



SKOKIE PARK DISTRICT

COMPREHENSIVE PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

2026-2031 COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN UPDATE
ADOPTED MAY 19, 2026



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Introduction

Since the last Comprehensive Master Plan adopted in 2020, much has changed within the Skokie Park District. This plan was developed to address those changes and provide an updated vision for the future.

Purpose

- Assess existing parks, facilities, and programs
- Determine community opinion on services and facilities
- Identify park, facility, and program needs
- Define strategic and measurable goals and objectives
- Provide an action plan to implement strategies over the next five years

Planning Process

The Comprehensive Master Planning Process encompasses four key phases: Analyze, Connect, Envision, and Implement. This master plan uses the results of the first three phases to inform and guide the final phase, Implement.

The planning process began in July of 2025 with an in-depth inventory and analysis of the Skokie Park District’s parks and open spaces, indoor facilities, community context, and detailed program assessment. During the Connect Phase, the Board of Commissioners, District staff, stakeholders, and community shared their opinions about the District’s parks, facilities, programs, and needs.

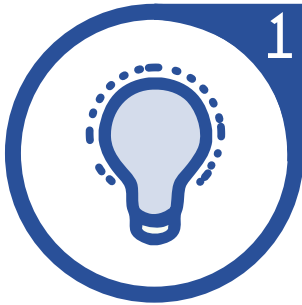
Upon completion of the Analyze and Connect phases, the planning team met to develop alternative strategies. Input from the Board of Commissioners and staff was used to prioritize and incorporate these strategies into a cohesive action plan to be implemented over the next five years.

This Master Plan is intentionally organized to present the District’s objectives and supporting strategies first, followed by an action plan that synthesizes these strategies into a clear, fiscal year-based implementation framework. This approach allows Park District staff and decision makers to easily reference priorities on a day-to-day basis, while providing community members with a clear understanding of the District’s goals. The inventory and analysis and community engagement chapters that follow document the data, context, and public input that informed and supported these recommendations.

How to Use the Plan

This Comprehensive Plan will be used by the Skokie Park District as a guide to implement action items over the next five years. The Action Plan should be thought of as a “working list” that will need to be evaluated and updated annually. This plan is meant to be flexible and fluid and may be adjusted based on funding, facility, or programmatic needs.

STRUCTURE OF THE DOCUMENT



1

envision

Chapter One

Envision: Strategies

Chapter One outlines the needs that arose during the Analyze and Connect phases. It provides the background of those needs, synthesizing the results from the previous phases into justification and background for future action items and the strategies to achieve them.



2

prioritize

Chapter Two

Prioritize: Action Plan

Chapter Two outlines the highest priority strategies into a five-year action plan. The action plan designates when strategies will occur and how to accomplish them.



3

analyze

Chapter Three

Analyze: Inventory & Analysis

Chapter Three provides a detailed inventory of parkland open space, District facilities, schools, and relevant adjacent land uses. Park assets are classified and quantified by standards, size, location, and amenities. Recreation programs are quantified through a comprehensive program assessment that analyzes offerings and participation by program area, age segment, demand, lifecycle stage, and geographic distribution, with findings used to evaluate alignment with community needs, operational resources, and the District's mission.



4

connect

Chapter Four

Connect: Community Engagement

Chapter Four includes national, state, and local parks and recreation trends. It also includes summaries of the statistically valid community survey, community pop-up event, staff workshop, Board discussion, and stakeholder interviews.

Appendix

The appendix contains the Village of Skokie zoning map, Skokie School District map, and Illinois Department of Natural Resources useful life criteria.



District Profile

The Skokie Park District service area covers approximately 10.07 square miles and serves a population of over 64,500 people. Located in northern Cook County, the Park District maintains 247.8 acres of open space, recreation, and special use properties.

