respondents used Park District parks and facilities at least monthly compared to 63% of mail and telephone respondents.

The percentages are consistent with earlier assumptions that online and email respondents speak for frequent users of Park District services, and that mail and telephone respondents speak for everyone in the community, regardless if they are users of services or not.

Capital Projects

Question 10 asked which capital projects respondents would favor the Park District to complete in the future. A list was provided. The following table shows the percentages that mail and telephone and online and email respondents said they favored.

Favored Capital Projects

Project	Number Responding	Percentage of M&T Respondents	Number Responding	Percentage of O&E Respondents
Nothing	543	43%	129	23%
Expanding the Recreation Center	543	27%	129	54%
Renovate Gordon Park	543	27%	129	30%
Renovate Denning Park	543	15%	129	13%
Renovate Sedgwick Park	543	15%	129	15%
Renovate Gilbert Park	543	14%	129	7%
Renovate Waiola Park	543	13%	129	10%
Renovate Elm Park	543	10%	129	7%
Renovate Stone Park	543	8%	129	3%
Renovate Spring Avenue Park	543	8%	129	6%
Expand the Community Center	543	7%	129	11%
Renovate Rotary Centennial Park	543	6%	129	1%

Figure 41

The table shows the most favored capital project is the expansion of the Recreation Center, with 27% of mail and telephone respondents supporting it and 54% of online and email respondents. Renovation of Gordon Park was also supported by 27% of mail and telephone respondents, but by a slightly higher percentage of online and email respondents, 30%.

Doing nothing was supported by 43% of mail and telephone and 23% of online and email respondents. The findings suggest that doing something is supported by 57% of mail and telephone and 77% of online and email respondents, yet 43% of mail and telephone respondents wanted to save money and make no additional improvements.

Park Amenities

Question 11 provided a list of park amenities and asked respondents to check which ones they or members of their families would like to see added to the parks.

Park Amenity Preferences

Amenity	Number Responding	Percentage
Outdoor swimming pool	547	38%
Walking/biking paths	547	35%
Splash pad	546	23%
Dog park	547	23%
Fitness stations	547	22%
Lighted walking paths	547	19%
Hockey rink/skating facility	547	18%
Driving range	547	17%
Additional picnic shelters	546	14%
Additional flower beds/landscaping	547	14%
Band shell	547	14%
Additional playground equipment	547	12%
Skate park	547	11%
Additional tennis courts	547	10%
Decorative gazebos	547	9%
Additional soccer fields with natural grass	547	8%
Softball/baseball fields with natural grass	547	8%
Golf course	547	8%
Fishing pond	547	7%
Football fields with natural grass	546	5%
Soccer fields with artificial turf	547	3%
Softball/baseball fields with artificial turf	547	2%
Football fields with artificial turf	547	2%

Figure 42

The table shows the response percentages for mail and telephone respondents only because these percentages can be generalized to the entire community, whereas the online and email data can't. The percentages show the most popular park amenities are an outdoor

swimming pool, favored by 38% of the community, additional walking and jogging paths favored by 35%, a splash pad by 29%, and a dog park by 23%. Considering their willingness to pay for these amenities, in question 13 respondents were asked, regardless if they supported them, how much would respondents be willing to pay in additional property taxes each month for them. The following table shows how much mail and telephone respondents would be willing to pay.

Willingness to Pay More Taxes for Park Amenities

Amount	Number Responding	Percentage
\$1-5 more per month	547	20%
\$6-10 more per month	546	19%
More than \$10 per month	547	10%
No More	547	31%
Don't know	547	20%

Figure 43

The findings suggest that 49% of the community members would support some tax increase to fund amenity improvements for the parks more than they oppose an increase. That is not to say a referendum would pass, it just suggests that respondents were serious when they said they wanted park amenity improvements.

Considering whether there are demographic splits that are stronger than others, the following table shows the support for a tax increase from families with children compared to those without children. The differences represent the effect of having children in the household.

Support for Park Improvement Tax Increases with Children in the Household			
Amount	Children in the Household	Number Responding	Percentage
\$1-5 more per month	Children	252	15%
	No Children	267	26%
\$6-10 more per month	Children	251	25%
	No Children	267	15%
More than \$10 per month	Children	252	15%
	No Children	267	6%
No More	Children	252	27%
	No Children	267	32%
Don't know	Children	252	18%
	No Children	267	22%

Figure 44



The table shows that there is a slight tendency of respondents from households with children to support more in taxes for park amenity improvements. To illustrate, 27% of households with children oppose a tax increase compared to 32% of households without children. The greatest differences were between households who supported \$1-\$5 more per month and \$6-\$10 per month.

Considering support from households with senior citizens, there was a difference in the percentage of households who had seniors in them compared to households without seniors. The following table shows the differences.

Support for Park Improvement Tax Increases with Seniors in the Household

Amount	Senior Respondent	Number Responding	Percentage
\$1-5 more per month	Senior	124	23%
	No Senior	395	20%
\$6-10 more per month	Senior	124	10%
	No Senior	394	23%
More than \$10 per month	Senior	124	2%
	No Senior	395	13%
No More	Senior	124	37%
	No Senior	395	28%
Don't know	Senior	124	27%
	No Senior	395	17%

Figure 45

The table shows it does make a difference if there is a senior citizen in the household whether there would be support for a tax increase to fund park amenity improvements. A higher percentage of households, those with seniors, opposed any increase. And there were a higher percentage of senior households that weren't sure. This finding is intuitive, assuming seniors don't use the parks as much as younger people, and is borne out in the data.

Comparing households with seniors, children and all households, the following graph shows the percentages that support a tax increase.

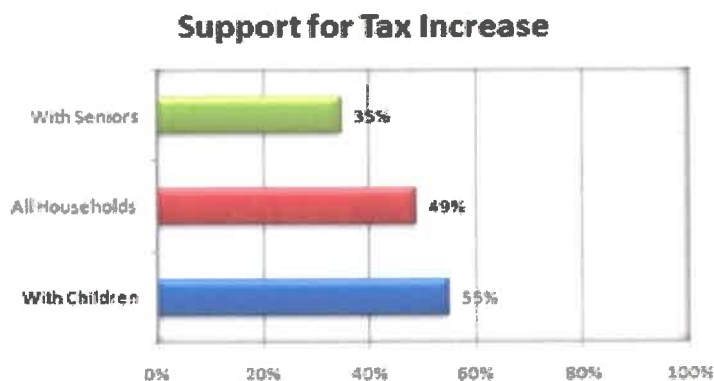


Figure 46

The graph shows that 49% of all households support a tax increase for park amenity improvements, compared to 55% of households with children and 35% with seniors. The comparison shows that demographics make a difference.

The Recreation Center

Question 14 asked, if the Park District were to expand the Recreation Center, what amenities should it include? Respondents were provided with a list of amenity choices from which they were permitted to select as many as they thought appropriate.

Since online and email respondents were such high users of the Recreation Center, it is important to include them in the analysis, comparing their responses to those of mail and telephone respondents, remembering that the mail and telephone responses are statistically generalizable and the online and email responses are not.

The following table compares the responses.

Amenity	Number Responding	Percentage of M&T Respondents	Number Responding	Percentage of O&E Respondents
Fitness center	547	37%	127	49%
Indoor aquatics center	547	35%	127	47%
Outdoor aquatic center	547	27%	127	38%
Climbing wall	547	20%	127	33%
None	546	25%	127	12%
Walking/jogging track	547	19%	127	16%
A quiet yoga room	547	17%	127	17%
Spinning rooms	547	16%	127	16%
Senior citizen center	547	14%	127	6%
Indoor ice rinks	547	13%	127	19%
Aerobic rooms	547	10%	127	11%
Outdoor ice rinks	547	10%	127	11%
Day care rooms	546	9%	127	11%
Performing arts center	547	8%	127	10%
Teen center	547	8%	127	11%
Outdoor softball field	547	6%	127	4%
Dance rooms	547	5%	127	13%
Gymnastics facility	545	5%	127	9%
More classrooms	547	5%	127	4%
Don't really care	547	5%	127	3%
More gymnasiums	547	4%	127	4%
Indoor soccer fields	547	4%	127	7%
Indoor softball field	546	2%	127	4%
More meeting rooms	546	2%	127	2%

Figure 47



The table shows that only 25% of mail and telephone and 12% of online and email respondents said they didn't want any improvements made to the Recreation Center. Among the most popular improvements were a fitness center and indoor and outdoor swimming pools. Other popular amenities were a climbing wall and a number of activity rooms, including a quiet yoga room and spinning rooms.

There were differences in the percentages of mail and telephone and online and email respondents support for the amenities, but, in most cases, the ranking in popularity was the same. The fitness center was the most popular for both groups of respondents and the indoor aquatics center was the second most popular.

Willingness to pay for Recreation Center amenities was considered in question 15, where respondents were provided the same choices as in question 13. Because of the need to generalize the population for this question, only mail and telephone responses are considered. It should be noted that the question was intended to measure the resolve of those respondents to the Recreation Center amenity question that they supported amenity improvements, not that the Park District of La Grange intends to increase taxes.

Willingness to Pay More Taxes for Recreation Center Amenities

Amount	Number Responding	Percentage
\$1-5 more per month	547	18%
\$6-10 more per month	547	18%
More than \$10 per month	547	8%
No More	547	35%
Don't know	546	21%

Figure 48

The table shows 35% of mail and telephone respondents were unwilling to pay more in taxes for Recreation Center amenities and 21% were undecided. A total of 44% were willing to pay more. Considering the splits between households with and without children, there were differences in responses.

Support for a Rec Center Amenity Tax Increase with Children in the Household Fig. 49

Amount	Children in the Household	Number Responding	Percentage
\$1-5 more per month	Children	252	17%
	No Children	267	22%
\$6-10 more per month	Children	252	25%
	No Children	267	12%
More than \$10 per month	Children	252	13%
	No Children	267	3%
No More	Children	252	30%
	No Children	267	37%
Don't know	Children	251	16%
	No Children	267	25%

The table shows that a similar phenomenon occurred with the Recreation Center tax question as occurred with the park amenity tax question, when having children in the household is considered. The greatest difference is that households with children are willing to pay more.

Considering support for a tax increase with seniors in the household, the following table compares the differences.

Support for a Rec Center Amenity Tax Increase with Seniors in the Household

Amount	Senior Respondent	Number Responding	Percentage
\$1-5 more per month	Senior	124	20%
	No Senior	395	20%
\$6-10 more per month	Senior	124	9%
	No Senior	394	21%
More than \$10 per month	Senior	124	2%
	No Senior	395	10%
No More	Senior	124	40%
	No Senior	395	32%
Don't know	Senior	124	29%
	No Senior	394	18%

Figure 50

The table shows that 40% of seniors are unwilling to pay increased taxes for Recreation Center amenity improvements and 29% are undecided. Comparatively, households without seniors are much more willing to pay a tax increase and at higher amounts.

Comparing all households with households with seniors and children, the following graph makes the comparison of the percentages of each group that said they would support a tax increase.

Support for Tax Increase

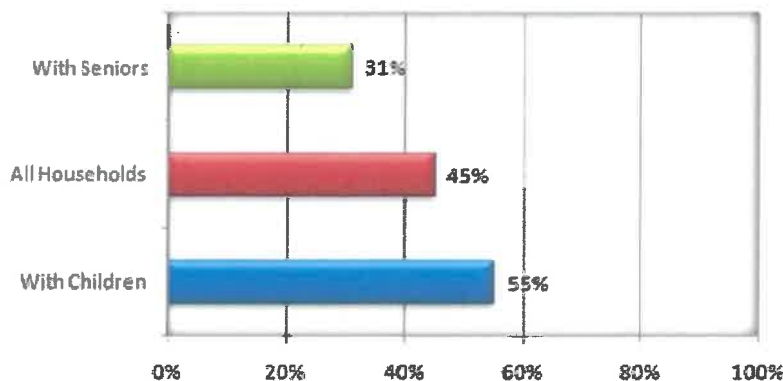


Figure 51

The percentages of support for a tax increase to fund Recreation Center amenity improvements are very similar to the levels of support for park amenity improvements. 45% of all households support a tax increase at some level, 55% of households with children do, as do 31% of households with senior citizens. The findings suggest that demographics make a difference.

Recreation Programs

Question 16 asked what new recreation programs the Park District of La Grange should offer. The question was open-ended. The responses are summarized in the Appendix.

The way that the Public Research Group interprets open-ended responses is to look for themes. It is apparent by reading the suggestions made by the mail and telephone respondents to question 16 in the previous table that there is an appetite for some kind of aquatic facility. A fitness facility was also mentioned several times. But from a programmatic standpoint, except for the occasional program suggestion, most of the comments were to build facilities.

Online and email responses were not that much more helpful. Most were to provide new facilities that had already been discussed rather than new recreation programs.

Rating Priorities

Question 17 asked respondents to rate the priorities of the Park District of La Grange with regard to maintaining existing recreation programs, improving existing recreation programs, acquiring new park land, improving existing parks and facilities, and building new facilities. Respondents used Likert Scale ratings, with 5 being very important, 4 as important, 3 as neutral, 2 being unimportant and 1 being very unimportant. Comparing their raw scores, the following graph shows the averages.

