

# EFFICIENCY REPORT FOR THE LISLE PARK DISTRICT



APPROVED BY THE PARK DISTRICT'S  
DECENNIAL COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY  
ON AUGUST 15, 2024

## I. Purpose

The Lisle Park District ("Park District") formed its Decennial Committee on Local Government Efficiency ("Committee") on May 18, 2023, to study efficiencies and report recommendations regarding those efficiencies and increased accountability pursuant to an act of the Illinois General Assembly, 50 ILCS 70/1, *et seq.* This report represents a comprehensive review and compilation of examples of the Park District's ongoing commitment to efficient operations, as identified through and as relevant to the study. As required, the report is submitted to DuPage County.

## **II. Committee Membership**

The Committee consisted of the following individuals:

Kari Altpeter, Commissioner

Jason Dombroski, Commissioner

Tom Hummel, Commissioner

Teri Tapella, Commissioner

Tim Wessel, Commissioner

Les Lavin, Resident Member

Susan Ross, Resident Member

Dan Garvy, Director of Parks & Recreation

Jon Pratscher, Superintendent of Recreation & Marketing

The Committee recognizes the efforts of Lisle Park District staff in providing input to this study.

### III. Committee Meetings

The Committee met as follows:

Meeting Date	Meeting Time and Place
March 21, 2024	7:00 PM at the Lisle Park District Recreation Center, 1925 Ohio Street, Lisle, IL
May 16, 2024	7:00 PM at the Lisle Park District Recreation Center, 1925 Ohio Street, Lisle, IL
August 15, 2024	7:00 PM at the Lisle Park District Recreation Center, 1925 Ohio Street, Lisle, IL

Minutes of these meetings are available on the Park District's website or upon request at the Park District's administrative office.

## IV. General Overview of Governing Statutes, Ordinances, Rules, Procedures, Powers, Jurisdiction

The Park District was established by a referendum initiated and approved by the voters of the Park District in 1967. All Illinois park districts, including the Park District, are governed by the Park District Code, 70 ILCS 1205/1 *et seq.*

Having a separate and distinct taxing body for parks, recreation, and conservation within the local community, which operates apart from general purpose governments, has many benefits to the community, as highlighted here and detailed further in this report.

- **Elected, non-partisan, non-compensated board.** The Park District is governed by a board of five (5) commissioners. Commissioners must reside within the boundaries of the Park District and are elected at the Consolidated Election in odd-numbered years. Pursuant to state law, commissioners are non-partisan and serve without compensation.
- **Accessible and focused representation.** Having a dedicated board to oversee these essential facilities, programs, and services provides the community with increased access to their elected representatives and allows those elected representatives to remain focused solely on those facilities, programs, and services. This is contrasted with general purpose governments where elected representatives are responsible for broad oversight on a wide range of issues. This special purpose benefit is particularly advantageous when it comes to budget and finance oversight.
- **Increased transparency.** Having a dedicated unit of local government to provide park and recreation services also improves the relationship between the Park District and its residents because of the transparency and openness related to the board and Park District operations. Having detailed agenda and action items focused on parks and recreation (as opposed to multiple departments/divisions) allows taxpayers to be better informed about the inner workings of their local government. Additionally, these items and budgetary decisions are subject to more scrutiny by locally elected officials than is the case with larger, multi-purpose governments with a multitude of departments and areas of focus. The recent decision to video record and post board meetings for public viewing advances the District's transparency efforts.
- **Protection of revenues.** Because the Park District is a separate unit of local government, the revenues it generates can only be used for Park District purposes. This assurance is contrasted with general purpose governments like cities, villages, and counties that provide a multitude of services such as fire, police, public works, economic development, etc., where revenues that are generated specifically for or by parks and recreation operations can be expended on these other services with limited, if any, input from voters.
- **Protection of assets.** Public parks and other real property owned by the Park District are held in trust for the residents of the Park District, and, subject to very limited exceptions, can only be sold or transferred if residents approve of the sale or transfer by a referendum. This is contrasted with general purpose units of government, which have authority to sell or dispose of property by a vote of the governing board.
- **Providing the community more with less.** The Park District does more with much fewer funding options. Unlike other units of local government that receive direct state funding and income, sales, use, hotel/motel, motor fuel, and other numerous taxes, the Park District's only

reliable tax revenue come from a portion of a resident's overall property tax bill. In fact, despite its limited funding options, the Lisle Park District share is about 6% of the local tax bill.