Geographic Profile

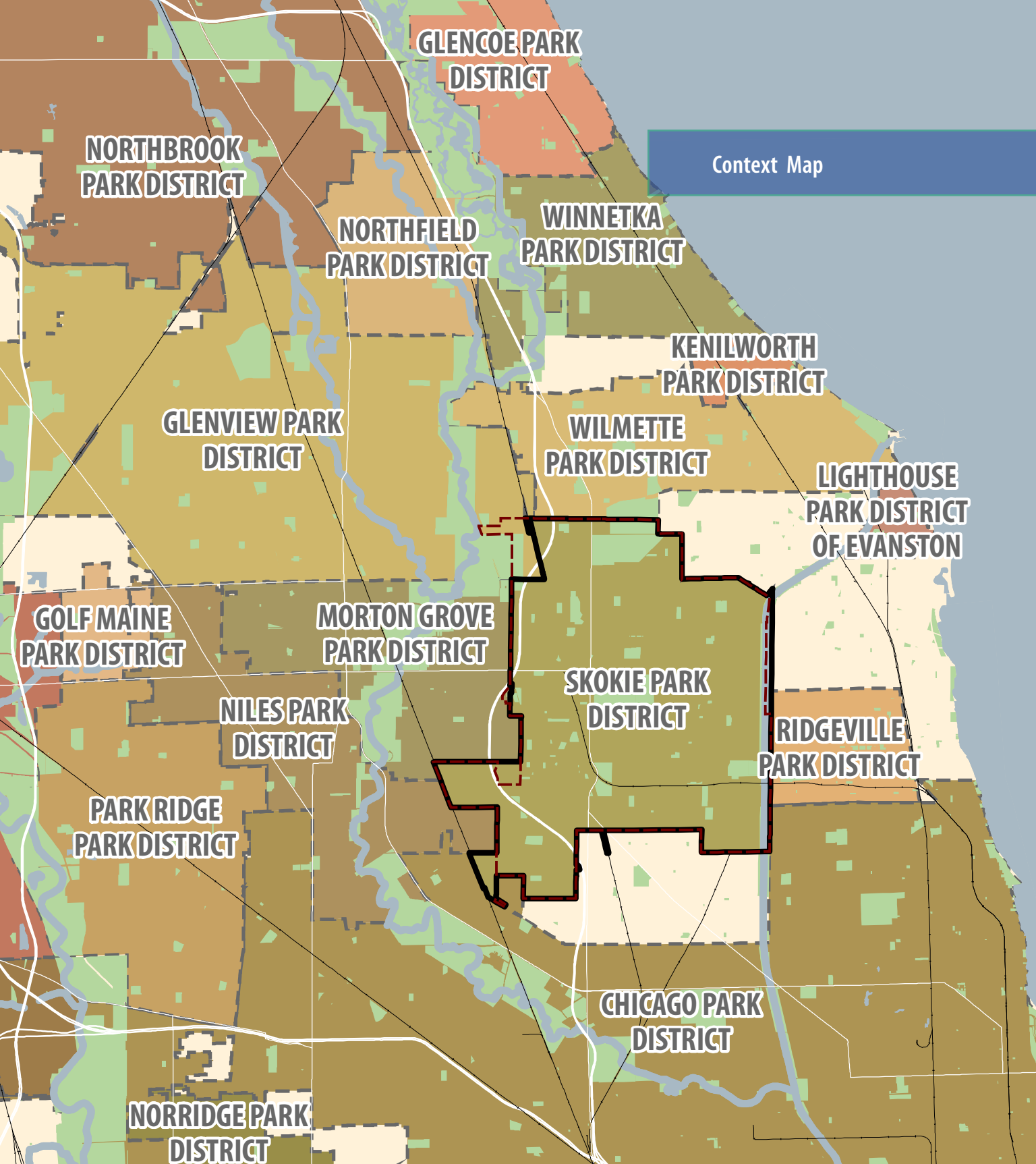
The Park District is located within Cook County and operates within a network of adjacent jurisdictions that support governance, public services, and community development. These jurisdictions include the Village of Skokie, the Village of Lincolnwood, the Village of Niles, the Village of Morton Grove, and the City of Evanston. It also includes Forest Preserve District of Cook County property, and portions of School Districts 65, 68, 69, 71, 72, 73, 73.5, 202, and 219.

Organizational Structure

The five-member volunteer Board of Commissioners is the legal governing authority of the Park District. District residents elect Commissioners at large to serve staggered six-year terms. Some of the governing body's responsibilities include setting policy, making major investment decisions, hiring and overseeing the Executive Director, passing ordinances, adopting the budget, and determining tax rates. The Executive Director is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations, hiring qualified and professional employees, and carrying out the policies and ordinances of the District.

Related Plans

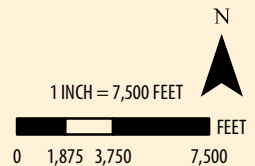
During the planning process the previous Skokie Park District Comprehensive Master Plan (2020) was referenced, as well as the Park District's 5-Year Capital Plan.



Context Map

Context Map Legend

- Skokie Park District Boundary
- Village of Skokie
- Park District
- Open Space







CHAPTER ONE

Envision
Strategies



Overview

This Chapter documents the Envision: Strategies Phase of the Comprehensive Master Planning process.

Purpose

The purpose of the Envision Phase is to outline the needs that were identified during the Analyze and Connect Phases. As part of the plan update, this phase focuses on building upon the findings, data, and community input established through prior planning efforts and recent assessments to develop a series of preliminary strategies that guide future decision-making for the Skokie Park District.

The Envision phase involved an internal planning and visioning workshop with District staff and the planning team to review existing conditions, reaffirm the District's priorities, and identify desired outcomes of the plan. Preliminary written objectives and subsequent strategies were developed across four core focus areas—facilities, parks and open space, programs and services, and policy and operations. Each strategy considers opportunities for improvement, expansion, or new development, as well as recommendations for maintenance, partnerships, and further study to support an overarching objective.

The resulting set of preliminary strategies provides a foundation for evaluating future initiatives and prioritizing investments that align with the District's goals, operational capacity, and the evolving needs of the Skokie community.