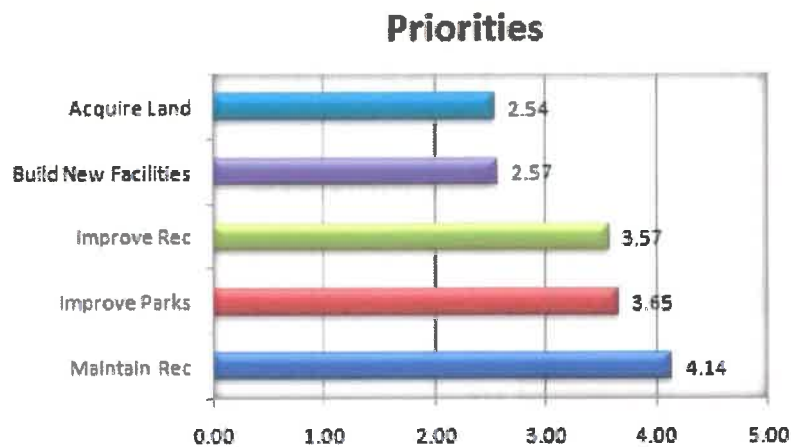


Figure 52

Comparing the importance of the choices, maintaining existing recreation programs rated the highest with an average score of 4.14. Improving existing parks and facilities had the second highest score at 3.65, followed closely by improving existing recreation programs, with an average score of 3.57. Building new facilities scored 2.57, followed by acquiring new park land at 2.54. The findings suggest that the public is most concerned about maintaining and improving existing recreation programs and facilities before new facilities are built.

Considering the individual frequencies of each issue, the following tables show the valid percentages of respondents who selected the Likert Scale choices, beginning with the issue of maintaining existing recreation services.

Maintaining Existing Recreation Services

Rating	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very unimportant	24	4.4%	4.8%	4.8%
Unimportant	16	2.9%	3.2%	8%
Neutral	80	14.6%	16%	24%
Important	127	23.1%	25.5%	49.5%
Very Important	252	45.9%	50.5%	100%
Total	499	90.9%	100.0	
No-Response	50	9.1%		
Total	549	100%		

Figure 53

The table shows that slightly over 50% of mail and telephone respondents rated maintaining existing recreation services as very important.

Improving Existing Recreation Services

Rating	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very unimportant	42	7.7%	8.6%	8.6%
Unimportant	40	7.3%	8.2%	16.8%
Neutral	131	23.9%	26.8%	43.6%
Important	148	27%	30.3%	74%
Very Important	127	23.1%	26%	100%
Total	488	88.9%	100.0	
No-Response	61	11.1%		
Total	549	100%		

Figure 54

The table shows that 26% of mail and telephone survey respondents rated improving existing recreation services as very important.

Acquiring New Park Land

Rating	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very unimportant	158	28.8%	33.2%	33.2%
Unimportant	78	14.2%	16.4%	49.6%
Neutral	124	22.6%	26.1%	75.6%
Important	55	10%	11.6%	87.2%
Very Important	61	11.1%	12.8%	100%
Total	476	86.7%	100.0	
No-Response	73	13.3%		
Total	549	100%		

Figure 55

In the case of acquiring new park land, only 12.8% of mail and telephone survey respondents rated it as very important.

Improving Existing Parks & Facilities

Rating	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very unimportant	38	6.9%	7.8%	7.8%
Unimportant	32	5.8%	6.6%	14.3%
Neutral	125	22.8%	25.6%	40%
Important	159	29%	32.6%	72.5%
Very Important	134	24.4%	27.5%	100%
Total	488	88.9%	100.0	
No-Response	61	11.1%		
Total	549	100%		

Figure 56

27.5% of mail and telephone survey respondents rated improving existing park and facilities as very important.

Building New Facilities

Rating	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very unimportant	152	27.7%	31.6%	31.6%
Unimportant	69	12.6%	14.3%	45.9%
Neutral	141	25.7%	29.3%	75.3%
Important	72	13.1%	15%	90.2%
Very Important	47	8.6%	9.8%	100%
Total	481	87.6%	100.0	
No-Response	68	12.4%		
Total	549	100%		

Figure 57

9.8% of mail and telephone survey respondents rated building new facilities as very important.

Contrary to the responses in question 17, particularly responses to building new facilities and earlier questions showing an appetite for adding amenities to the parks and the Recreation Center, respondents viewed amenity additions as a way of maintaining and improving existing services rather than as completely new facilities.

Additional Comments

Question 21 asked respondents to add any comments that they or their family would like to share with the Park District. The comments are summarized in the table located in the Appendix.

Reading the comments for themes, there seemed to be a lot of supportive and generally positive comments. There were a few comments about the Gordon Park issue. There were also people who said they were not happy with the location of the Recreation Center and the lack of a swimming pool. There were people who opposed an outdoor swimming pool and people who were just opposed to taxes being increased.

There were some random suggestions for program and facility improvements as well as sporadic maintenance criticisms. But overall, except for the Gordon Park issue, there were no overwhelming issues raised.

Staff Visioning

There were three visioning sessions held with staff to gather their input about what they consider to be important initiatives the Park District of La Grange should pursue. The meetings were held on June 2, July 20 and September 15, 2010. Issues discussed were on a wide array of topics.

The data from the meetings was gathered using “brainstorming” techniques, where staff members were provided a topic and permitted to throw out any ideas they had on the topics. Note that the ideas are ones that staff believe warrant consideration and investigation, not necessarily implementation.

The comments made by the staff can be summarized in the following categories of discussion topics.

New recreation program offerings

- Expand early childhood programs
- Offer all-day daycare
- Expand fitness classes
- Expand senior programming
- Expand teen activities
- Offer an adult outdoor boot camp program
- Reintroduce gymnastics classes
- Expand and revise tennis programs
- Offer archery instruction
- Offer new dance classes
- Offer ecology classes
- Concerts in the park

New facilities

- Add a fitness facility to the Recreation Center
- Add a yoga studio to the Recreation Center
- Expand preschool facilities
- Acquire additional land
- Improve the banquet room at the Recreation Center
- Add additional multi-purpose rooms at the Recreation Center
- Improve the social area at the Recreation Center
- Add a youth fitness area
- Install a splash pad
- Build more picnic shelters
- Install a climbing wall at the Recreation Center
- Develop an indoor ice or roller hockey facility
- Build a skate park

Administrative issues

- Staff would like the Board to trust in their professional knowledge and experience and their understanding of PDLG operations.
- The Gordon Park lawsuit is a financial burden to the District.
- Board meetings operate more efficiently and effectively when commissioners/staff are prepared by thoroughly reviewing the monthly board packet and related issues prior to the meeting.
- The Board should recognize and support the accomplishments of staff.

Miscellaneous issues and comments

- In general, the community believes the PDLG is doing a quality job.
- Staff strives for a positive image of the District and would like to be known for its quality programs, services and facilities.
- Pricing strategies need to be competitive as well as provide sufficient revenue generation.
- Increase our commitment to maintaining and improving outdoor parks.
- The PDLG should implement initiatives to work towards a greener environment.
- MBO could be a valuable process if it is revised and streamlined for maximum effectiveness.
- There are many additional facilities and services staff would like to offer the community if the financial resources were available.

The summarized comments represent themes from the meetings. Much of the discussion focused on ways to improve the park facilities or the Recreation Center. It was stated that, due to the consumption of financial resources by the Gordon Park lawsuit, too many park maintenance items have been deferred.

The staff generally believed that the lawsuit needed to be ended so that legal fees would not continue to grow. The staff believed that expenditure of future capital resources on making improvements to the parks would improve the overall image of the Park District and serve the needs of the public.

Regarding the Recreation Center, the staff was unanimous in its view that improvements made to the Recreation Center would result in additional patron recreation opportunities and increased revenue to the Park District of La Grange. There were several comments about how revenue had grown since the facility had been opened and that revenue continues to grow with minimal additional capital expenditures and minimal staff expansion.

Finally, staff expressed a commitment to valuing community input in planning for future changes and expansion of services at PDLG. They felt the comprehensive survey was an important source of information and direction.

Board Visioning

The Board of Commissioners conducts regular monthly meetings, and annual special meetings for the purpose of reviewing goals and objectives, and prioritizing items for the operating and capital budgets. Design Perspectives, Inc. and Public Research Group representatives met with the Board for a visioning exercise.

The Board was provided two tasks to complete. The first was to vision how its own meeting process could be improved, including how the Board can make itself and its processes better, improve interactions with the staff and improve relationships with the public. The second task was the completion of a brief survey which asked questions about the agency itself and how it was performing.

The comments made by board members were generally consistent. The Board was genuinely concerned with making meetings more open and productive, with improving its interactions with the staff, and with participation of the public at meetings when policy decisions are made and communication with the public after policy decisions are made.

Several suggestions were made to improve the efficiency and efficacy of board meetings including:

- Keep deliberations away from minutiae
- Encourage members to be more prepared for the meetings
- Clearly identify methodologies and processes before discussions
- Be more open to interacting with the public at meetings

In order to improve interactions with the staff, it was suggested that the Board:

- Gain a better understanding on staff views of issues, priorities and responsibilities
- Have the staff attend more monthly board meetings
- Make sure staff participation at meetings is clearly defined and efficient
- Filter all Board requests and directives through the Executive Director rather than asking the staff to drop everything to address individual board members' concerns

In order to improve public interaction, it was suggested that the Board:

- Return to more open communication with the public through email blasts and other social media outlets
- Be proactive rather than reactive on communication
- Ask ourselves "if we do this, who needs to know?"
- Consider the media within which we communicate to the public (i.e., press releases, advertisement, social media, board packets, minutes, etc.)
- Make sure the Board and staff agree on the level and medium of communication

With respect to the survey administered to the Board, the first question asked if they felt the Park District is providing adequate recreation opportunities to the community. Of the five board members, four were satisfied that the recreation offerings were adequate and one had suggestions for additional programs.

The second question asked in the survey was whether board members thought the parks were adequately maintained. Four responded affirmatively, and one said that there was room for improvement with proper funding.

The third question asked whether the staff was doing a good job. Again, four commissioners responded affirmatively, and one indicated the need for improvement. In each of these questions, a different board member responded with the need for improvement, indicating that each board member saw different weaknesses in the job currently being done at the District.

All board members responded positively to question 4, that the Park District provided equal employment opportunities.

Question 6 asked if the Park District of La Grange was on good terms with other governmental agencies. In this case, a majority of the board members said that there was room for improvement with respect to other governmental units. The findings suggest that improving intergovernmental relations would be an important issue with the Board.

Question 7 asked board members if they were comfortable with the financial position of the Park District of La Grange. Three out of the five board members said they were not comfortable with it, suggesting that there is concern with it. Further discussion indicated a high level of concern because the resources spent to defend the Gordon Park lawsuit have prevented the District from making needed capital improvements.

Considering the responses to question 8, which asked if the individual board members would support a referendum for improvement of the parks, three out of five said they would support a referendum. The findings suggest a lack of consensus on the part of the Board either in favor of or opposing a referendum.

Question 9 asked if the board members thought the Park District was a forward thinking agency. Four out of five said they did. Question 10 asked if the board members felt they had adequate policies and procedures in place to operate the agency. Four out of five said they did.

Question 11 asked if they thought residents were leaving the Park District and going elsewhere for services. There was a unanimous view that the residents were going elsewhere for at least some of their recreation needs.

Question 12 revealed that four of five board members found their role on the board to be rewarding. The fifth member felt it was frustrating because of the Gordon Park lawsuit distraction.

Question 13 asked about individual board member awareness of what other communities were doing in terms of parks and recreation. Three out of five said they were and two said they were not.

Safety in the parks was raised in question 14. Four of five board members said they believed the parks were safe but one board member said that safety was a concern in at least one park.

Finally, in question 16, the Board was asked what they would like to see come out of this comprehensive plan. One board member said a narrower set of goals and better tracking system with benchmarking. Another board member said an outside perspective would be helpful to determine what priorities ought to be. Still another said a clear direction so the Executive Director can align the staff to take forward thinking action. One board member simply said improvements, and one board member didn't respond to the question.

It is apparent that the Board is generally supportive of how the District is operated and would like to see improvements whenever feasible. Each member had a different perspective on the weaknesses that need to be addressed.

Affiliate Group Meeting

The Park District works with a number of affiliate organizations that provide programming on Park District property, including but not limited to the La Grange Little League, AYSO soccer, Babe Ruth baseball, Kiwanis and SEASPAR. Key affiliates were invited to meet and discuss their relationship with the Park District of La Grange, their needs and their wishes for the future.

The following items were discussed and highlight the main topics discussed:

La Grange Little League started in 1956. They enjoy a good working relationship with the Park District. They use a number of fields for baseball and girls softball including Sedgwick south fields A & B, Waiola south field and the temporary north field, two fields at Gordon Park, two fields at Gilbert Park and the Spring Avenue fields.