- As part of good governance and implementing best practices in the management of day-to-day operations, the Park District has also adopted the following ordinances, rules, policies, procedures, and communication tools:
  - Annual Budget & Appropriations Ordinance
  - Detailed Budget Report
  - Annual Treasurer's Report
  - Annual Comprehensive Financial Report
  - Paid Invoices Report
  - Open Meetings Act Compensation Disclosure
  - Board Policy Manual
  - Purchasing Ordinance
  - Conduct Ordinance
  - Employee Handbook
  - Safety Manual
  - Strategic Master Plan
  - Behavior Management Policy
  - Annual Newsletter

Additionally, the Park District has issued its own bonds rather than using a third party. This is particularly efficient because rather than paying interest on these bonds to a third party, interest is paid to the Park District itself. This maximizes the taxpayers' investment by keeping their taxes in the hands of the Park District, which in turn invests those funds right back into Park District parks and facilities. A current example is the issuance of bonds in February 2024. Had the Park District issued bonds the traditional way, it would have paid interest in the amount of \$77,329.80 to a third party, with absolutely no benefit to the taxpayer. Instead, this \$77,329.80 will be used to fund capital projects throughout the District. This is indeed a unique practice but is one of which we are particularly proud.



## V. List of Shared Services and Partnerships

The Park District works diligently to provide the best possible programs, services, and facilities to our community at the least possible cost. One of the many ways the Park District achieves this goal is by partnering with neighboring park districts, school districts, other units of local government within or near the community, the State, non-profit organizations, and for-profit corporations. Below is a comprehensive list of the current partnerships, agreements, and other relationships that assist the Park District's mission of being community focused and delivering the best possible services at the least possible cost.

### 1. Membership in South East Association for Special Parks & Recreation (SEASPAR)

The Park District is part of the South East Association for Special Parks & Recreation (SEASPAR) special recreation association ("SRA"). Special recreation associations are a form of intergovernmental cooperation among units of local government that are authorized under the Illinois Constitution, the Intergovernmental Cooperation Act, the Park District Code, and the Municipal Code. Their formation is rooted in a fundamental belief and recognition that "Recreation is for Everyone." They are shining examples of local government efficiency.

By partnering with other organizations, local communities can effectively and efficiently deliver more successful program opportunities to their own community members who have special needs. Furthermore, by participating in SEASPAR, the Park District networks with 13 other local governments to provide many more program opportunities for our community members who have special needs and offers a choice between participating in SEASPAR programs or in programs that are provided by the Park District.

The Park District and SEASPAR also achieve efficiency by utilizing existing facilities that are owned and operated by the other SEASPAR members. Utilizing these existing facilities allows SEASPAR to deliver services to its member communities at a lower cost. Currently the Park District provides SEASPAR access to the following facilities for their program offerings:

- Recreation Center
- Community Center
- Sea Lion Aquatic Park (SLAP)
- River Bend Golf Club
- Museums at Lisle Station Park
- Community Park and all other parks and facilities managed by the Lisle Park District

SEASPAR also provides the support needed for participants with special needs who choose to register for Park District programs. The Lisle Park District and SEASPAR collect information on the registered participant, and SEASPAR determines what support is needed for that participant to be successful in the Park District's program. This could include additional training of the supervisory staff, providing additional support staff, the use of adaptive equipment, behavior management, and/or other measures that will assist in the successful participation of this individual in the Park District program. Although success may not look the same for everyone, SEASPAR works with the Park District's staff to ensure the best possible results for all the participants in the program, regardless of ability. The Park District's cost of providing these services would be much greater without its participation and partnership in SEASPAR and the other SEASPAR communities.