Chapter Outline

This chapter is organized into four sections which include the objectives, supporting information, and corresponding strategies for each category:

- Facilities
- Parks and Open Space
- Programs and Events
- Policy and Operations

Objective

Each category contains a series of numbered objectives that address the needs identified during the Analyze and Connect Phases:

- **Facilities**
 1. Evaluate program facility needs to support a variety of programs
 2. Evaluate existing facility utilization to identify operational and programming gaps
 3. Identify and address challenges related to indoor programming by optimizing use of existing indoor spaces
 4. Continue enforcement of environmental stewardship and sustainability practices through facilities
 5. Continue 5-Year Capital Plan for long-term facility modernization and capital reinvestment

- **Parks and Open Space**

1. Continue to maintain and upgrade park facilities to ensure safe, accessible, and high-quality recreational spaces
2. Evaluate parks to identify opportunities for improvement, repurposing, or amenity enhancement
3. Identify and evaluate opportunities for land acquisition to enhance park access, connectivity, and future recreational development
4. Continue environmental stewardship and sustainability practices throughout all parks
5. Strengthen safety and security measures across all parks and facilities

- **Programs and Events**

1. Expand overall programming reach in the community, especially with special attention towards increasing adult participation
2. Increase program retention and participant engagement
3. Develop and maintain a consistent recreation program and service evaluation process to identify opportunities for improvement, expansion, or retirement
4. Enhance inclusivity to ensure welcoming and equitable experiences for all community members

- **Policy and Operations**

1. Continue to strengthen communication, awareness, and access to information
2. Continue to evaluate and enhance partnerships and coordination with community organizations
3. Continue to advance sustainability and resilience practices across operations
4. Evaluate pricing and access models to balance affordability, inclusivity, and sustainability

Justification

Supporting justification is provided under each objective to document the rationale for the recommended strategies. These justifications are derived directly from the planning process and reflect:

- **Statistically Valid Survey (SVS):** Conducted by aQity Research & Insights Inc., this survey consisted of input from Park District residents and is scientifically representative of the community demographics through randomly sampled households throughout the Skokie Park District.

Results consisted of 404 surveys completed between the dates of June 3rd, 2025 and August 7th, 2025.

- **Prior Plans:** Park District staff provided relevant prior facility, park, District-wide, and regional plans and studies for reference in future planning. Staff also shared relevant District history and current initiatives.
- **Inventory/Analysis:** The planning team gathered park, amenity, facility, and program information including condition and location in order to identify gaps and deficiencies in the existing recreation service. The District's amenities were also benchmarked against state and national data to determine possible gaps in services.
- **Staff Workshop:** Sixty District staff members from multiple departments participated in a visioning and prioritization workshop to determine their top priorities for SPD for the next five years.
- **Stakeholder Interviews:** The planning team conducted one-on-one small group interviews with 1-3 participants representing specific interest groups within the District: Education, Special Community Groups, Public Agencies, and Athletics. Topics included community participation trends, existing District strengths, areas for improvement, industry trends, opportunities not currently offered, and long-term visioning for the District.
- **Community Event:** The planning team staffed a booth at the District's Festival of Cultures event on May 18th, 2025. Event participants who visited the booth participated in satisfaction and interest polls, provided written comments, and shared input directly with planning team members. Younger participants could also record their thoughts via a coloring sheet.

Strategies

Each objective is supported by one or more strategies that identify recommended actions to achieve the stated objective. The strategies outlined in this plan are based on a synthesis of all data gathered throughout the planning process and are intended to advance the Park District's desired outcomes. Specifically, strategies draw from the Analyze Phase, including inventory and analysis, demographics and trends, GIS inventory mapping, and recreation program data, as well as from the Connect Phase, which incorporated community engagement, staff input, and Board guidance.

FACILITIES

OBJECTIVE 1: EVALUATE PROGRAM FACILITY NEEDS TO SUPPORT A VARIETY OF PROGRAMS

Justification:

- SVS: Top reasons for dissatisfaction: SPD Facility/Park (60 respondents).
- Skokie Water Park/Playground: dirty bathroom/locker rooms or more cleaning/upkeep in general, facility needs updating in general.
- Emily Oaks: needs revamping Note: planned improvements 2024-2027 5 Year Project Plan: HVAC repairs - Wander Inn, shelter electric, exterior metal painting, tot room window replacements, grass knoll seating replacements, flooring - multiple locations, specialized outdoor trash receptacles.
- Devonshire Pool: locker rooms are dirty and that the facility needs more cleaning.
- SVS: When asked in an open-ended format what they (residents) disliked the most about SPD, some residents noted:
 - “Lack of open gym times where teen girls can get a hoop. Open gym gets overrun so fast with men and they do not let the kids get in. Either more hoops need to be open, or more times for teenagers. It is exhausting to go at the early morning time only on weekends so they can play. Also, those have been taken off the schedule for July. Will that come back? We bought our fitness membership partially because of that for the kids!”
- SVS: 1 out of 10 residents feel that their household and its interests/needs are not included and represented by the Park District because:
 - Racial, cultural or religious reasons (n=13);
 - More focus on serving those with special needs (n=5);
 - Limited finances to cover SPD costs/fees (n=3);
 - Lack of programming/focus on those without children or young families (n=2).
 - “Programs not on the Jewish sabbath.”
 - “When pools are open, it’s challenging to deal with patrons who are not willing to make sure other patrons using mobility equipment have access. Need sign language interpreters at events.”
 - “Limited programming at more affordable rates for older residents, who are usually on more fixed incomes. Indoor pool would help those with some mild limited mobility.”