Little League paid to put lights in at Sedgwick south fields A & B, and built a concession building between the two fields. They also worked with the Park District to move the fields at Gilbert Park away from the street for safety reasons. Little League now hosts tournaments at Sedgwick Park which are very successful. The program has grown from 650 kids in 2005 to 889 in 2010. There are 75 teams and 11 leagues. There are 7 levels of All-Star teams, some of which have won state championships. There is a "Challenger Program" for athletes with special needs. The goal is to keep kids in the program and interested in baseball. This is a community based program, not a traveling type program. They are concerned about losing field space at Gordon Park when the renovation is done. They would like to develop a volunteer base to help out in the parks, like "Pals for Parks". The season starts in mid-April and plays until the end of June, then All-Stars play in July and championships take place in August. Then fall ball runs from mid-September until October with about 180 kids participating.

AYSO (American Youth Soccer Organization) started in 1962. Today there are 244 teams with 3,000 kids in the U5 through U19 age divisions. There is also a VIP program for athletes with special needs, and an adult group that plays. AYSO uses a number of parks in La Grange and surrounding suburbs. They do their best to alternate parks to let the fields rest. Every soccer goal in La Grange has been purchased by AYSO. They stripe all the fields each week.

AYSO uses the following fields each week:

- 9 small fields in Sedgwick Park with over 400 kids
- Gilbert Park – U8/U9
- 7th Avenue School

- Waiola Park – U7/U8 field
- Spring Avenue School – not used a lot
- Denning Park – would love a full size field but need more parking
- Gordon Park – but they need a full size field for adults
- If you put lights up at Gordon Park, you will need a synthetic field and then the park would rock

Babe Ruth manages a baseball program for about 350 older kids. They use Sedgwick Park only. The Babe Ruth field is the size of a full major league field. When they started there were 14 teams and now there are 24 teams with 8 teams in each of the following age brackets: age 13, ages 14 & 15, ages 16 through 18. Babe Ruth manages the maintenance on their fields. The two fields are managed by a work force of about 5 men. They typically spend \$18,000 annually on field maintenance. The fields have good drainage and one field is lighted. They hope that the Park District does not attempt to over schedule the fields with traveling leagues, because most of the kids are from out of town, and in their opinion the revenue generated to the Park District is not worth all the extra work done by Babe Ruth to keep the fields in good condition. Overall, the relationship with the Park District is good, and La Grange Babe Ruth feels fortunate to have 2 fields and 24 teams because most towns have only 1 team.

Kiwanis' mission is to change the world, one child and one community at a time. They hold their weekly meetings at the Rec Center, and the District stores supplies for Kiwanis. They have about 50 members. The Park District helps Kiwanis every year by lending them picnic tables for their events. Kiwanis helps the Park District by making a donation to the Easter Egg Hunt. Kiwanis have their own park on La Grange Road. Overall there is a mutually good working relationship with the Park District.

SEASPAR (*Southeast Association for Special Parks and Recreation*) serves individuals with disabilities ages 3 and older. Occasionally services are provided for children under 3. There are 11 member agencies that make up the Association, which has been around for 34 years. La Grange is a high demand area for SEASPAR mainly because LADSE (La Grange Area Department of Special Education) is so good that it attracts many families who have children with disabilities to La Grange, which creates a higher demand for special recreation services.

SEASPAR needs dedicated program space for social clubs and sports; they currently have a social club and basketball team meeting at the Rec Center. They have an adult day program for individuals 18-35 years of age at the Darien Park District. An additional site is needed for those over 18 years of age; approximately 4,500 sq. ft. in La Grange would be ideal.

Public Meetings

A public meeting was held on July 21, 2010. The following notes are a summary of that meeting.

Residents immediately wanted to discuss the possibility of a community pool, asking whether this planning effort was considering a pool, and giving feedback as to the impact of the location of a possible pool.

Then the discussion moved to Waiola Park and the temporary baseball field that was installed in this small park in the last year. The new field is being used to accommodate a growth in Little

League and the loss of the Spring Avenue field during construction. Residents discussed problems with parking on the street, the feeling that it had become a mini-sports park, and the feeling that they would like for the park to be used more as open/passive recreation space as it was in the past. They asked the Park District to put sports fields at parks with better parking and existing sports use.

Residents asked for the Park District to focus on programs. They expressed a need for more adult programming, and asked the District to seek community involvement and feedback on the programming and incorporate this feedback into programming plans.

The residents asked the Park District to increase the amount of information given to the public regarding what is going on in the Park District, and involve residents in more decision making.

Neighbors surrounding Denning Park also asked for increased communication from the Park District.



5 Goals & Objectives

Goals & Objectives

The Park District of La Grange operates pursuant to its stated mission “To provide quality recreation programs, facilities and parks that enhance the health, happiness and quality of life of Park District residents.” Everything we do, and every decision made, is made in light of our mission. To achieve our mission, we have outlined four distinct goals which flow from that mission, and annually define objectives which are measurable, achievable steps in meeting those goals. Our goals, which are reviewed annually, are defined as:

1. Provide clean, safe and attractive parks and facilities
2. Provide programs that improve the health and quality of life in our community
3. Maximize benefits to taxpayers for the funds we receive
4. Provide a work environment which maximizes the productivity and enthusiasm of our professional staff

The MBO Process

Over the last 3 years the Board and staff have developed, defined, and redefined a Management by Objective (MBO) process for the District. This process is designed to inspire new ideas and projects which help us meet our goals, and give us a process for clarifying, prioritizing, and determining which objectives will be funded in the coming year.

Key activities of the MBO process are:

1. Generating and collecting potential objectives
2. Screening/filtering potential objectives
3. Defining, categorizing and quantifying qualified objectives
4. Prioritizing qualified objectives
5. Reporting on objective status

Gathering Ideas

This is done at the staff level with input from the Board, community, and outside organizations. Staff should determine the best way to keep a running list of ideas to be considered each year.

Filtering the Ideas

This is done at a staff level first, and then at a Board level.

- Does the objective meet one or more of our goals? If not, revise or remove. If so, define which goal it meets.
- Is the objective realistic? If yes, continue. If not, revise or take off list.
- Is it possible to complete the objective (as stated) in the next 12 months? If yes, continue. If not, revise, provide alternate completion date or take off list.
- Are there actionable steps defined that are understandable by the staff and Board? If yes, continue. If not, revise or take off list.



Fig. 58



Categorizing and Defining the Objective

Next, the process requires us to categorize and define the idea to determine whether it meets one of our goals, is achievable, affordable and how it is to be prioritized with other objectives. To do this we ask ourselves a series of questions:

1. Is the objective meant to improve a process for business as usual? (Improvement can include efficiency, reducing operational costs, improving customer service, etc.)
2. Is the objective required by law? If so, provide required completion date.
3. Is the objective required for safety compliance? Or intended to improve safety? If so, provide required completion date.
4. Is the objective needed to preserve capital assets of the PDLG? Determine whether or not if this is not done, will it cost more to do it next year, or will it negatively affect another capital asset in a significant way? (i.e. roof leak)
5. Is the objective needed to continue to offer programming at current levels?
6. Does completion of the objective cost money? If so, estimate how much. Categorize the expense as capital expense or operational expense. Does this objective require a pro-forma analysis to answer some of these categorization questions?
7. Is completion of the objective necessary to bring us up to industry benchmarks? Or best practices?
8. Does the objective move us forward toward meeting our 10-year strategic plan?
9. Will completion of this objective generate revenue in the short term? Mid-term? Long-term?
10. Is there an outside funding or other external deadline?
11. How do we measure progress or completion?

Prioritizing

Based on how each objective is defined, we then separate objectives into two groups, those which require funding and those which require more time than funding. Both time and money are considered valuable resources at the Park District. Then, the objectives which require funding are broken down into capital projects, operational projects exceeding \$2,000, and operational projects under \$2,000. To prioritize further, we look at several factors which the District deems important and rate each objective on a 0 to 5 scale.

1. Is there a legal requirement that this project be done? If required by law, objective moves to top priority.
2. Is this project required for safety reasons, or will it improve safety of participants or employees? If item presents a safety hazard, score as a 5 and move to the top of the priority list. Otherwise, to what degree will this improve safety?
3. Future capital expense: To what degree will this avoid greater capital expenses in the future?
4. Operational Costs: To what degree will this avoid significant operational costs?
5. Revenue: To what degree will this generate revenue?
6. Outside Funding: To what degree will this be funded by outside sources, agencies or ventures?
7. Internal Productivity: To what degree will this improve productivity for staff and/or volunteers?
8. Efficiency: To what degree will this improve efficiency of PDLG or community wide?
9. Usage: To what degree will this increase use of the Park District?

10. Industry Standard: To what degree will this improve compliance with industry standards or allow PDLG to offer services typically provided by most other park districts?
11. Public Opinion: To what degree will this enhance the public perception of the Park District?
12. Community: To what extent does this fill a need in the community?
13. Strategic Plan: To what extent does this help us achieve our 10-year strategic plan?

Thinking Strategically and Setting Long Term Goals

One of the most important benefits of the strategic planning process results from taking the time and effort to look beyond short term needs and objectives to think about where you might want to be in 5 to 10 years, and think globally about what is happening in the world, the community, and how the Park District can continue to play an important role in the community consistent with our Mission.

The Park District took a slightly different tact in organizing its long term strategic thinking by breaking the process down into three main categories: Parks and Facilities, Programs and Administration.

Background: Where We Are Today

The key to a successful Park District starts with fully developed and well maintained parks and facilities. There should be sufficient park space which is developed with a mixture of active and passive uses including but not limited to playgrounds, developed field space, walking paths and open and contemplatory space. Because La Grange was incorporated over 130 years ago, it is fully developed, land-locked, and does not have open land for purchase or annexation. Consequently, the Park District seeks to maintain its parks to their highest and best use, and constantly looks at acquiring additional land, selling land which is no longer useful with the hope of acquiring land which would be more beneficial in the park system, or trading land.

One example of a successful land swap included the swap with the Village of La Grange for land at the south end of Gordon Park to be used for a water tower, in exchange for land next to Elm Park which resulted in a larger more useful Elm Park.

Another proposed sale of land involved three parcels of land in Gordon Park, two of which the Park District attempted to sell to a developer (2.82 acres) to complete a multi-use project on the corner of La Grange Road and Ogden Avenue on the former YMCA site. The sale of land would have permitted the Park District to redevelop Gordon Park and increase capital reserves for potential future purchases of more useful park land. Tied to the sale was a proposed swap of land with the Village of La Grange, which would give the Village vehicular access to the proposed development in exchange for an equal amount of land to be incorporated into Gordon Park.

The proposed transaction was halted by a small group of residents (18) who sued the Park District to stop the sale. During the course of litigation, the economy took a negative turn in 2009, and after fighting for over 2 years to keep the transaction viable, the developer eventually pulled out of the deal, leaving the prominent corner in La Grange vacant and

fallow for the foreseeable future. Furthermore, the development of Gordon Park is also now in jeopardy.

One issue in the lawsuit challenged the constitutionality of the law permitting Illinois park districts to sell land. Because this issue affected the ability of the Park District of La Grange to conduct business as it relates to the sale or swap of land, as well as the ability of all Illinois park districts to do the same, the District felt compelled to fully litigate the issue in order to protect this important right and duty for park districts.

The greater La Grange community suffered many negative effects of the protracted litigation. In addition to the undeveloped property left at the corner of La Grange Road and Ogden and the lack of potential tax revenues that would have been generated through the development, the YMCA was denied the proceeds of the sale which would have gone to build a new fitness center. The YMCA is currently operating out of a small converted garage building in La Grange Park, but the space is smaller than the space previously occupied in the former YMCA building. The survey results contained in Section 4 indicate a need and desire for a community fitness center.

Yet the Park District of La Grange has made significant strides since our last Master Plan. The Open Space Master Plan adopted June 20, 2000 focused mainly on acquiring open space because the Recreation Center was still on the wish list at this time. Since that date, a referendum was passed to purchase land and renovate the Recreation Center which now houses the vast majority of programming for the District.

The Recreation Center was built on time and under budget, and since it's opening in 2007, each year it has outperformed all of the District's projections, contributing excess operating income which is used to help fund capital projects and improvements.

The Board of Commissioners and staff are cognizant of the La Grange taxpayers' concerns about increased taxes. Our residents, who cover a wide range of socioeconomic levels, demand quality parks, programs and facilities. Yet a large portion of our population is opposed to any new or increased taxes. Consequently, the Board and staff make every effort to operate the District efficiently, giving taxpayers the most for their tax dollars.

La Grange is a relatively small village, surrounded by other small villages. It would be inefficient for each corresponding park district to duplicate the same facilities and services exclusively for the benefit of its own residents. The Park District of La Grange has worked hard to develop relationships with leaders from the surrounding park districts and governments, as well as affiliate organizations, so that we might all cooperate and share resources for the benefit of our residents and the surrounding communities.