In 2023, SEASPAR successfully served 34 Lisle Park District residents in 153 programs. The SRA also supported 16 participants in inclusive programs that were provided by the Park District.

The Park District is very proud of the ongoing collaboration with SEASPAR. By working cooperatively with other local governments, not only are we better able to collectively serve all citizens within our communities, including persons with special needs, but we are able to do so in the most efficient and effective manner possible, and not only as it relates to providing services to those with special needs. This group of 13 SEASPAR member entities is an ongoing and ever-growing wealth of knowledge and experience that is shared at a moment's request with any single member with a question, whether that question is related to serving those with special needs or any other general question about the delivery of park and recreation services. Information is regularly sought and shared on matters of all sorts, including employment practices, resource allocation, park and facility maintenance, policies and procedures, project specifications, contract templates, contractors and consultants, and more.

## **2. Membership in Park District Risk Management Agency (PDRMA)**

The Park District is also a member of Park District Risk Management Agency (PDRMA), an intergovernmental risk pool for park districts, forest preserve and conservation districts, and special recreation associations. PDRMA was formed in 1984 by 25 park districts because of skyrocketing insurance costs. The legal basis for the pool's existence arises out of the Intergovernmental Cooperation Act, and members jointly self-insure to provide health benefits, property casualty coverage, and specialized services. PDRMA exists through a contract among members, which today totals over 160, and is owned, controlled, and governed by its members.

As PDRMA is a non-profit entity, there are no profit margins built into PDRMA member contributions. Member contributions are accumulated to ensure there is money to pay losses when losses occur, and members share the savings as savings occur. Any funds that are not used to pay claims or administrative costs are used to benefit the members in either the short or long term. Accumulated net position is used to stabilize member rates, and through the successful management of this net position, rate increases have been minimal over the past 20 years. This efficient pooling of public resources helps insulate PDRMA members from insurance cost fluctuations.

PDRMA secures insurance and reinsurance, offers education and training, and provides certain legal services. It also has several operational committees including Claims and Coverage, Education and Training, Finance, Health Benefits, Risk Management, and Wellness. These committees are comprised of member entity personnel and pull together widely varied professionals in the field of parks and recreation from agencies of different sizes, locations, and makeups. These committees and individuals who serve on them provide unrivaled resources to each other and the entire PDRMA membership by way of experiences and perspectives, both shared and unique. PDRMA also provides its members with training procedures, useful documents, inspection forms, operating procedures, employee handbooks, and much more. Lastly and similar to SEASPAR, participation in PDRMA committees and boards affords direct access to professional personnel who routinely share resources directly with each other.

## **3. Membership in Intergovernmental Personnel Benefits Cooperative (IPBC)**

The Intergovernmental Personnel Benefit Cooperative (IPBC) is an intergovernmental agency created under Illinois statutes, which allows units of local government to band together for the purposes of insurance and is open to municipalities, counties, special districts, and intergovernmental agencies. The IPBC was established in 1979 and as of July 1, 2023, has 163 members spread across the state of Illinois. The purpose of the IPBC is to provide economies of scale and risk pooling that will allow members more financial stability than offered by the commercial insurance market in a fully transparent environment. The members retain the right within the IPBC to create and change their plan design, which is often required due to the nature of bargained contracts. Members also operate as part of a larger Board of Directors to control the finances within the pool.



The IPBC offers self-insured PPO, HMO, and Dental programs and fully insured Vision and Dental programs. Upon entering the IPBC, each community will have access to a Life/AD&D benefit as well as a multitude of other voluntary products. The PPO program allows members authority over plan design but provides a unique pooling of risk among all members for individual claims between \$50,000 and \$500,000. Claims over \$500,000 are fully reinsured. Therefore, members are responsible for claims under \$50,000 and the redistributed claims cost for claims between \$50,000 and \$500,000. This allows for enhanced budgeting and stability from year to year.