Strategies:

1. Evaluate facility needs for high-impact programs such as camps and identify underused or adaptable spaces to help relieve seasonal crowding and increase capacity.
2. Strengthen coordination and communication between facilities and programming operations.
3. Consider peak usage times, indoor/outdoor needs, locker room and restroom capacity, and staffing.
4. Evaluate ancillary needs such as storage for camp materials.
5. Leverage planned capital improvements to meet program demands.

FACILITIES

OBJECTIVE 2: EVALUATE EXISTING FACILITY UTILIZATION TO IDENTIFY OPERATIONAL AND PROGRAMMING GAPS

Justification:

- *Staff Workshop: facility improvements were the third top voted items when asked about top priorities for the Park District. Key themes included renovating aging buildings as well as expanding existing buildings and properties. Another key theme was the addition and expansion of storage space.*
- *Staff Workshop: a key theme noted during the staff workshop involving community events was the desire to expand across more locations.*
- *Staff Workshop: a top voted item was additional indoor space.*
- *Staff Workshop: a current challenge/anticipated hurdle noted is the lack of/limited space.*
- *Community Event: key themes derived from comment cards addressed the desire for the Park District to improve crowding within facilities.*

Strategies:

1. Map program schedules by age group and program type, using data tools such as RecTrac to visualize utilization patterns, identify inefficiencies, and support more equitable access.
2. Identify short-term storage solutions and long-term expansion opportunities for facilities experiencing operational strain.
3. Incorporate heatmap analyses or utilization tracking at high-demand facilities such as Fitness First, Weber Leisure Center, and Devonshire Aquatic Center.

FACILITIES

OBJECTIVE 3: IDENTIFY AND ADDRESS CHALLENGES RELATED TO INDOOR PROGRAMMING BY OPTIMIZING USE OF EXISTING INDOOR SPACES

Justification:

- *Staff Workshop: facility improvements were the third top voted items when asked about top priorities for the Park District. Key themes included renovating aging buildings as well expanding existing buildings and properties. Another key theme was the addition and expansion of storage space.*
- *Staff Workshop: Current challenges/hurdles noted during the staff workshop were the lack of/limited space with a goal of increasing athletic and aquatic facilities/access.*
- *Staff Workshop: a top voted item was additional indoor space.*
- *Staff Workshop: a current challenge/anticipated hurdle noted is the lack of/limited space.*
- *Community Event: key themes derived from comment cards addressed the desire for the Park District to improve crowding within facilities.*
- *SVS: 27% of respondents noted negative opinions about the SPD regarding facility issues, especially from those seeking longer hours at SPD facilities.*

Strategies:

1. Assess each indoor facility (Weber, Devonshire, Oakton, etc.) for potential reconfiguration or expansion to meet growing fitness and recreation demand.
2. Explore feasibility of adaptive reuse or small-scale additions to support specialized activities (e.g., walking track, multi-purpose studio, gymnasium expansion, cultural programs, or music rooms).
3. Continue shared-use agreements or partnerships with schools or private facilities to increase indoor access during peak demand periods.

FACILITIES

OBJECTIVE 4: CONTINUE ENFORCEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AND SUSTAINABILITY PRACTICES THROUGHOUT FACILITIES

Justification:

- *Prior Plans: Multiple sustainable/green initiatives have been implemented at SPD parks and District facilities.*
- *Prior Plans: SPD's 5-Year Capital Plan (2025-2026) Notes planned green-facility improvements for the next 5 years.*
- *Inventory/Analysis: SPD currently supports/advances sustainability initiatives and environmental policy implemented within the Park District.*

Strategies:

1. Deepen facility-level energy and resource efficiency and ensure facilities operate efficiently with minimal environmental impact.
2. Ensure facilities operate efficiently with minimal environmental impact.
3. Continue/Expand building retrofits, targeting HVAC upgrades, lighting improvements, and smart building systems as noted in SPD 5 Year Capital Plan (e.g., Devonshire Cultural Center chiller replacement, Emily Oaks HVAC repairs).
4. Implement green purchasing policies for all materials and equipment.
5. Aim for LEED or equivalent green certification on major renovations or new construction.
6. Leverage planned solar panel projects at Devonshire Aquatic Center, Skokie Water Playground, and Oakton Community Center to increase renewable energy use.
7. Minimize waste generation and expand recycling and reuse efforts across facilities.
8. Explore feasibility of reusable dishware programs at major facilities, including dishwashing and storage considerations.
9. Incorporate sustainability considerations into long-term facility planning and renovations, such as roofing replacements, flooring upgrades, and energy-efficient retrofits included in the 5-Year Capital Plan.