Moving Forward: Where We Want to Be

Long Term Park and Facility Goals

1. Maintain Recreation Center and other facilities in the best possible condition
 - Keep Recreation Center in “like new” condition, painting as necessary, refinishing floor annually
 - Maintain a capital replacement plan for roofs, HVAC, fixtures, etc. and provide reasonable capital reserves for funding these replacements

2. Fitness Center: Perform a feasibility study for a fitness center within the Recreation Center
 - Obtain competitive market data
 - Prepare drawings and plans for build out of unused area north of the White Sox area
 - Prepare a pro-forma of the build out costs and the costs to operate a fitness center
 - Develop information needed to apply for grants that may become available to help offset capital costs

3. Upgrade each of our ten parks over the next ten years
 - Master plans have been completed for each of the larger and older parks
 - Seek grants whenever possible to help fund upgrades in the parks
 - Perform a spring and fall walk-through of each parks space with Executive Director, Supt. of Facilities, Park Foreman and a member from the Board of Commissioners to determine necessary upgrades and capital improvements
 - Engage Boy Scouts and other volunteer groups to help with smaller projects in the parks
 - Institute a tree donation program
 - Engage the public in a clear and transparent planning process

4. Complete build out of Recreation Center into revenue generating operations. Would include fitness center and additional program rooms if resources are available.

5. Investigate the possibility of a community pool and/or water park in next 10 years.

Park & Facility Improvement Plan

The Park District of La Grange was established in 1929. It was a small District at its inception and it acquired land and amenities as it grew. These amenities include parks, buildings, equipment, vehicles, and much more. As the Park District continues to expand there is a continuous need for improvements; this is not limited to replacement, repairing, and improving. A five year and ten year plan has been developed for each site and amenity.

Parks

1. Community Center Park

5 Year Plan

- Patch, seal, color, & stripe basketball courts
- Replacement of fencing around play area
- Replace drinking fountains

- Replacement of main entrance doors(north)
- Replacement of chairs

10 Year Plan

- Replace playground & surface
- Replacement of sidewalk on east side of building & park
- Replace activity building flooring
- Replace activity building interior doors
- Replace activity building roof

2. **Denning Park**

5 Year Plan

- The Park District has applied for a local Township grant to address drainage problems, increase & add additional pathways, accessibility, new playground & surface, new shelter, and parking lot work
- Replace activity building exterior doors
- Replace roof on the activity building (asphalt shingles)
- Add a community garden

10 Year Plan

- Activity building bathroom renovation
- Replace HVAC units

3. **Elm Park**

5 Year Plan

- Remodel & improve the Nadine Troy Memorial Garden
- Improve turf conditions on the sled hill
- Patch, seal, color, & stripe basketball shoot-around

10 Year Plan

- Replace playground & surface
- Replace basketball standards
- Replace drinking fountains

4. **Gilbert Park**

5 Year Plan

- Add a second ice rink
- Replace walking path around the park
- Patch, seal, color, & stripe basketball shoot-around
- Remove & replace parking lot & stripe
- Exterior doors replacement
- Replace HVAC system
- Bathroom upgrades in activity building
- Replace preschool play equipment
- Replace roof on the activity building (asphalt shingles)

10 Year Plan

- Replace playground & surface
- Replace pathway & ice rink lights
- Patch, reseal, & stripe tennis courts
- Replace drinking fountains
- Regrade turf area where ice rinks are placed

5. **Gordon Park**

5 Year Plan

- Park scheduled for major improvements
 - New soccer/football field
 - Add concession stand/bathroom building
 - New pavilion
 - New playground & surface
 - Add splashpad
 - Add skate spots
 - Add butterfly garden
 - Add small amphitheatre
 - Add pathway with workout stations
 - Add parking on east side of park
 - Improve drainage
 - Improve two existing softball fields (fencing, bases, turf work, & benches)
 - Eliminate two softball fields, two basketball courts, & two tennis courts
- Demolition of old brick maintenance building

10 Year Plan

- Add additional pathways with workout stations
- Rotate current softball fields
- Replace athletic field lights

6. **Rotary Centennial Park**

5 Year Plan

- No changes

10 Year Plan

- New shelter
- New pathway

7. **Sedgwick Park**

5 Year Plan

- Replace playground & surface
- Replace volleyball standards & nets all three courts & add new sand to south court
- Replace light heads on volleyball ball courts
- Replace or move basketball courts
- Improve soccer field turf main north field & East Ave. field
- Replacement of main entrance doors (west)
- Replacement of drinking fountain by Little League, Prep, & Senior fields

- Bathroom upgrades in activity building
- Replace activity building HVAC units
- Replace flooring in the activity building
- Patch, reseal, & stripe parking lots

10 Year Plan

- Replace fence surrounding Prep & Senior Field
- Replace athletic field lights on Prep & Senior fields
- Renovate turf & field on Senior, Prep, & Little League Fields
- Residing of the Prep Field storage building
- Patch, reseal, & stripe tennis courts

8. **Spring Park**

5 Year Plan

- Replace Fence
- Fix/upgrade retaining wall

10 Year Plan

- Replacement of playground & surface
- Replacement of shelter
- Landscape improvements

9. **Stone Park**

5 Year Plan

- Patch, seal, color, & stripe basketball shoot around

10 Year Plan

- Replace playground & surface

10. **Waiola Park**

5 Year Plan

- Patch, seal, color, & stripe basketball court
- Replace playground & surface
- Restoration of T-ball field on southwest side of park

10 Year Plan

- Replace pathway around park
- Replace basketball standards
- Tuck point small storage building
- Replace drinking fountains

Facilities

Recreation Center

5 Year Plan

- Remodel banquet room (look into naming rights)
- Replace roof
- Replace old roof top unit (RTU) pre-existing units
- Patch, reseal, & stripe parking lot
- Paint murals on the walls in the playground
- Renovate social area (carpet & furniture)
- Expand speaker system into areas that do not currently have any speakers
- Install a golf simulator (area to be determined)
- Replace hanging heaters in maintenance area and parking garage
- New garbage & recycling receptacles throughout building inside & outside
- Investigate renovation of kitchen
- Replace HVAC for foreman's office
- Replace hanging heaters in maintenance area and parking garage
- Apply for a grant for a fitness center in the recreation center

10 Year Plan

- Remove & replace parking lot & stripe
- Development of southwest storage area
- Replace copier
- Replace flooring in front office area
- Develop storage area between recreation center and maintenance department into a fitness center

Vehicles

5 Year Plan

- Replace recreation department 1995 Ford passenger van with an ADA 14 passenger bus
- Replace 1996 Ford F-150 pick-up with a F-250 with a snow plow
- Replace 2005 Ford Explorer
- Replace 1998 Ford Econoline Maintenance Van
- Replace 1995 Ford F-150 pick-up
- Replace 1998 Ford F-150 pick-up

10 Year Plan

- Replace grey 24' landscape trailer
- Replace large Ford dump truck
- Replace small Ford dump truck
- Replace 1998 Ford F-250 pick-up

Equipment

5 Year Plan

- Replace John Deere riding mower cabbed (2)
- Replace John Deere riding mower
- Replace Smithco diesel
- Replace Smithco gas
- Replace Electric Generator
- Replace two way radio system

10 Year Plan

- Replace gas welder

Long Term Administrative Goals

1. Hold annual Board retreats for the purpose of establishing annual MBO's which inform the operating budget and the capital budget.
2. Create and implement an MBO reporting process which provides quarterly updates on the progress of the MBO's.
3. Hold annual meetings to discuss the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.
4. Revise the park board meeting process, permitting a second opportunity for public comments and questions.
5. Invite staff to participate at board meetings on a regular basis.
6. Revise the organizational structure which clarifies lines or reporting.
7. Compare the organizational structure of other park districts to PDLG. Consider if personnel revisions or salary adjustments are warranted.
8. Revise personnel policy manual to update changes in the law.
9. Ensure compliance with Records Retention and Destruction Policy, destroying all outdated documents in compliance with state law.
10. Continue to improve upon relationships with affiliate organizations for the cooperative sharing of resources, and potential strategic alliances.
11. Aim to reduce the percentage of the District's revenues that are attributable to real estate taxes to 65% in the next 10 years.
12. Achieve Distinguished Agency Award within the next 10 years.
13. Make long term commitment to help the environment by reducing our paper use throughout the District.

14. Restructure the recreation fund, creating department categories that provide greater accountability on the part of department heads.
15. Evaluate the fee structure of the recreational activities offered by the Park District and develop a general philosophy of profitability.
 - Direct the Supt. of Finance to provide a program analysis of general program profitability.
 - Direct the Supt. of Recreation to review the analysis and present the Executive Director with recommendations about which programs should sustain fee increases or the adjustments in expenditures that should be made to provide the opportunity for each program category to be self-sustaining.
 - Provide the park board with monthly financial reports which clearly identify the self-sustainability of each program category.
 - Based on the self-sustainability of the recreation programs being offered, develop a board policy about which percentages of administrative, maintenance and support costs should be covered by each program category. A 60/40 split between tax revenue and program fees should be a target to be obtained to the extent that we are able to add additional revenue generators, such as a fitness center.
16. The District should implement a 5 year capital improvement plan to the best of its abilities.
 - Advance the capital improvement plan by developing structured review meetings, discussing the conceptual site plans for each park and associated improvements.
 - Continue to review the CIP and move projects up or down based on continued resident feedback and park board/staff interaction.
 - Develop grant applications where possible to assist in offsetting capital costs.
 - Finalize master plans with opportunity for public viewing and potential timelines.
 - Evaluate life span of park elements, issues/concerns from the public, etc.

Recreation Program Goals & Objectives

The ability to program effective course offerings while providing a variety of options is a challenge for every recreation agency. The need to base program decisions on the needs of the community is paramount for improvement in class offerings. Developing new and creative classes is commended but the high cancellation rate and classes running at less than capacity are issues that need to be addressed. Follow-up research is needed to define the obstacles to these classes and to maximize the Park District's core recreation offerings. The immediate short term goal is to re-visit financial and performance based criteria to bolster the success of the recreation department. A focus on family based and senior programming might be a good test to see what level of interest is generated.

1. Strive to become our residents primary source of fitness and programming in the next 5 years:
 - Increase the number of programs for families that are more focused on health and wellness including exercise, environmental education, computer camps and cultural day trips.
 - Experiment by changing class times and days to see if participation increases.
 - Develop a 12 month long special event program with an activity for each month of the year. Establish a strong corporate sponsorship program as a significant revenue stream to generate income for these programs.

2. Develop improved decision making for recreation programming income and attendance potential:
 - Review profit/loss statement as well as attendance numbers for each recreation program at the end of each session, in light of a 3 to 5 year history to set programming direction.
 - Establish a competitive pricing strategy which tracks pricing policies for both internal use and external competitors.
 - Make decisions as to the short term direction on programs and take action to stop unsuccessful endeavors where and when possible.
3. Develop performance standards for each recreation course grouping:
 - Set specific performance standards and develop matrix indicators to gauge outcomes.
 - Develop continuous market based research as to class offerings to identify strengths and weaknesses and set criteria to correct imbalanced performance.
4. Coordinate recreation programming with capital plan development for improved use of limited parks and facilities:
 - Develop a structured review of park and facility plans to discuss potential recreation needs for new and improved spaces for program activities.
5. Craft and/or update use agreements with affiliate groups on a yearly basis:
 - Appoint a board member to act as liaison between affiliate groups and District (working with Supt. of Facilities).
 - Hold yearly meetings with affiliate groups to coordinate schedules and understand groups' needs.
 - Develop agreements that are fair for all parties involved and enforce terms of the individual agreements.
6. Consider the development of a fitness center within the Recreation Center with plans for programs that could be supported with a new facility:
 - Utilize feedback from mail and telephone surveys created by this comprehensive plan as a basis for new programs and facilities.
 - Coordinate the development of plans for new fitness programs within the feasibility study done for facility planning.



6 Plan Implementation

Overview

In Chapter 1, this plan presented the rationale for planning, reviewed the District's previous planning efforts, identified the plan's purpose, as well as the goals of the planning process. In Chapter 2, the plan identified the demographics of the community, including its population characteristics and projections for growth. The history of the Park District of La Grange was also reviewed.

In Chapter 3, the Park District's administrative system was identified, its financial system considered, and its parks and recreation services presented. Chapter 4 presented extensive data findings from community telephone, mail, online, and email survey processes. Staff and Board visioning results and comments from public meetings were also presented.

Utilizing the background information from Chapters 1-4, which considered the position the Park District of La Grange is in and where the public would like to see the District go, in Chapter 5, administrative, park, facility, and recreation goals were presented. These goals and objectives represent the heart and soul of this plan, its purpose and its vision.

This chapter presents recommendations for implementing the goals and objectives presented in Chapter 5.

Chapter 6 will begin with some overall performance strategies, focusing on the timing of implementing the administrative goals. It will be followed with the financial strategies that can be used to achieve its other goals, including changes in thinking that the District should employ in handling its financial resources.

This section of the plan will then focus on marketing strategies, a capital improvement plan, and a plan of action for achieving those strategies, including the acquisition of grant monies.

As determined earlier in this plan, the Park District of La Grange is in a solid financial position but legal expenses have reduced fund balances. These balances are considered solid but not flush with extra money to spend. The District has sufficient cash to cover its portion, as well as to float the \$400,000, before reimbursement from the OSLAD program; however, this would severely limit the District from making additional capital improvements, and reduce the capital reserve balance to an extremely low level.