The HMO product is also self-insured through a special arrangement. Members pay for fixed costs of capitation (monthly stipend paid to primary care physician) for hospital and Rx charges. There are several different choices of plan designs with different levels of office visit and prescription drug co-pays. All members pay the same rates based on plan design offerings.

The IPBC offers both a self-insured and a fully insured Dental program. For the self-insured plan, each member has complete flexibility over plan design.

#### **4. Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF) Management**

The Park District has made its statutory required contribution to this fund every year. The District has also made additional contributions which has put the District in the position of being 99.7% funded. The District has taken advantage of IMRF ability to invest in the markets which have yielded a much better return than money markets and certificates of deposits. Knowing IMRF's average rates of return on its investments (and the Park District's as a result) exceeds that which the Park District can earn on its own makes this one of the more efficient uses of Park District investment opportunities.

#### **5. Other intergovernmental agreements and shared use with other park districts, forest preserve districts, conservation districts, or municipal recreation agencies**

- Sea Lion Aquatic Park and Naperville Park District Centennial Beach Intergovernmental Agreement for emergency shared use
- Aquatic park shared use with Wheaton, Woodridge, Bolingbrook
- Cooperative programs with Woodridge Park District
- Memorandum of Understanding with Downers Grove Park District for reciprocal use of select facilities at each other's resident rates
- Use of Naperville Park District's large area portable sprinkler for turf establishment of Community Park ballfield # 5 2022-23 renovations project

#### **6. Intergovernmental agreements and informal cooperation with other units of local government which save taxpayer dollars by eliminating redundancy**

- School District 202 Intergovernmental Agreement
- School District 202 Land Swap – Community Park Ballfield # 7 and School District-owned property adjacent to the Van Kampen Stage in Community Park, in the front of the Community Center, and part of the access road leading to the Parks Department Headquarters
- Tips Taps Cooperative Purchasing
- Sourcewell Cooperative Purchasing
- DuPage County – Maple Avenue Bridge construction
- DuPage County – Warrenville Road Bridge and Pedestrian Underpass
- DuPage County Sheriff's Work Alternative Program – Provides community service individuals to prepare Sea Lion Aquatic Park for the season and off-season, spread mulch at playground sites, etc.
- DuPage County – Polling place at Recreation Center

- Village of Lisle – Warrenville Road Bridge and Pedestrian Underpass
- Village of Lisle – Fuel
- Village of Lisle – Short Street Bridge Agreement
- Village of Lisle – Four Lakes Drive Bridge
- Village of Lisle – Museums at Lisle Station Park land lease
- Village of Lisle – Tate Woods Park/Oldham Avenue ROW Encroachment License
- Village of Lisle – BNSF Protective Canopy IGA
- Village of Lisle – Police Prosecution Adjudication IGA
- Village of Lisle – Pond Study IGA
- Village of Lisle – Stormwater Management Facilities Maintenance IGA
- Village of Lisle – Parks Department Sanitary Sewer Conveyance
- Village of Lisle – Old Tavern Road Culvert Rehabilitation Easement
- Village of Lisle – Short Street Storm Sewer Easement – Pending
- Village of Lisle – Memo of Understanding for mulch
- Village of Lisle – Emergency Use of Equipment and Personnel Agreement
- Village of Lisle – July 4 holiday fireworks agreement, park clean-up, etc.
- Village of Lisle – Collaboration of biometric wellness screenings to save on administrative costs, as both entities are members of IPBC
- Village of Lisle – IGA for pond maintenance in the entire Green Trails Subdivision
- Village of Lisle – Park District representation on the Village of Lisle’s Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Committee
- Lisle Area Chamber of Commerce – Park District membership in organization, representation on Chamber Board of Directors, partnership in various activities involving the business community
- Lisle Woodridge Fire Protection District – Shared use of each other’s vans
- Lisle Woodridge Fire Protection District – Deep water training in Community Park Pond and Sea Lion Aquatic Park, as well as assistance with raising/lowering the flags and performing minor maintenance at the Veterans Memorial
- Lisle Woodridge Fire Protection District – Assistance with Down and Dirty Day event preparation and participant clean-up
- Lisle Woodridge Fire Protection District – Free blood pressure checks at Senior Center
- Lisle High School – Students assisting in Gentle Learning Preschool classroom instruction
- Lisle Township – Lunch and Learn cooperative efforts to provide information to the senior citizen population on matters including Senior Health Insurance Program (SHIP), DuPage County Senior Services, Lisle-Woodridge Fire Protection District fire safety, and more
- Village of Lisle – Access to their wellness fair for Park District employee wellness screenings; this saves both entities money because alone, neither one meets the IPBC minimum number of participants, but together we do and therefore avoid an extra fee
- Lisle Library – Use of Recreation Center for Library programs during Library renovations
- Lisle Library – Their staff occasionally attends Camp Summer Quest to provide programming
- Forest Preserve District of DuPage County and Village of Lisle – Purchase of Hitchcock Woods