FACILITIES

OBJECTIVE 5: CONTINUE 5-YEAR CAPITAL PROJECT PLAN FOR LONG-TERM FACILITY MODERNIZATION AND CAPITAL REINVESTMENT

Justification:

- *Prior Plans: SPD's 5-Year Capital Plan (2025-2026) Notes planned facility improvements for the next 5 years.*
- *SVS: 27% of respondents noted negative opinions about the SPD regarding facility issues, including general comments about renovations being needed.*
- *SVS: Fitness First was mentioned by n=5 respondents (too small, outdated, more cleanliness, no/slow repairs).*
- *SVS: Top reasons for dissatisfaction: SPD Facility/Park (60 respondents).*
 - *Skokie Water Park/Playground: dirty bathroom/locker rooms or more cleaning/upkeep in general, facility needs updating in general.*
 - *Fitness First: steam rooms are always in repair, facility is too dirty.*
 - *Emily Oaks: needs revamping Note: planned improvements 2024-2027 5 Year Project Plan: HVAC repairs - Wander Inn, shelter electric, exterior metal painting, tot room window replacements, grass knoll seating replacements, flooring - multiple locations, specialized outdoor trash receptacles.*

Strategies:

1. Prioritize renovation of aging buildings and invest in infrastructure upgrades that extend facility lifespan and improve accessibility.
2. Align the 5-Year Capital Plan with evolving community priorities and sustainability goals.

PARKS & OPEN SPACE

OBJECTIVE 1: CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN AND UPGRADE PARK FACILITIES TO ENSURE SAFE, ACCESSIBLE, AND HIGH-QUALITY RECREATIONAL SPACES

Justification:

- *Prior Plans: SPD 5-Year Capital Plan (2025-2026) lists multiple parks set for ADA auditing, play surfacing/concrete/pathway renovations, and bench additions/renovations between the years of 2025 and 2030.*
- *Inventory/Analysis: Review and analysis of the Park District amenity inventory and based off of criteria set by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), provided a list of potential amenities to consider for renovation or addition. Trails, bicycle and multi-use trails specifically, were highly rated as a potential need, however, multi-use trails are offered through the Village and available for residents.*
- *Inventory/Analysis: Review and analysis of the Park District amenity inventory and based off of criteria set by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), provided a list of potential amenities to consider for renovation or addition. Rectangular fields, both synthetic turf and natural grass, were rated as a potential need. While there are currently no synthetic turf rectangular fields within the Park District offerings, the District offers numerous natural turf soccer fields.*
- *Staff Workshop: Staff expressed the need for continued outdoor improvements and maintenance.*
- *Stakeholder Interviews: Stakeholders expressed the need for expanded amenities and more recreational field space.*
- *SVS: Residents expressed the highest demand in Park District amenities/facilities in terms of current usage, interest, or need as walking/biking paths (nearly four out of five, 78%) and second highest need as open space with amenities (59%). Residents also noted walking/biking paths as the #1 top priority and open space with amenities as #2 top priority.*
- *SVS: Nearly one in four residents expressed a demand for outdoor pickleball courts, splash pad/spray features, dog park, or outdoor basketball courts (21% to 24%). Park District or other providers in the area inventory of these amenities shows only a gap for dog park. Dog park is seen as somewhat of a priority with a 13% #3-rank among top priority improvements.*
- *SVS: Residents express a need for improved cleanliness and upkeep at various parks.*

Strategies:

1. Continue to evaluate, refine, and implement the Park District's 5-Year Capital Plan.
2. Evaluate and prioritize park amenity renovation and replacement based on community need, industry benchmarks (SCORP and Park Metrics), and budget.
 - i. Continue to renovate or add walking/biking trails and pathways priorities:
 - a. Channelside Park (2026)
 - b. Skokie Sports Park East (2026 Referendum)
 - c. Channelside Park South (2026 Referendum)
 - ii. Evaluate locations for additional open space with amenities priorities:
 - a. Skokie Sports Park East
 - b. Channelside Park South
 - iii. Evaluate locations for additional rectangular fields priorities:
 - a. Skokie Sports Park East
 - iv. Evaluate future locations for an additional dog park.
3. Evaluate the need for new amenity types and trends.