The estimated budget submitted for the OSLAD grant elements that need to be completed at Gordon Park by the end of 2012 include:

Improvements	Estimated Cost	
Splash pad	\$255,000.00	
Skate spot	\$ 50,000.00	
10' multi-use path	\$ 75,000.00	
Football field with sod	\$ 85,000.00	
Children's butterfly garden	\$ 10,000.00	
Community performance area with arbor	\$ 75,000.00	
Pathway lighting	\$ 55,000.00	
Native landscaping & prairie seeding	\$ 55,000.00	
Site furnishings	\$ 30,000.00	
Pre-fab restroom building	\$ 65,000.00	
Native habitat educational panels	\$ 7,500.00	
Fitness stations	\$ 25,000.00	
A/E design fees	\$ 10,000.00	
CPA report costs	\$ 500.00	
Reimbursed by OSLAD	\$400,000.00	Figure 59

It is recommended that the District reduce costs on the project as much as possible; consider building the project in phases, and complete the elements included in the OSLAD grant request. To not complete the items on that list places the Park District of La Grange in a position of defaulting on its commitment, with the possibility that it will not receive OSLAD funding in the foreseeable future.

On the other hand, it is not advisable for the PDLG to overextend itself with regard to Gordon Park development. A fiscally conservative strategy would be to wait until the sale of the 2.82 acres is completed and the money from the sale received, or request an extension on its commitment on the grant until the District has sufficient reserves to complete the project with enough left over for emergencies and other projects. Assuming the litigation is successful, and the District is able to sell the 2.82 acres, it should proceed with the sale, and use the proceeds to fund the remaining projects listed as goals in this plan to the extent possible.

Administrative Strategies

It is recommended that the Park District of La Grange amend its board policies in several ways:

Personnel

The organization chart should be updated to clarify the lines of authority, and job descriptions and evaluation forms should be revised to more accurately fit the actual job being performed. Salaries should be compared to market to make sure that full-time staff is being compensated fairly. The recommendation of Design Perspectives is that the job descriptions and evaluation forms be accomplished during the first year. That would allow the policy manual and organizational chart to be accomplished in the second year and the evaluation of pay for salaried positions to be achieved in the third year accordingly.

Second, a number of administrative goals will be accomplished and leadership improved by implementing initiatives for board retreats, updating the MBO process, revising the board meeting process, and inviting staff to meetings.

The next administrative goal was that the Park District evaluate its fee structure for recreational activities, developing a general philosophy of profitability. The process would begin with the financial manager providing an analysis of recreation program profitability. Then, the recreation superintendent needs to meet with the executive director and establish parameters for the financial self-sustainability of all recreation programs. With the provision of monthly reports to the Board and staff that clearly identify the level to which recreation programs are sustainable, the Board would set policy goals for program profitability.

Having achieved sustainability of recreation services allows the Park District of La Grange to proceed to its third goal, of ultimately expanding the Recreation Center. That process begins by conducting a feasibility study to drill deeper into the research findings from this plan. A feasibility study would consider competing services from other providers and the levels of probability that an expanded Recreation Center would be successful.

Marketing Strategies

All quality organizations understand the power of self-promotion. The true essence of marketing revolves around a steady and consistent message. In many government sectors, marketing is an afterthought with little or no effort placed in this area. The Park District evaluates its branding every decade and considers the roll out of a new logo, fresh marketing slogan and an upbeat campaign in getting the message out to the community. The five types of marketing that the Park District should focus on are: public relations, publicity, advertising, personal selling and sales promotion. The following are a few strategic methods to be evaluated as to their merit and usefulness in the daily operations of staff.

- Contact the Village of La Grange about distributing PDLG material through various media outlets that the Village can access for little or no cost.
- Frequent press releases sent out to local media outlets covering the Park District, including special events and program offerings.
- Develop a PDLG video for promotional purposes to be shown on local access cable.

- Develop a constant contact media campaign with a focus on pass holders and regular program patrons.
- A special emphasis should be on the retention of program users. Continued use of the parks, programs and facilities only lead to better outcomes.
- Target special months to encourage program sales. Two key months would be May and October.
- Invest in paid advertising when appropriate.
- Work with local businesses and affiliate organizations to spread news about Park District offerings to their customer base.

These ideas are just a start to the potential of a smart, common sense, budget friendly marketing plan that is always in motion.

Park & Facility Improvement Plan

The Park District of La Grange has developed a 5 year and 10 year plan for each park and facility. Each year during the MBO process, the Board and staff should consider the 5 year plan and rate the projects for prioritization for the coming year.

The 5 year plan includes:

Community Center Park & Building

- Patch, seal, color, & stripe basketball courts
- Replacement of fencing around play area
- Replace drinking fountains
- Replacement of main entrance doors (north)
- Replacement of chairs

Denning Park & Building

- The Park District has applied for a local Township grant to address drainage problems, increase & add additional pathways, accessibility, new playground & surface, new shelter, and parking lot work
- Replace activity building exterior doors
- Replace roof on the activity building (asphalt shingles)
- Add a community garden

Elm Park

- Remodel & improve the Nadine Troy Memorial Garden
- Improve turf conditions on the sled hill
- Patch, seal, color, & stripe basketball shoot around

Gilbert Park & Building

- Add a second ice rink
- Replace walking path around the park
- Patch, seal, color, & stripe basketball shoot around
- Remove & replace parking lot & stripe
- Exterior doors replacement

- Replace HVAC system
- Bathroom upgrades in activity building
- Update preschool play equipment
- Replace roof on the activity building (asphalt shingles)

Gordon Park & Building

- Park scheduled for major improvements
 - New soccer/football field
 - Add concession stand/bathroom building
 - New pavilion
 - New playground & surface
 - Add splashpad
 - Add skate spots
 - Add butterfly garden
 - Add small amphitheatre
 - Add pathway with workout stations
 - Add parking on east side of park
 - Improve drainage
 - Improve two existing softball fields(fencing, bases, turf work, & benches)
 - Eliminate two softball fields, two basketball courts, & two tennis courts
- Demolition of old brick maintenance building

Rotary Centennial Park

- No changes

Sedgwick Park & Building

- Replace playground & surface
- Replace volleyball standards & nets all three courts & add new sand to south court
- Replace light heads on volleyball ball courts
- Replace or move basketball courts
- Improve soccer field turf main north field & East Ave. field
- Replacement of main entrance doors (west)
- Replacement of drinking fountain by Little League, Prep, & Senior fields
- Bathroom upgrades in activity building
- Replace activity building HVAC units
- Replace flooring in the activity building
- Patch, reseal, & stripe parking lots

Spring Park

- Replace fence
- Fix/upgrade retaining wall

Stone Park

- Patch, seal, color, & stripe basketball shoot around

Waiola Park

- Patch, seal, color, & stripe basketball court
- Replace playground & surface
- Restoration of T-ball field on southwest side of park

Recreation Center

- Remodel banquet room (look into naming rights)
- Replace roof
- Replace old roof top units (RTU) pre-existing units
- Patch, reseal, & stripe parking lot
- Paint murals on the walls in the playground
- Renovate social area (carpet & furniture)
- Expand speaker system into areas that do not currently have any speakers
- Install a golf simulator (area to be determined)
- Replace hanging heaters in maintenance area and parking garage
- New garbage & recycling receptacles throughout building inside & outside
- Investigate renovation of kitchen
- Replace HVAC for foreman's office
- Replace hanging heaters in maintenance area and parking garage
- Apply for a grant for a fitness center in the recreation center

The 10 year plan includes:

Community Center Park & Building

- Replace playground & surface
- Replacement of sidewalk on east side of building & park
- Replace activity building flooring
- Replace activity building interior doors
- Replace activity building roof

Denning Park & Building

- Bathroom renovation activity building
- Replace HVAC units

Elm Park

- Replace playground & surface
- Replace basketball standards
- Replace drinking fountains

Gilbert Park & Building

- Replace playground & surface
- Replace pathway & ice rink lights
- Patch, reseal, & stripe tennis courts
- Replace drinking fountains
- Regrade turf area where ice rinks are placed

Gordon Park & Building

- Add additional pathways with workout stations
- Rotate current softball fields
- Replace athletic field lights

Rotary Centennial Park

- New shelter
- New pathway

Sedgwick Park

- Replace fence surrounding Prep & Senior Field
- Replace athletic field lights on Prep & Senior fields
- Renovate turf & field on Senior, Prep, & Little League Fields
- Residing of the Prep Field storage building
- Patch, reseal, & stripe tennis courts

Spring Park

- Replacement of playground & surface
- Replacement of shelter
- Landscape improvements

Stone Park

- Replace playground & surface

Waiola Park

- Replace pathway around park
- Replace basketball standards
- Tuck point small storage building
- Replace drinking fountains

Recreation Center

- Remove & Replace parking lot & stripe
- Development of southwest storage area
- Replace copier
- Replace flooring in front office area
- Develop storage area between recreation center and maintenance department into a fitness center

Grant Recommendations

In these challenging economic times, many governmental agencies are eagerly pursuing the ability to meet their expanding needs by seeking alternative revenue sources such as grants that are available to offset the high costs of facility improvements. Grants are becoming highly competitive and maintaining an updated park and recreation master plan is a strategic advantage.

Several projects included in this study would be potential candidates for grant dollars including a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), urban tree and forestry grants, as well as future OSLAD grants and PARC funding.

Also, corporate foundations and other non-profits such as friends of the parks groups could also be approached for potential investments into the park system and facilities.

The areas of growth for the Park District of La Grange are numerous. The Park District has an opportunity to advance the overall good work of the past into an exciting future with the wise investment in strategic thought based on solid planning. If the Park District implements the majority of the key goals and objectives, it will make significant strides towards becoming a stronger governmental unit. For this to happen, ownership of this master plan and the leadership to implement it must occur. This plan will serve to keep the organization moving forward.



May 25, 2010

Dear Resident,

Thank you for supporting the Park District of La Grange. It is a pleasure serving you and/or your family's leisure and recreation needs. The Park District of La Grange serves a three square mile area almost contiguous with the boundaries of the beautiful west suburban Village of La Grange. The park district maintains 67 acres of parkland at 11 locations, and offers over 1500 recreation programs annually for its more than 15,000 residents.

The district's numerous playgrounds, ball fields, tennis courts, basketball and volleyball courts, paths and Recreation Center provide recreational opportunities for all ages.

In order to plan for future programming, we are interested in knowing what recreational services your household utilizes, either with the Park District of La Grange or elsewhere. These services include park usage, recreation programs and recreation center usage. We are also interested in your opinion, related to additional program offerings and amenities, in order to meet your leisure and recreational needs.

Your willingness to complete the enclosed questionnaire will assist in planning future programs and facilities. The feedback received will help us understand ways in which we can better serve you. Please return completed survey in the enclosed stamped envelope by **June 14, 2010**.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call the Park District of La Grange at 708- 352-1762.

Thank you for your assistance. We hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Dean Bissias
Executive Director
Park District of La Grange

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



Park District of La Grange Survey

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Please consider all members of your household when completing this survey. The abbreviation PDLG is short for the Park District of La Grange.

Please return it in the enclosed stamped envelope by June 14, 2010. Please call us at 708-352-1762 if you have any questions.

1. Does your household reside within the Park District of La Grange (PDLG)?

Yes No I don't know

2. Are you or other members of your household familiar with the programs, services and facilities of the Park District of La Grange?

Yes No

3. How does your household hear about the Park District of La Grange? (Please check all that apply)

Newspaper articles PDLG program brochure PDLG website
 Word of mouth PDLG emails PDLG mailings
 Other

4. If your household is familiar with the district, how would you characterize the overall satisfaction with the programs and services that the Park District of La Grange offers?

Very satisfied Moderately satisfied Neutral Moderately dissatisfied Dissatisfied

5. How would your household characterize your overall satisfaction with the parks and facilities of the Park District of La Grange?

Very satisfied Moderately satisfied Neutral Moderately dissatisfied Dissatisfied

6. In which of the following indoor and outdoor recreational classes do you or other members of your household participate in **only at the Park District of La Grange**? (Please check all that apply)

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Walking/jogging | <input type="checkbox"/> | l. Volleyball | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Dog obedience | <input type="checkbox"/> | m. Art classes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Early childhood | <input type="checkbox"/> | n. Adult athletics | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Recreation center use | <input type="checkbox"/> | o. Martial arts | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. Gymnastics | <input type="checkbox"/> | p. After school program | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. Basketball | <input type="checkbox"/> | q. Dance class | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g. Continuing ED classes | <input type="checkbox"/> | r. Special events | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| h. Daycare program | <input type="checkbox"/> | s. Trips | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| i. Summer day camp | <input type="checkbox"/> | t. Other | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| j. Fitness classes | <input type="checkbox"/> | (please specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| k. Preschool programs | <input type="checkbox"/> | | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Please answer the questions on the reverse side of this survey

10. Which of the following capital projects would you or other members of your household be in favor of the Park District of La Grange completing in the future? (Please check all that apply)

- a. Expand the Recreation Center (536 East Avenue) _____
- b. Expand the Community Center (Lincoln & Washington) _____
- c. Renovate Denning Park _____
- d. Renovate Elm Park _____
- e. Renovate Gilbert Park _____
- f. Renovate Gordon Park _____
- g. Renovate Sedgwick Park _____
- h. Renovate Stone Park _____
- i. Renovate Rotary Centennial Park _____
- j. Renovate Spring Avenue Park _____
- k. Renovate Waiola Park _____
- l. Nothing _____

11. What amenities would you or your family like to see added to the parks?

- | | |
|---|--|
| _____ Fitness stations | _____ Hockey rink/skating facility |
| _____ Walking/biking paths | _____ Additional playground equipment |
| _____ Additional soccer fields with natural grass | _____ Additional softball/baseball fields with natural grass |
| _____ Decorative gazebos | _____ Softball/baseball fields with artificial turf |
| _____ Lighted athletic fields | _____ Soccer fields with artificial turf |
| _____ Skate park | _____ Football fields with artificial turf |
| _____ Outdoor swimming pool | _____ Additional flowerbeds/landscaping |
| _____ Fishing pond | _____ Lighted walking paths |
| _____ Driving range | _____ Splash pad |
| _____ Other (please specify) _____ | _____ Band shell |
| _____ | _____ Golf course |
| _____ | _____ Dog park |

12. Whether you or your family would use these new amenities or not, how much more would you or your household be willing to pay in property taxes for the new park amenities each month?