**7. Partnerships or agreements with athletic or similar affiliate organizations that operate sports or other leagues**

- Lisle Baseball Softball
- Lisle Football Club, LTD.
- Team One Lacrosse
- Lisle Football Cheer

**8. Partnerships or other interrelationships with non-profits**

- Lisle Partners for Parks Foundation



- Financial assistance for individuals and families in financial need for access to Park District programs
  - Financial contributions to park and facility improvements
- Lisle Heritage Society
  - Artifact acquisition and care
  - Exhibit creation
  - Docents for special programs and scheduled tours
  - Blacksmith classes
  - Special events planning and support, including Depot Days and Once Upon a Christmas
- Green Trails Improvement Association (GTIA)
  - Woodglenn Paths agreement for maintenance
  - Property ownership reconciliation
  - Publicity of Park District in GTIA Pathfinder newsletter
  - Collaboration on homeowner encroachments
  - Communication of specific and timely Lisle Park District challenges in the parks in GTIA monthly newsletter
  - Collaboration with Association on residents' stormwater remediation efforts
- Eyes to the Skies (July 4 holiday festival, ran 1980-2019)
  - Financial contribution of \$100,000 towards the Van Kampen Stage renovations
- U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary – Boat Launch programming and promotions
- Naperville and Lisle Township TRIAD – Senior health and safety program
- Lisle Community Service Corporation – Grant-making body supporting non-profits
- AARP Tax-Aide – Senior citizen income tax preparation service
- Kids Around the World – Free playground removal and repurpose in underprivileged countries
- DuPage AME Church – Use of Tate Woods Park Parking Lot
- Kiwanis Club of Lisle – Financial and volunteer support of annual Senior Picnic

## **9. Partnerships with for-profit organizations**

- Sponsorships
  - Duly Health and Care
  - Molex
  - Lisle Savings Bank
  - Brookdale Senior Living, Lisle
  - BubbleHouse Brewing Company
  - Ellen Gorrell from Baird & Warner Realty
  - Boyce Chiropractic
  - The Honda Superstore of Lisle/Volvo Cars Lisle
  - Naperville Bank and Trust
  - Republic Bank
  - Lisle Football Cheer
  - Independence Village
  - Presto Real Estate
  - Pepsi
  - Front Street Real Estate
  - St. Joan of Arc Catholic School & Church
  - Alter Brewing Company
  - Homewatch Caregivers
  - Senior Helpers
  - Encore Memory Care
  - Atria Senior Living
  - Home Helpers Home Care
  - Sunrise Senior Living