PARKS & OPEN SPACE

OBJECTIVE 2: EVALUATE PARKS TO IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT, REPURPOSING, OR AMENITY ENHANCEMENT

Justification:

- *Prior Plans: SPD 5-Year Capital Plan (2025-2026) lists multiple parks set for ADA auditing, play surfacing/concrete/pathway renovations, and bench additions/renovations between the years of 2025 and 2030.*
- *Inventory/Analysis: Overall LOS is 95.2% of the population served by parks with Planning Areas 1, 7, and 12 having populations completely unserved by a park asset. Although partially served, Planning Areas 3, 13, and 23 have populations of 500 or more residents unserved by a park.*
- *Inventory/Analysis: Mini Park LOS is 57.4% of the population served with 12 planning areas unserved by Mini Parks. Planning Areas 16, 17, 18, 23, and 26 have the largest populations unserved (1,700 or more) by a Mini Park, although 4 of the 5 have at least partial service.*
- *Inventory/Analysis: Neighborhood Park LOS is 53% of the population served with 19 planning areas unserved by Neighborhood Parks. Planning Areas 13, 16, 23, 25, and 26 have the largest populations (1,300 or more) unserved by a Neighborhood Park. Of these, only Planning Area 26 has partial service.*
- *Inventory/Analysis: Community Park LOS is 84.4% of the population served with 3 planning areas unserved by Community Parks. Although they all have partial service, Planning Areas 13, 19, 23, 27, and 37 have the largest populations (650 or more) unserved by a Community Park.*
- *SVS: Residents express their top priority for Sports Park East and Channelside South potential improvements to be walking/jogging/bike paths around the perimeters.*
- *SVS: Nearly one in four residents expressed a demand for outdoor pickleball courts, splash pad/spray features, dog park, or outdoor basketball courts (21% to 24%). Park District or other providers in the area inventory of these amenities shows only a gap for dog park. Dog park is seen as somewhat of a priority with a 13% #3-rank among top priority improvements.*

Strategies:

1. Review park classifications and service area coverage to ensure equitable access, balanced park types, and efficient resource distribution.
 - i. Potential parks with room to grow, add amenities, and update classification upon development:
 - a. Channelside South is classified as undeveloped and has potential to become a community park with added proposed amenities.
 - b. Skokie Sports Park East is classified as undeveloped and has potential to become a community park with added proposed amenities.
2. Prepare and implement redevelopment/master plans for specific parks:
 - i. Skokie Sports Park East
 - ii. Channelside South

PARKS & OPEN SPACE

OBJECTIVE 3: IDENTIFY AND EVALUATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR LAND ACQUISITION TO ENHANCE PARK ACCESS, CONNECTIVITY, AND FUTURE RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Justification:

- *Inventory/Analysis: Planning Areas (PA) with the largest unserved populations are 23 (912 unserved), 13 (679 unserved), and 3 (542 unserved).*
- *Stakeholder Interviews: a key theme was the desire to improve and expand existing facilities.*
- *SVS: Dog park is seen as somewhat of a priority (as 13% rank it among Top-3 improvements for the SPD). From a list of indoor and outdoor recreational features, respondents were asked to identify those that represent demand for their household (in terms of current usage, interest, or need). Nearly 1 in 4 express interest in a dog park (21%), including a third of Central-W residents.*

Strategies:

1. Continue monitoring land availability and partnership opportunities to expand park access or enhance connectivity.
2. Prioritize incremental or strategic acquisitions that fill identified gaps in underserved areas. Consider enablement of trail linkages, park frontage, or redevelopment of underused parcels.
 - i. Acquire Channelside South.
3. Coordinate with Village and regional partners to pursue incremental parcels that fill service or connectivity gaps.

PARKS & OPEN SPACE

OBJECTIVE 4: CONTINUE ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AND SUSTAINABILITY PRACTICES THROUGHOUT ALL PARKS

Justification:

- *Prior Plans: Multiple sustainable/green initiatives have been implemented at SPD parks and District facilities.*
- *Prior Plans: SPD's 5-Year Capital Plan (2025-2026) Notes planned green-facility improvements for the next 5 years.*
- *Inventory/Analysis: SPD currently supports/advances sustainability initiatives and environmental policy implemented within the Park District.*

Strategies:

1. Integrate sustainable transportation into park planning:
 - i. Add EV charging stations at key parks and community centers.
 - ii. Implement green parking lot designs (bioswales, native landscaping).
2. Identify key areas for continued integration of resilience planning and green infrastructure expansion.
 - i. Integrate green infrastructure and adaptive design to reduce climate risks and protect natural resources.
 - ii. Implement stormwater management projects (rain gardens, bioswales, green roofs) when and where possible.
3. Make sustainability more visible and participatory.
 - i. Develop a "Green Parks" signage or labeling program that explains sustainable features to visitors.

PARKS & OPEN SPACE

OBJECTIVE 5: STRENGTHEN SAFETY AND SECURITY MEASURES ACROSS ALL PARKS

Justification:

- *Stakeholder Interviews: Additional security measures are needed at Schack Park restroom facility.*
- *Community Event: a whiteboard comment noted the desire for safety for kids and pets.*
- *SVS: Emily Oaks Nature Center (sometimes closed to public usage, earlier hours sought, needs updates/patrols, eBikes being unsafe, etc.).*
- *SVS: Oakton Park “don’t feel safe there”.*

Strategies:

1. Investigate and implement ways to improve safety in parks:
 - i. Pilot park security camera program.
 - ii. Community campaign promoting safety.
 - iii. Revisit signage in parks.
 - iv. Develop policy for eBikes.
 - v. Reinforce staff training on safety procedures and emergency response to ensure consistent standards districtwide.

PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

OBJECTIVE 1: EXPAND OVERALL PROGRAMMING REACH IN THE COMMUNITY, ESPECIALLY WITH SPECIAL ATTENTION TOWARDS INCREASING ADULT PARTICIPATION

Justification:

- *Staff Workshop: a top goal/aspiration noted was to better serve/reach adults in the community and a key theme was broadening inclusive offerings in regards to programming. There was also a desire to expand across more locations.*
- *Stakeholder Interviews: an overall key theme during stakeholder interviews was expanding access and inclusivity: additional programming for low-income families, inclusion of more languages, and emphasizing parks' benefits for the community's mental health.*
- *Community Event: The continuation of special events was the top noted theme in at the community pop-up event.*
- *Rec Program Analysis: Room to reach more SPD households and individuals:*
 - *15% of Skokie Park District households registered for a program/ticketed event in 2024 (39% of Skokie Park District households had a transaction in RecTrac from a membership, rental, facility visit, donation, etc.).*
 - *55% of 5-9 year olds signed up for a program/ticketed event and were the highest age segment reached, but only 3% of 50-55 year olds did.*
- *Rec Program Analysis: Like most park and recreation organizations, the majority of program registrations/ticket purchases come from youth participants:*
 - *71% of overall registrations/ticket purchases came from participants ages 0-17 (11% from 18-59 year olds, 18% from 60+).*
- *Rec Program Analysis: Heavy female program registration discrepancies in certain program categories:*
 - *Active Adults programs (73% female, 23% male, 4% other/unknown).*
 - *Exercise & Fitness programs (70% female, 7% male, 23% other/unknown).*
 - *Cultural Arts programs (72% female, 17% male, 10% unknown).*
- *SVS: 27% of respondents noted negative opinions about the SPD regarding program/activity issues, most often the need for more adult programming and/or issues with summer camps.*
- *SVS: Sample verbatims noted there weren't enough suitable activities for teenagers and middle-aged people/working adults or adults without families.*
- *SVS: 1 out of 10 respondents (10%) disagree that SPD sufficiently represents their household composition and interests. This 10% tend to seek more cultural, ethnic, or religious representation in SPD offerings and programs.*
- *SVS: Feedback given for age-based programs and community events that SPD offers shows that demand is highest for community events overall, with 50% of respondents saying their household is interested in or seeks these events.*
- *SVS: When asked in an open-ended format what they (residents) disliked the most about SPD, some residents noted:*
 - *"When changes are being made not enough effort is made to get community input."*
 - *"Communication of the activities and events needs to be better. Sometimes I miss them!"*
 - *"I wish it had an email newsletter where we could get updates about events and programming."*
 - *"I really miss the catalog that came in the different seasons. I know there is an online one, but it is so much effort to get to it and sift through it online. When it used to come in the mail, my entire family would scour it, circling different things we wanted to do or try. Now, we only look at the catalog if we are looking for a specific thing. I don't think we use the Park District as much as we could now that the catalogs are not being sent home."*
 - *"Senior events are not well publicized. I am 70 and have yet to hear about them."*

PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

Strategies:

1. Use touchpoints within facilities, memberships, and special events (which reach a wider audience than programs) as an opportunity for cross-promoting programs to a broader audience.
2. Identify opportunities to increase program participation by male members of the community, with emphasis in the areas of exercise and fitness, cultural arts, and active adults.
3. Conduct additional outreach to better understand how to serve adults in the community through programs and events.
4. Evaluate current programs and events for opportunities to better reflect cultural representation.
5. Continue to identify new program and event options that celebrate the community's diversity.

PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

OBJECTIVE 2: INCREASE PROGRAM RETENTION AND PARTICIPANT ENGAGEMENT

Justification:

- *Rec Program Analysis: Annual household retention rate for 2024 was 55% (% of households that registered for at least one program/ticketed event in the prior year and also signed up for at least one program/ticketed event in the next year) and has fluctuated in the 50-59% range since 2021.*
- *Rec Program Analysis: With household retention numbers at their current rates, in 2024 36% of the households registering for a program or buying a ticket were new to Skokie Park District programming (had not signed up for a program/event since 2019). This large number of new program households help Skokie Park District increase its overall registration and are currently an important part of their customer base.*
- *Individual programs/events attracting the highest number of households that are brand new to Skokie Park District overall (created a new household account entirely) in the past year included:*
 - *Special events, including: North Pole Express, Breakfast with the Bunny, Princess Ball, and Breakfast with Santa.*
 - *Nature programs, including: Groundhog Day Fireside, Solar Eclipse Watch Party, Glow Gnomes Campfire, and Meet & Greet: Illinois Raptors.*
 - *Athletics & Sports, including: CBL Boys (K-2nd Grade) and Basic 1 Skating.*
 - *AARP Smart Driving Course.*
 - *Water Fun Run.*
- *Program categories attracting the highest number of households brand new to Skokie Park District included: Athletics & Sports, Summer Camps, and Special Events.*
- *Rec Program Analysis: The number of average program registrations/tickets per customer per year is on the rise, peaking at 3.8 registrations/tickets in 2024, but still has some room for growth. This increase in sales per customer helped support an overall increase in program registrations/ticket sales in 2024, despite an overall decline in the total number of individuals and households who signed up for a program/ticket.*