- _____ \$1-5 more per month _____ \$6-10 more per month _____ More than \$10 per month _____ No More _____ Don't Know

13. If the Park District were to expand the Recreation Center (at 536 East Avenue), which amenities should be included?

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| _____ Indoor aquatic center | _____ Outdoor aquatic center | _____ Fitness center |
| _____ Dance rooms | _____ Aerobic rooms | _____ Spinning rooms |
| _____ Quiet yoga room | _____ More gymnasiums | _____ Indoor soccer fields |
| _____ Indoor softball field | _____ Indoor ice rink | _____ Outdoor ice rinks |
| _____ Outdoor softball fields | _____ Walking/jogging track | _____ More classrooms |
| _____ More meeting rooms | _____ Gymnastics facility | _____ Teen center |
| _____ Climbing wall | _____ Performing arts center | _____ I don't really care |
| _____ Senior citizen center | _____ Daycare rooms | _____ Fitness center |
| _____ Other amenities not on this list (please specify) _____ | | |

Please answer the questions on the reverse side of this survey

14. How much more would you or your household be willing to pay in property taxes for these Recreation Center amenities each month?

_____ \$1-5 more _____ \$6-10 more _____ More than _____ No More _____ Don't Know
per month per month \$10 per month

15. What new recreation programs should the Park District of La Grange offer?

16. Please rate each of the following Park District of La Grange priorities in terms of how important it would be to you and your family.

	5-very important	4-Important	3-Neutral	2-Unimportant	1-Very Unimportant
a) Maintaining existing recreation services	5	4	3	2	1
b) Improving existing recreation services	5	4	3	2	1
c) Acquiring new park land	5	4	3	2	1
d) Improving existing parks/facilities	5	4	3	2	1
e) Building new facilities	5	4	3	2	1

17. How long has your household lived in the Park District of La Grange? _____ Years

18. Are you a female or male?

_____ Female _____ Male

19. Beginning with yourself, what are the ages of those in your household?

20. Please add any comments that you or your family members would like to share with the Park District of La Grange.

Thank you for your time and effort in completing this survey. We invite you to view the survey results on our website in July 2010 at www.pdlg.org.

What New Recreation Programs?

Co-op programs for ice skating that way we can pay a reasonable rate vs. non-residential rate @ Darien
Have events/activities for teens around the various parks of La Grange
Swim lessons
0-3 years old classes
2 or 3 "get away" trips
A recreational center on the west side of the tracks
A swimming pool
A swimming pool and swim lessons
Access is so bad we'd like a pedestrian bridge over the train tracks near Maple Ave
Add outdoor pool please
Add younger childhood programs Adding a fitness center
Adult/child yoga/ballet
Adult fitness, outdoor pool
Adult softball
Adult tennis USTA
Again keep spending down, private industry is cutting back
Anything water/swim related would be used and enjoyed by our family
Aquatic
Art
Ballroom dancing
Band shell summer concerts
Basketball courts safe environment
Better maintenance of park land grass, flowers, shrubs
Bicycle tours of the forest preserves
Cannot think of anything at this time
Centralized fitness
Co-op with Countryside Flagg Creek Golf course, outdoor adult fitness programs at all parks
Dance lessons
Day trips
Dodge ball, teen basketball
Dog park
Don't know
Early AM exercises, Wt lift aerobics, spin classes
Evening senior activities
Exercise
Expand the recreation center, add soccer fields
Expanded activities for preschool children whose caregivers need support
Expanded walking/jogging track perhaps upstairs from gymnasium
Facilities for tweens and teens
Fitness center and platform tennis
Fitness equipment, yoga, pilates, tai chi
Fitness equipment center
Fitness facility
Fitness level program for the middle aged that have not been active
Golf instruction
Good programs now.
Health and fitness room and programs and fitness center
Hockey league, lacrosse
Holistic health
I'm confident with what they have
I am more interested in a swimming pool vs. recreational programs

I believe the existing programs are more than adequate
 I really don't care what the PD does if it does not have these things (fitness center w/ pool)
 I would really like an outdoor pool and swimming lessons
 Ice skating, swimming
 Indoor/outdoor pool, volleyball courts
 Indoor pool
 Indoor swimming and aquatic activities especially for Sr. Citizens
 Interested in rubberized walking/jogging track
 It would be nice if East Ave Center had a fitness center
 Kids gym with instructor
 Lacrosse field/rugby field
 Local special needs programs
 More 3-5 yr old sports (ice skating, martial arts, basketball)
 More adult classes and recreational activities
 More adult ed classes
 More art classes More challenging yoga/spin/fitness 2-3 x/wk M-F
 More cooking and baking classes
 More intense fitness classes for adults
 More senior citizens programs
 More senior friendly programs and activities
 More teen activities and programs
 More teen related things
 N/A
 New indoor pool, fitness center, outdoor pool - see Oakbrook PD
 No clue
 No opinion
 No suggestions
 None-or only add if you subtract
 None
 None at this time
 None, great as stands now
 None with the current economic environment
 None, there are plenty already
 Not sure of all programs offered today so don't know
 Not sure what is offered now, the fees should not be changed, fees way too high
 Not sure what is offered presently
 Nothing
 Nothing I don't think it will cost you any extra to let people walk dogs on the path
 Offer lacrosse (not offered)
 Outdoor pool
 Outdoor pool
 Outdoor pool
 Outdoor pool important
 Outdoor pool please replicate the Wheaton PD Rice Water park outdoor pool
 Pet first aid was cancelled when I tried to attend
 Pilates classes
 Pilates, yoga, etc. make them available
 Please build an outdoor pool
 Please maintain existing physical plant. please deliver classes and programs being offered vs. cancelled
 Please offer adult programs and classes in the evenings
 Pool, safe place to ride bikes
 Pottery wheel class, indoor hockey league
 Programs and park playground equipment (swings, slides, etc.) for mentally challenged children

Programs for tweens, age 10-13
 Public supported swimming pool/expensive to operate
 Racquetball and inline hockey
 Recreation services for 13-20 year age group
 Seems great right now, i wouldn't change a thing
 Senior programs Senior citizen classes
 Senior fitness center e/u treadmills, aerobics
 Something for children ages 10-12
 Straightened out Gordon Park and continue 16" softball programs
 Stuff the Y had - body pump, weights more yoga, etc.
 Summer programs for toddlers/parents
 Swim lessons
 Swimming lessons (w/ pool), quality outdoor ice rink
 Swim lessons/team, ice skating/hockey
 Swim pool
 Swimming pool
 Swimming facility
 Swimming lessons
 Swimming lessons, splash pad
 Swimming pool
 Swimming pool
 Swimming, ice skating
 Swimming, ice skating/hockey, in-home music lessons
 Swimming/fitness center
 Swing, skating Swimming center
 Tai chi classes
 They offer enough
 TLC - to parks
 Unsure
 Use of fitness equipment
 Vegetable growing space
 Very pleased with the selection
 What they already have budget for
 Workout facility
 Would like existing programs re-evaluated upgrade for families busy schedule Would like to see artificial turf
 for all fields (baseball, softball, soccer)
 YMCA with pool
 Yoga classes are only offered through the Park District during the day
 You just need better instructors for children's dance and sports
 Young adult tennis Youth baseball
 Youth gymnastics/dance classes on Saturdays or early evening hours
 You name it

Final Comments

As a household with 2 fulltime working parents, we find there is a lack of available PDLG programs for our family in the evenings and on Saturday
Our facility should include a workout center - I pay Cardinal Fitness and would be willing to pay an increase in taxes
This has made me aware that I should pay more attention to LGPD facilities/programs
We really don't use the PDLG much anymore (sometimes 3-5 x a year). We use the tennis courts
A big priority for us is to see a swimming pool built and to have lessons offered. We also would like to see things kept as affordable as possible
A handicap garden by the dog park
A pool or splash pad would be wonderful
Access to the Rec center is difficult as we cross a set of track and much traffic at 47 and East ave. A fitness center at Denning Park would be the best
Add cement tables with checkboard/chess grids to play board games
Add more classes for adults
Add more flowers around town
Add senior fitness center, basketball court user should use the inner courts instead of the outer courts
Although I currently use the other facilities for biking, hiking and fitness, I recognize the importance of maintaining La Granges recreational services
As already mentioned, I feel there is a need for age appropriate facilities for older children
As our children are grown, we no longer participate in Park District programs like we did when they were young
As senior citizens we like to walk, bike and swim. Since the YMCA closed, my husband joined the Five Seasons
At our age we have little use for the amenities, however we live near Sedgwick Park and enjoy seeing how well it is used and maintained
At this time we are members of Life Time and use their facilities for all exercise programs and have not even considered using the PD for anything
Attempts to sell the Gordon Park land were badly handled. It's against our best interests to sell public land ever
Baseball fields in Sedgwick Park unfairly monopolize the land fields not in use
Basketball courts have been a problem for the residents adjacent to the courts
Be careful in spending new money, many individuals are facing tough times
Be sure to be wise in spending our tax dollars, make sure we are getting the most for our money
Because of breathing problems it is hard for me to participate
Better customer service and returning phone calls at front desk
Biggest concern is that there be better supervision and safety at East Ave Rec center building Buy the YMCA, rip it down, build a fitness center and outdoor pool
Check for IDs at field house
Children ages 10-12 found no programs offered
Consider Gordon Park a refuge, commuters, citizens, walk thru tree lines paths, a nature fountain, a place to site and unwind
Continued success to you
Current rec center waste of money, really poor plan, not user friendly
Daughter plays soccer
Denning - across the street from house looks awful
Denning park has standing water in it after rain that's where mosquitoes breed, it seems to be under utilized as the green area to the south is uneven
Do whatever you can to lower our property taxes

Doing great job, please add additional tennis courts, even better construct clay courts
Don't have such young people working with the very young children in the summer camp
Don't promise programs that never come to pass
Don't sink any more money into the East Ave Rec center. It's too expensive, does not have classes or facilities for youth/teens
Don't spend money, the PD and government needs to live within their means
Due to certain physical limitations, I can only utilize aquatic activities such as swimming
Due to our age we are not able to use many of these facilities
Early morning access would be a great option - swimming pool would be great
Educate weekend/evening staff members at rec center or have someone available who can answer questions related to programs
Everyone is older now but the whole family enjoyed La Grange parks
Everyone is reducing waste and being creative with existing funds in business and personal finance
Expand on recreation center, need a fitness center don't have one
Feels PD of La Grange needs to reorganize and improve existing programs before adding new ones
Generally pleased with overall facilities and services
Gilbert and Sedgwick tennis courts need full wind screens for use - tennis clubs using the courts could donate these or funds, if needed
Gilbert Park tear down YMCA, see it everywhere they use the park
Given the current state of the economy and its effects on PDLG families we oppose any growth or expansion of programs or facilities
Gordon Park developed as a beautiful city park Green space for seniors and adults with young children
Gordon Park issue is a huge concern for residents. Resolve it, move on and spend the money on needed PD programs
Grandchildren in La Grange
Graphic graffiti is a recurring problem at Elm Park, perhaps signs or other discouragement would help
Great job the past 5-10 years improving facilities
Great work, quantity and quality so please continue to pursue the Gordon Park acreage sale
Has it occurred that we might be going into a depression and that all forecast of growth may be off He pays highest taxes on street, no more taxes, user fees would work
Here's my email address so you can keep me aware of programs and changes
I'd like to see land purchased so the East of La Grange Rd had a recreational park just like all other areas of LG
I'd love to see a hockey/ice skating rink and an outdoor swimming pool
I'm against raising taxes for anything to do with the Park District of La Grange
I'm grateful for parks to take my grandchildren to use play equipment
I wouldn't think this would be a good time to ask residents if they're willing to pay more for taxes for LPD programs/facilities
I am disgusted with the handling of the property by the YMCA by the PD the incredible waste of money on legal fees
I am happy that you added the new rec building for the kids when mine were younger we were forced to go to WS or LGPK
I am pleased with our Park District - an outdoor or indoor pool and/or fitness center would be great
I am totally opposed to the sale of park land/green space for any reason. La Grange is totally built out with no available green space
I cannot understand why your programs are so much more than Burr Ridge and Hinsdale? I can only guess that you have become like our federal and state government
I currently use Oak Brook and Westmont for their swimming programs. I also use Pleasantdale/Burr Ridge for golf, party rentals and splash pad
I do not approve anything that will increase my real estate taxes. You should work within your budgets.