- Lacey Creek Supportive Living
- Independence 4 Seniors
- Aspired Living of Westmont
- AETNA
- 101 Mobility
- Senior Solutions
- Williams Chiropractic Center
- Culvers, Downers Grove
- Seven Bridges Fitness Center
- Central Park of Lisle Fitness Center
- Naperville F3 – Community Park Fitness Trail ongoing contributions
- River Bend Golf Club Restaurant – License Agreement
- Gator Chef – Ice for Summer Entertainment Series
- Dana-Victor – SLAP Parking in exchange for resident rates for SLAP & CPF Memberships (previous)
- ABC Discovery Daycare – Community Park soccer field overflow parking (previous)
- Evviva Bar & Eatery – SLAP concessions partnership that provides pizzas for parties and daily purchasing
- Bee All About It – Maintenance and harvesting of Community Park bee hives and honey production for point of sale
- Naperville Kayak – Stand up paddleboard and kayak rentals at Community Park Pond

#### **10. Other**

- Vodicka family – Masonry work at Leask Lane Park
- Adopt a Park program participants:
  - Lisle Woman's Club
  - Water Quality Associates
  - Kiwanis Club of Lisle
  - Lisle High School Track team
  - Lisle Lions Ladies Club



## VI. Other Examples of Efficient Operations

**Use of volunteers.** One way in which the Park District reduces the burden on taxpayers is through the use of volunteers. Last year, approximately 100 individuals volunteered for a total of about 500 volunteer hours of service to the Park District.

**Youth employment.** The Park District is a major employer of youth in the community. Last year, the Park District employed over 200 local youth. Not only is this an efficient way to deliver services, but youth employment serves as a valuable training tool for the future workforce.

**Joint purchasing** The Park District participates in joint purchasing cooperatives pursuant to the Governmental Joint Purchasing Act (30 ILCS 525/0.01 *et seq.*) thereby saving taxpayer dollars through economies of scale. These include:

- Playground equipment, saving at least 15% on average
- ADA playground surfacing
- Vehicles and equipment

**Lisle Partners for Parks Foundation.** Last year, the Foundation raised over \$19,000 in funding which helps alleviate the burden on taxpayers. The Foundation also supported the Park District by:

- Providing beverage sales for Summer Entertainment Series
- Providing scholarships for Park District families who otherwise could not afford to participate in Park District programs
- Partnering with the Park District in the delivery of the Scarecrow Scramble Family 5K Run/Walk and raising funds in the process
- Made financial contributions to Park District programs and projects:
  - Scholarships in the amount of approximately \$15,000 over the past 3 years
  - Discovery Playground donation
  - Van Kampen Stage donation
  - Boat Launch donation
  - Discovery Fitness Trail donation
  - Annual Senior Picnic
  - End of year preschool picnic
  - Tate Woods Park pickleball courts shade units funding
  - Beau Bien Park outdoor fitness equipment donation

**Collaboration with other park districts on best practices.** Because park districts are not in competition with one another, and generally work toward universal purposes, they are typically willing to share best practices. These best practices help to avoid unnecessary costs and deliver services more effectively and efficiently.

**Reliance on non-tax revenue.** Unlike some local governments that rely on a wide range of sales, use, and other taxes, the Park District is not permitted to assess these types of taxes. Also, unlike Illinois cities, villages, counties, and school districts that received billions of dollars in direct financial assistance from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), our Park District did not receive any such direct federal aid, but rather had to lobby its DuPage County elected officials for a carve out of the funds it (DuPage County) received. Our Park District also does not receive state funding under the Local Government Distributive Fund (LGDF) or General State Aid (GSA) that these same cities, villages, counties, and school districts receive through the State budget.

Through area park districts and the Lisle Park District's collective lobbying efforts, it did however, receive COVID-19 reimbursement funds through DuPage County and FEMA:

- CARES Act (DuPage County) in the amount of \$90,528.07 (\$37,631.40 in 2020 and \$52,896.67 in 2022)
- FEMA in the amount of \$11,229.50 (\$9,101.87 in 2021 and \$2,127.63 in 2023)

Additionally, the Lisle Park District issued Build America Bonds in 2010 whereby we were refunded/reimbursed 35% of the interest, which was reduced to about 94% of the 35% until 2019 when those bonds were refinanced.

**Playground installations performed in-house.** Unlike many other park districts, the Lisle Park District performs all its playground installations and maintenance with in-house personnel. This saves at least an additional 30-40% of the cost of each playground. It also makes tending to maintenance needs much more expeditious having a certified employee perform these required tasks.

**Oak Regeneration Project.** Our Parks Department collects and plants seeds from herbaceous and woody plants in the parks and grows them for future use in the parks. This saves money annually by using locally grown materials without having to procure them through the traditional nursery market. A particular focus is the Oak Regeneration Project to restore native plants for the health of park landscapes and the greater environment, benefiting residents.

**Tate Woods Park Renovations.** Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) Grant in the amount of \$600,000 was awarded to redevelop the 40-year-old Tate Woods Park with accommodations for pickleball and other outdoor recreation improvements.

## VII. Transparency to the Community

The following information about the Park District may be obtained by citizens on the Park District's website. This list is not exhaustive.

- Annual tax levy
- Annual budget and appropriation ordinance
- Board meeting recordings, agendas, and minutes
- Comptroller's annual finance report (AFR)
- Annual audit
- Strategic Master Plan
- Cost Recovery, Resource Allocation and Revenue Enhancement Study
- Various Ordinances, Resolutions, and Policies

The Park District offers residents many opportunities to provide feedback. These include:

- The Board of Park Commissioners meets monthly on the third Thursday. Residents may provide public comment at every meeting.
- The Park District's annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance is available in tentative form at least 30 days prior to its adoption at an open meeting of the Park District board. Additionally, at least one public hearing is held prior to final action, and notice of the hearing is published in the newspaper at least one week prior to the hearing. While not required, the Park District also posts its budget (not just the required Ordinance) on its website.
- The Park District's annual property tax levy is approved at an open meeting of the Park District board in accordance with the Open Meetings Act. The Park District follows all public notice and hearing requirements under the Truth in Taxation Law prior to the adoption of this annual tax levy.
- Residents may contact or request information from the Park District by phone at 630-964-3410 or email at [info@isleparkdistrict.org](mailto:info@isleparkdistrict.org).
- The Park District has performed or continues to offer the following opportunities for checkpoints and/or ongoing dialogue:
  - 2023 Strategic Master Plan
  - Ongoing program and facility use surveys
  - Solicitation of feedback in seasonal program guide, annual newsletter, enews outreach, etc.
  - Maintain social media accounts with more than 17,000 followers where information is shared, park district services are featured, and feedback is provided through commentary and messaging
  - Provide email communication to over 18,000 subscribers to provide important information and promote recreation opportunities available at various facilities through programs and services
  - Annual Newsletter is sent to approximately 14,000 resident households providing a brief synopsis of current park district projects and accomplishments while also addressing prominent community concerns
- The Park District has involved residents in the planning of new parks and facilities and in the prioritization of resource allocation. Recent examples include:
  - 2023 Strategic Master Plan

- Arbor View Park development
- Tate Woods Park development
- Pickleball court layout and amenity additions, clinics/lessons, and programming
- Efforts to establish and maintain advisory panels involving customers for various core program areas to ensure resources are aligned where there is demand for programming. An example is the recent Senior Center advisory meeting that took place in February 2024 to identify how and where to evolve services.



## **VIII. District Awards and Recognition**

The District's achievements have been recognized in numerous ways. Some recent examples include:

- Jane Foulser Habitat Award for Oak Regeneration Project
- Chicago Region Trees Initiative Community Award (Oak Regeneration Project)
- Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for past 17 years from Government Finance Officers Association
- Park District Risk Management Agency – Loss Control Program Review, Excellence, Level A accreditation

## **XI. Benefits and Services**

The Park District serves the entire community from the youngest child to the oldest adult and all ages in between. It does so in a variety of ways.