I do not feel you should charge a fee for residents to walk at the 536 East Avenue facility. I do not support any Park District tax increases

I don't consider Sedgwick Park safe at night. More police patrols needed in this park.

I don't think PDLG should be a realtor and sell off existing park land. The PDLG should preserve what we have

I enjoy the Day trips we need nice pool I'm going when the YMCA went

I feel that very little is offered to those without children. The yoga/pilates are not offered at easily maintained times and are too

I feel we need what the YMCA offered and the PD can help in missing program areas

I have just recently moved from La Grange - based on this fact, I don't believe my comments would be of value to you sorry

I have pulled my kids out of youth athletics and switched to the Y as the PDLG instructors aren't kid friendly and don't engage the kids.

I have seen a major improvement in programming over the last year or two. Love to see new trendy programs to entice people of all ages

I love in a condo near the tracks and I have a 4 room unit which I pay \$6000 a year

I love indoor park 536 East, great job for little ones

I love the La Grange Park District

I love the limestone running path at Sedgwick. By far the best amenity LGPD offers

Thank you for maintaining it

I think it would be really great to have a fenced in Dog Park and I would be willing to pay a small annual fee to maintain it.

I think the indoor play area for the children should be free. We don't use the facilities because of the extra charge.

I think you've already overspend on the East Avenue facility. How many programs do there need to be I think you are all doing a great job. The LGPD has come a long way since we moved here

I wish there were more trips - Trip to Navy Pier for architecture tour was great, we could do it again - anything downtown.

I worked for Oak Park PD for Sycamore - PDLG programs do not compare to PDOP and PDLG senior citizens programs are a joke

I would be interested to see the Park District expand fitness programming to compete with the YMCA I would like to see a swimming pool open to the public since the YMCA is gone. The La Grange field house is so exclusionary

I would like to see more efforts to reduce waste and to improve recycling - I would also like to see green space maximized and utilized

I would like to see more free track time, you offer discount to non-residents, how about a discount to residents

I would love to see more of the items I drive all the way to lifetime fitness to use

If it seems that there is a contradiction between an interest/desire for new services or facilities and no desire to add to my property taxes

In 9 years we have used 1 class of gymnastics we then took 4 years at Gemini gymnastics. The instructors have an educational background in early childhood

In the old YMCA I used the pool often and really wish there was a heated pool available in La Grange It is a shame to lose softball fields near YMCA

It is too dangerous to access the PDLG rec building by bike or on foot. This greatly limits our use of the facility.

It seems that you are wanting the community center to take the place of the YMCA. If so, I am vehemently against it. No real estate tax increase.

It would be nice for a community of this size to have a recreational swimming pool although I realize that land and cost are a huge hurdle.

It would be nice if the parks could enforce the times that they are closed so the older kids wouldn't hang out at them late at night.

It would have been nice to be able to sign our grand and great grandchildren into activities available during summer vacation

Keep in mind you're a Park District not a gym or a fitness center or a sports facility

Try to keep universal appeal with general specialties

Keep plugging

Keep YMCA land develop a great open park with good playing fields. Very limited NEW equipment

Kids are in off age group where nothing offered and some of the times are goofy for teenagers

Landscape the parks of Sedgwick and Gordon to make them more inviting for walking or relaxing in them

Last year you had youth baseball. It was offered in the summer and met at Sedgwick Park - it was a good program.

Less emphasis on baseball more on swimming

Living on west end of the village we really would like to use Denning park but are unfamiliar with activities available there

Location is poor, kids can't walk there so not as useful or valuable

Love to have swim pool and splash pad - better care needed for Spring park

Maintain attractive green and forested parks

Maintaining area parks - look neglected, small parks less is more.

Maintaining the wasting park facilities is a full time job

Make Sedgwick park a more family oriented park, less baseball field or at least let families use them when no baseball games are being played.

Make those front desk folks a little friendlier

Many communities have aquatic centers as part of their Park Districts that adds value to the community.

Many of the adjoining towns are drawing large crowds for outdoor concerts and movies. We should offer something for families of all ages.

Many times an outside provider is chosen because of the class day/time variety offered outside of the PD More activities for kids ages 6-9 not during school time

More seaspar classes offer in La Grange. Pool needed in La Grange.

My children are in high school now, too busy for LGPD - the basketball program 2 years ago was terrible, the new freshman class really lost.

My children are now in college and beyond but I do not think La Grange has offered programs that appeal

My children are past the age of using the Park facilities when they were young we used the parks often My daughter is in some toddler classes and the supervisor/teacher doesn't add anything to the class New 47th street crossing does not stop traffic suggest make it a flashing red light

Finish sidewalks along both sides of 47th to RR tracks

No more taxation

No new taxes cut costs for least popular to add any needs, great job

None - very satisfied with the PD and what La Grange has to offer

None - I can't think of anything

None - family new to the community

Not much programs for this age group

Now that our kids are older, we don't use parks or participate in PD services very often, so I don't know much about programs

Now that the kids are older we don't really use the facilities like we use to when they were younger

Oakbrook (near Butterfield) used oasis

Offer more classes at a variety of different times to fit more effectively with peoples individual schedules Our facilities are great and well kept, I love taking the family to the park. I just wished we would have a pool.

Our taxes are too high already - stop spending our money, cut back on taxes, don't raise them

Over 60, what does the Park District offer senior citizens, really not much, sunday morning classes, church time how about late.

Overall i am very happy with the Park District. The main thing I would like is an outdoor pool

Overall we've been very satisfied with PD programs over the years, keep up the good work

Overall we are very pleased but would love to see a reasonably price community pool.

Program fees should equal program costs including program brochure and administrative staff.

Park District needs to look at the PD residents needs instead of their own agenda

Parking is problem at Waiola for baseball being played there

Parking issue, trash after baseball games at Waiola Park

Parks are important for our community - do not sell off any park land.

Parks are very nice and well maintained, however in these difficult economic times, please don't spend money on renovations/additions

PDLG does a great job, LG has much to be proud of - acquiring additional park land would not only be great for families, their kids but would bring LG

PDLG runs great parks, keep up the maintenance and keep the green spaces open.

Pick up trash at outdoor ball fields at Sedgwick park

Please add a better crosswalk

Please add a swimming pool (preferably outdoor pool)

Please add daycare program for seniors (especially with special needs)

Please add senior activity programs and mild exercise class at midday times - noon to 3ish

Please add some teen programs

Please build a community pool for our town, we need a place like that in our town

Please change the day of week for Little Actor's club

Please do not close East ave facilities on Sundays in the summer, I work M-F and can only use the track on weekends

Please keep the outdoor handball courts, consider also adding indoor handball/racquetball courts.

We like ping pong.

Please keep the parks we have beautiful well maintained trimmed free of weeds befitting a growing vibrant best of the suburbs community

Please post on the website the cost in time and materials of this survey

Please put a light at corner

Please renovate Gordon and put some good baseball/softball fields

Political patronage concern in favor of corporate sponsorship to offset renovation

Q10: Whatever is needed to keep the community attractive

Q16: Seems to be counter of Park District policy when it is selling land, existing rec center is inconvenient to access

Reach agreement and finalize plan/budget for Gordon Park

Rec center not in a convenient place, taxes in LG too much now, do not want to pay more

Reopen use the warming house room in Gilbert Park in the winter with the ice rink

Reread above

Resident doesn't not like the rec center location at east ave

Resident feels the PD does a good job

Resident is very upset about Gordon Park project and hundreds of thousands of dollars wasted

Resident not interested indoor soccer, softball, football, etc as there is a large sports complex

Resident thinks the PDLG does a good job, parks are all great too

Resolve the Gordon Park situation immediately, gross waste of money

Retirees if the park board had not tried to sell Gordon Park land it would have had 400 to 600 thousand dollars that would have helped to maintain

Save us some money basically feels the PD is good Please add picnic pavilions to park areas

Sedgwick - take grandchildren

Sedgwick could be an outstanding park but it's good enough, we wish Gordon Park and Denning Park were utilized more

Seems like the PD of LG is only interested in expansion of facilities and services
Need to drop programs that serve a decrease # of people
Senior citizen/is in favor of any upgrades that will enhance the community
Services have been excellent people are very helpful and courteous, east ave is very good
Small parks have great value in the neighborhood
Sorry but we don't really use the Park District facilities
Spend a lot of time at Gilbert Park walking, would like lighted pathways for safety
Summer camp should be offered for 1 or 2 days a week, offer same classes at different day/time one day may not
Survey is too long
Swimming for wealthy kids only - what a shame, organized sports - plenty, unorganized play - limited, active seniors - limited
Take care of existing park issues with the old UMCA building
Takes a weekly walk thru park at corner, no raise in taxes
Taxes are high enough don't need them higher in this bad economy
Teens need a juicebar/hangout, dance club that is safe - that's a good idea if you can get them there
Thank you to the PD board and employees for a job well done
The classes are too expensive considering that we are already paying taxes to PDLG
The classes/programs I am involved with are expensive compared to joining the Y and getting those classes with that membership
The current building is a bad location, the camps are so poorly managed they are the worst I have ever seen
The current playing conditions at Gordon Park are dangerous and embarrassing
You need to have someone remove the lip
The district does a good job
The newer rec center did not seem to have any adult fitness when I inquired just basketball and walking The Park District needs to be mindful of the amount of taxes we already pay, those that can join pools The parks are not maintained properly - solicit bid to privatize maintenance, class are too expensive, location of rec center not convenient
The programs offered are great, however the times offered are geared toward stay at home parents The proposal to renovate Gordon Park with the developer funds and land sale was fantastic
The quality of the grass at the Soccer Field leaves a lot to be desired as a La Grange resident it's somewhat embarrassing
The rec center is comprehensive and not in need of additional services, denning park is an underutilized property
The recreation facility needs to be reconfigured to provide expanded pre-school activities and facilities
There is a fundamental disconnect with the Park District board and La Grange residents
Times are hard enough I do not wish to pay any more for services that I provided for my family out of my own pocket
Too many sporting fields, why no dog park, not open space for kites. Why can't my dog play with my children in the park I pay for?
Took her 6 year old to the tiny tots class - enjoyed
Trust with Park District, maintain parks better, they need some attention
Unusual craft classes, one friend just took a class on making pine needle baskets
Upgrade recreational programs overall, other Park Districts have better programs and facilities.
Upkeep in the parks is wonderful - the graffiti left by junior high students is promptly erased.
Upset should have update rec center and generate pool facilities years ago
Very happy programs have expanded after a few more choices
Very important to expand and upgrade programs and the community center at Lincoln and Washington Very pleased with PD of La Grange

Wasting money on Gordon Park project is awful, the money spent on this controversy could have been spent on renovating most of the parks in La Grange

We're happy to live in a community with well maintained parks, keep up the good work

We're only here 2 months annually, so our use of facilities would be minimal

We've used the Park District for many uses since the kids were in preschool

We have been please with the Park District

We always preferred the UMCA, the location and offerings

We are definitely not in favor of tax increase, the situation at the UMCA/Gordon is costing every taxpayer and we are getting nothing in return.

We are disappointed with the conditions of some of the parks, Gordon is the worst

We are moderately satisfied (#4 and 5) because of the lack of a pool

We are new residents to La Grange and are completely dismayed that there is no outdoor space to legally run a dog off leash

We are not heavy users of park facilities at this time but would love to see Gordon Park improvements

We are opposed to having the Park District build a swimming pool, cost to operate and maintain should not be a taxpayer burden

We can't stress enough how much La Grange needs a public pool, preferably outdoor and indoor but most importantly outdoor

We did participate in activities when my children were young, all of your day trips occur during the week and we still work

We do not understand why a fee is charged to residents, our taxes are very high to be charging fees to use facilities

We don't know what the PDLG offers so we could not answer the questions off our knowledge for the PDLG

We don't use the PD as much as in the past because kids are grown

We don't want to see any park land sold for commercial development

We have enjoyed the Adult Co-Rec sand volleyball league for years, however, we have seen the condition of the courts deteriorate

We have seven children who use or have used park facilities, plus grandchildren and great grandchildren We live in the neighborhood of Waiola Park, this beautiful green and open park has been turned into an organized sports park

We live next to Denning Park and would like to see the park maintained better. It's wet, the weeds are not pulled

We love the indoor playground at the rec center during the winter and the Wifi is great

We moved here when our youngest was 8 years old, he took advantage of a number of classes We often use Oak Brook PD services and facilities, would like to have similar options here

We rarely use Park District programs or facilities, past experience with summer youth athletic programs were negative and now kids are not interested.