Its operations are based on the five priorities of the Strategic Master Plan: Community Engagement and Alignment, Facility Upgrades and Expansions, Accessibility and Connectivity, Fiscal Responsibility and Resource Management, Diverse Offerings.

The Park District follows these guiding principles for decision making and resource allocation processes:

Mission: Be community focused.

Vision: A place where everyone belongs.

Values: Safety, Inclusion, Stewardship, Impact

### **1. Facilities**

The Park District offered the following facilities to the community last year:

- 40 park sites comprised of close to 380 acres
- Recreation Center with a preschool and senior center
- Community Park Fitness Center
- Sea Lion Aquatic Park
- Museums at Lisle Station Park
- River Bend Golf Club and Wheatstack – A Midwestern Eatery & Tap

### **2. Programs**

The Park District offered programs in the following core areas.

- Core Program Areas are identified as: aquatics, arts & enrichment, athletics, camps, early childhood, fitness, school age, seniors, special events, and teens.
- Total program registration for 2023 was 19,423.

### **3. Additional Services**

The Park District provided the following additional services to the community.

- Medical Supply Lending Closet
- Lisle Teens With Character
- Free blood pressure checks at the Senior Center

### **4. Other Benefits**

While the Park District is a special purpose district, its impact on the community is multi-faceted and far reaching. For example, the Park District's parks, recreational programming, and other opportunities improve the community's overall physical and mental health and wellness. Before and after school and summer programs offer safe, convenient, and affordable childcare options for working families during critical times when school is not in session. The Park District's open space, natural areas, and water bodies help improve air and water quality and mitigate flooding.

## **XII. Recommendations for Increased Accountability and Efficiency**

### **1. Intergovernmental Fees and Charges**

One opportunity for improved efficiency would be the elimination of certain fees and charges assessed by other units of government including DuPage County and the Village of Lisle. By way of example, the Park District pays fees for tent permits, building permits, inspections, and more.

At the very least, other governmental units should be encouraged to not charge more than their out-of-pocket costs associated with the activities covered by a fee that is assessed to another unit of local government with substantially the same taxpayers. Put another way, one unit of local government should not profit by taxing another. Eliminating local permit fees could be a way to reduce administrative costs without impacting overall public revenue.

### **2. Unfunded Mandates**

Unfunded state mandates are another cost driver. While the Park District recognizes that there are benefits to some of these mandates, modifications could help alleviate some of the burden to the Park District.

- a) Prevailing Wage.** One way to reduce the burden on local government staff is to limit the prevailing wage requirement to larger capital contracts. For example, eliminating prevailing wage on smaller projects, e.g., those less than \$50,000, will result in more local bids and decrease the overall cost for these smaller public works projects.
- b) Newspaper Publication.** The newspaper is no longer the most effective way to provide notice. Websites are cheaper and reach more people. Permitting the park district to post the information on its website in lieu of newspaper publications, while not significant on a global scale, would reduce costs.

### **3. Opportunities for Increased Transparency**

As illustrated above, the Park District strives to be transparent in its operations. The following are opportunities for increased transparency:

### **4. Opportunities for Other Intergovernmental Agreements**

- *Possibly sharing staff or other resources to provide services more efficiently*
- *Expand relationship with DuPage Convention & Visitors Bureau to host local and regional events.*

### **5. Opportunities for Savings such as Energy Efficiency Projects, Joint Purchasing**

- Consult with Green Trails Improvement Association on the continued conversion of pathway lighting to LED (Green Trails has saved approximately \$11,000/year since they completed their conversion).

This Efficiency Report for the Lisle Park District is hereby approved by the Park District's Decennial Committee on Local Government Efficiency on August 15, 2024.

Signed: Kari To Altpeter  
Committee Chair Altpeter

Date: 8/15/2024

Attest: Dan Garvy  
Committee Member Garvy

Date: 8/15/2024