We really need an outdoor pool

We used the parks for many years for our own children and we still use them often with grandchildren as well as for our own recreation

We would come to classes like spin or fitness if could just walking with or without a fee

We would love more family festivals

We would really appreciate a pool

Whatever happened to the UMCA, it's just an eyesore with a lot inside to offer

Whatever La Grange tries, they screw up the first time, just leave the parks they way they are, maintain them

When my children were home they participated in many activities.

When grandchildren visit we walk to the park and take advantage of the play area

When our daughters were younger we used the Park facilities more, we still enjoy taking walks and playing tennis but belong to the YMCA.
While my husband and I don't use the Park District facilities frequently anymore, we have in the past especially when raising our 3 children
especially when raising our 3 children
Why didn't you build on a property close to La Grange instead of Brookfield
Wish we had more park land in better neighborhoods, rec center is not a safe place for young children
Women who work at community center provide great customer service and are very friendly
Work with neighboring communities and do a combined facility, save everyone money
Would be interested in Day trips to various casinos and pay extra as a nonresident if offered
Would be nice if La Grange had more than once ice rink and that was maintained on a regular basis
Would like to see more senior event schedules listed in local papers
Would like to see the Gordon Park project resolved
Would love a community pool in La Grange
Would love to have a dog park, there are a lot of pet owners in La Grange, I myself have 3 dogs and would love a place for them to legally run and play
You should cash reserves to cover 6 months of staff salaries to cover economic meltdowns and Cook county property tax remittance delays
Young adult population is underserved, internet registration is a very nice service Youth need an outdoor swimming pool.

Park & Facility Improvement Plan

Parks

1. **Community Center Park**

5 Year Plan

- Patch, seal, color, & stripe basketball courts
- Replacement of fencing around play area
- Replace drinking fountains
- Replacement of Main entrance doors(north)
- Replacement of chairs

10 Year Plan

- Replace playground & surface
- Replacement of sidewalk on east side of building & park
- Replace activity building flooring
- Replace activity building interior doors
- Replace activity building roof

2. **Denning Park**

5 Year Plan

- The Park District has applied for a local Township grant to address drainage problems, increase & add additional pathways, accessibility, new playground & surface, new shelter, and parking lot work
- Replace activity building exterior doors
- Replace roof on the activity building(asphalt shingles)
- Add a community garden

10 Year Plan

- Bathroom renovation activity building
- Replace HVAC units

3. **Elm Park**

5 Year Plan

- Remodel & improve the Nadine Troy Memorial Garden
- Improve turf conditions on the sled hill
- Patch, seal, color, & stripe basketball shoot around

10 Year Plan

- Replace playground & surface
- Replace basketball standards
- Replace drinking fountains

4. **Gilbert Park**

5 Year Plan

- Add a second ice rink
- Replace walking path around the park
- Patch, seal, color, & stripe basketball shoot around
- Remove & Replace parking lot & stripe
- Exterior doors replacement
- Replace HVAC system
- Bathroom upgrades in activity building
- Update preschool play equipment
- Replace roof on the activity building (asphalt shingles)

10 Year Plan

- Replace playground & surface
- Replace pathway & ice rink lights
- Patch, reseal, & stripe tennis courts
- Replace drinking fountains
- Regrade turf area where ice rinks are placed

5. **Gordon Park**

5 Year Plan

- Park scheduled for major improvements
 - New soccer/football field
 - Add concession stand/bathroom building
 - New pavilion
 - New playground & surface
 - Add splashpad
 - Add skate spots
 - Add butterfly garden
 - Add small amphitheatre
 - Add pathway with workout stations
 - Add parking on east side of park
 - Improve drainage
 - Improve two existing softball fields(fencing, bases, turf work, & benches)
 - Eliminate two softball fields, two basketball courts, & two tennis courts
- Demolition of old brick maintenance building

10 Year Plan

- Add additional pathways with workout stations
- Rotate current softball fields
- Replace athletic field lights

6. Rotary Centennial Park

5 Year Plan

- No changes

10 Year Plan

- New shelter
- New pathway

7. Sedgwick Park

5 Year Plan

- Replace playground & surface
- Replace volleyball standards & nets all three courts & add new sand to south court
- Replace light heads on volleyball ball courts
- Replace or move basketball courts
- Improve soccer field turf main north field & East Ave. field
- Replacement of main entrance doors(west)
- Replacement of drinking fountain by Little League, Prep, & Senior fields
- Bathroom upgrades in activity building
- Replace activity building HVAC units
- Replace flooring in the activity building
- Patch, reseal, & stripe parking lots

10 Year Plan

- Replace fence surrounding Prep & Senior Field
- Replace athletic field lights on Prep & Senior fields
- Renovate turf & field on Senior, Prep, & Little League Fields
- Residing of the Prep Field storage building
- Patch, reseal, & stripe tennis courts

8. Spring Park

5 Year Plan

- Replace fence
- Fix/upgrade retaining wall

10 Year Plan

- Replacement of playground & surface
- Replacement of shelter
- Landscape improvements

9. Stone Park

5 Year Plan

- Patch, seal, color, & stripe basketball shoot around

10 Year Plan

- Replace playground & surface

10. Waiola Park

5 Year Plan

- Patch, seal, color, & stripe basketball court
- Replace playground & surface
- Restoration of T-ball field on southwest side of park

10 Year Plan

- Replace pathway around park
- Replace basketball standards
- Tuck point small storage building
- Replace drinking fountains

Facilities

Recreation Center

5 Year Plan

- Remodel banquet room (look into naming rights)
- Replace roof
- Replace old Roof Top Units(RTU) pre-existing units
- Patch, reseal, & stripe parking lot
- Paint murals on the walls in the playground
- Renovate social area(carpet & furniture)
- Expand speaker system into areas that do not currently have any speakers
- Install a golf simulator(area to be determined)
- Replace hanging heaters in maintenance area and parking garage
- New garbage & recycling receptacles throughout building inside & outside
- Investigate renovation of kitchen
- Replace HVAC for foreman's office
- Replace hanging heaters in maintenance area and parking garage
- Apply for a grant for a fitness center in the recreation center

10 Year Plan

- Remove & replace parking lot & stripe
- Development of southwest storage area
- Replace copier
- Replace flooring in front office area
- Develop storage area between recreation center and maintenance department into a fitness center



Park District of La Grange

PDLG Goals and “Management By Objectives (MBO)” Process



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PDLG MBO Process

Key activities for the MBO process are:

Generating and collecting potential objectives

- How are new objectives identified and collected?

Screening / Filtering potential objectives

- What criteria define an appropriate objective?

Defining, categorizing and quantifying qualified objectives

- What, specifically, will accomplishing the objective deliver (pro-forma's)? What steps are required to meet the objective? How will progress or success be measured?

Prioritizing qualified objectives

- Relative to other qualified objectives, what can and should be accomplished in a defined time period? Relative to the available funds, which should be pursued?

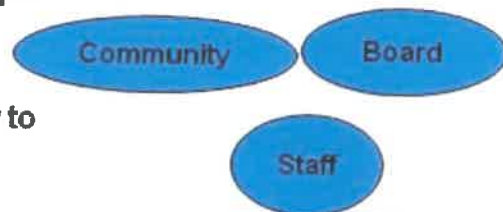
Reporting on objective status

- How will qualified, high-priority objectives be measured and reported?

MBO Process Steps – Gathering and Filtering

GATHERING IDEAS

- This is done at the staff level with input from Board, community, outside organizations.
- Staff should determine the best way to keep a running list of ideas to be considered each year.



FILTERING THE IDEAS

- This should be done at a staff level first, and then done at a board level.
- Does the objective meet one or more of our goals? If not, revise or remove. If so, define which goal it meets.
- Is the objective realistic? If yes, continue. If not, revise or take off list.
- Is it possible to complete the objective (as stated) in the next 12 months? If yes, continue. If not, revise, provide alternate completion date or take off list.
- Are there actionable steps defined that are understandable by the staff and board? If yes, continue. If not, revise or take off list.





MBO Process Steps – Defining

CATEGORIZE/DEFINE THE OBJECTIVE:

- Is the objective meant to improve a process for business as usual. (Improvement can include efficiency, reducing operational costs, improving customer service, etc.)
- Is the objective required by law? If so, provide required completion date.
- Is the objective required for safety compliance? Or intended to improve safety?
If so, provide required completion date.
- Is the objective needed to preserve capital assets of the PDLG? Determine whether or not if this is not done, will it cost more to do it next year, or will it negatively affect another capital asset in a significant way? (i.e. roof leak)
- Is the objective needed to continue to offer programming at current levels?
- Does completion of the objective cost money? If so, estimate how much. Categorize the expense as capital expense or operational expense. Does this objective require a pro-forma analysis to answer some of these categorization questions?
- Is completion of the objective necessary to bring us up to industry benchmarks?
Or best practices?
- Does the objective move us forward toward meeting our 10-year strategic plan?
- Will completion of this objective generate revenue in the short term? Mid-term? Long-term?
- Is there an outside funding or other external deadline?
- How do you measure progress or completion?
- Other



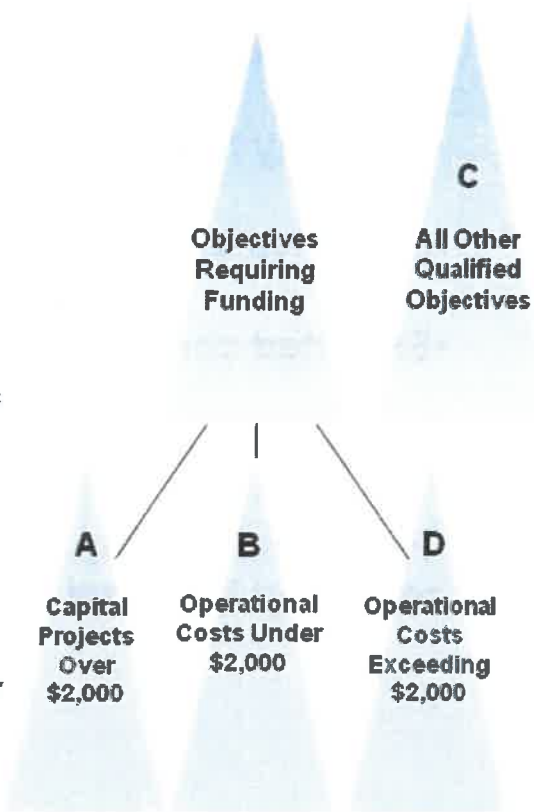


MBO Process Steps – Prioritizing

Prioritization Hierarchy

- Required by law
- Safety/Liability Issues
- Preservation of capital assets
- Productivity improvements/Cost reductions
- Potential to generate additional revenues
- Potential leverage of external resources
- Will improve public satisfaction
- Compliance with industry standards
- Will improve access or usage of facilities or programs
- Aligns with 10-year strategic plan

Prioritize objectives with costs relative to one another





MBO Process - Reporting

REPORTING ON PROGRESS OF OBJECTIVES

- Quarterly reports
- Objective in priority order based upon points
- Expected completion date
- Progress % completion
- Flag/highlight any objective that is not likely to be completed by target date





PDLG Goals

Our goals are consistent with our mission statement and establish a concise, actionable structure for organizational objectives

PDLG 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”

Goals for 2012-2013

- Provide clean, safe, attractive parks and facilities
- Provide programs that improve the health and quality of life of our community
- Maximize the benefits to our residents with the funds we receive
- Provide a work environment which maximizes the productivity and enthusiasm of our professional staff



Capital/MBO Evaluation Form

Date: _____ Project Title: _____

Submitted By: _____ Location: _____

Department: Recreation _____ Facilities _____ Parks _____ Administration _____

Description: _____

Classification: A _____ B _____ C _____ D _____

- A: Capital Projects (Costs over \$2,000)
- B: Operational Costs (Costs under \$2,000)
- C: Projects that require time but no money
- D: Operational Budgetary Costs (Costs over \$2,000)

Scoring Range between 0 and 5 points. Greatest need is 5 points.

- _____ 1) Legal Requirement: ****If required by law, objective moves to top priority****
- _____ 2) Safety: ****If item presents a safety hazard, score as a 5 and move to the top of the priority list**** Otherwise, to what degree will this improve safety?
- _____ 3) Future Capital Expense: To what degree will this avoid greater capital expenses in the future?
- _____ 4) Operational Costs: To what degree will this avoid significant operational costs?
- _____ 5) Revenue: To what degree will this generate revenue?
- _____ 6) Outside Funding: To what degree will this be funded by outside sources, agencies or ventures?
- _____ 7) Internal Productivity: To what degree will this improve productivity for staff and/or volunteers?
- _____ 8) Efficiency: To what degree will this improve efficiency of PDLG or community wide?
- _____ 9) Usage: To what degree will this increase use of the Park District?
- _____ 10) Industry Standard: To what degree will this improve compliance with industry standards or allow PDLG to offer services typically provided by most other park district?
- _____ 11) Public Opinion: To what degree will this enhance the public perception of the Park District?
- _____ 12) Community: To what extent does this fill a need in the community?
- _____ 13) Strategic Plan: To what extent does this help us achieve our 10-year Strategic Plan?

_____ Total Points Est. Cost _____ Est. Hours _____