Strategies:

1. Identify opportunities to conduct just-in-time marketing and/or streamline re-enrollment processes for key program areas where you expect repeat users (such as summer camp, leagues, fitness classes, etc.).
2. Conduct targeted outreach at or immediately following programs and events known to attract new users to the District.
3. Consider loyalty or engagement incentives, rewards, or special offers for programs where repeat participation is low.
4. Create a process to reach out to past customers to learn why they have opted not to return.
5. Collect and promote stories or testimonials that showcase long-term participants and the benefits of on-going/ steady participation.
6. Ensure that training provided to program staff, instructors, and volunteers includes opportunities to strengthen relationships with participants through improved communication, recognition (even the importance of learning names), and ensuring every participant feels welcomed and encouraged to return.
7. Where it makes sense, identify and develop bundled or sequenced programs so that participants can more easily transition into the next opportunity.

PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

OBJECTIVE 3: DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN A CONSISTENT RECREATION PROGRAM AND SERVICE EVALUATION PROCESS TO IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT, EXPANSION, OR RETIREMENT

Justification:

- *Inventory/Analysis: growing registrations and sales trends: camps, school days off, fitness, cultural arts, museum, active adults.*
- *Inventory/Analysis: registrations by age, 65% of registrations from 12 years and under, 18% of registrations from 60 years and older.*
- *Inventory/Analysis: registrations by age, peak at age 7, decline starts rapidly at age 11.*
- *Inventory/Analysis: declining registration and sales trends: youth, childcare, homeschool.*
- *Community Event: a key theme was to keep providing a variety of programs and to have more programs outdoors.*
- *Staff Program Assessment: programs considered in their end of life include: Volleyball League, Adult Hockey Class, Santa's Hotline, and Homeschool Art Class.*
- *Staff Program Assessment: lower performing examples: Cooking Workshops, Adult Drawing and Painting, Devonshire Playhouse, Rag Rug-Style Coasters Workshop, Hockey Skills Clinics (12u-14u, Girls 10u+), Holiday Gift Market, and Santa's Hotline.*
- *Staff Workshop: a top goal/aspiration noted was improved program performance.*
- *SVS: There is a small amount of dissatisfaction/frustration with the registration process for programs (digital platform and/or how quickly popular options fill up).*
- *Rec Program Analysis: Staff recognized an opportunity to increase the consistency and efficiency of current post-program evaluation processes and use of data within RecTrac to better allow for evaluation and comparisons across programming categories and facilities.*

Strategies:

1. Identify and monitor key recreation program and service metrics aligned with organizational priorities.
2. Build staff capacity and expectations regarding the responsibilities for program and service evaluation, documentation of findings, and use of results to support decision-making.
3. Review programs identified as being at or near the end of their lifecycle to determine whether to adapt, retire, or refresh them.
4. For those programs rated as being well-aligned with the Park District's mission, but requiring a high amount of resources, explore opportunities to improve operational outcomes such as enhancing revenue generation, building partnerships, or utilizing volunteers to reduce staff time.
5. Conduct a review and clean-up of the current RecTrac database, beginning with customer contact and demographic information.

PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

OBJECTIVE 4: ENHANCE INCLUSIVITY TO ENSURE WELCOMING AND EQUITABLE EXPERIENCES FOR ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Justification:

- *Community Event: The community provided input on what the District should focus on over the next five years and a reoccurring theme was improved inclusion for culture, language, all abilities.*
- *SVS: The most frequent response for residents that did not feel properly represented/included by SPD and its offerings were racial, cultural, or religious reasons (13).*

Strategies:

1. Leverage emerging and evolving technology to improve communication and access for residents of diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.
 - i. Continue to add translation kiosks

POLICY AND OPERATIONS

OBJECTIVE 1: CONTINUE TO STRENGTHEN COMMUNICATION, AWARENESS, AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Justification:

- *Staff Workshop: a top goal/aspiration noted is the streamlining of internal systems/processes and communication.*
- *Staff Workshop: a key theme regarding community engagement was strengthening the outreach with schools and new residents.*
- *Community Event: a key theme noted in comment cards was better marketing for special events.*
- *SVS: There is a small amount of dissatisfaction/frustration with the registration process for programs (digital platform and/or how quickly popular options fill up).*
- *SVS: 22% of respondents noted negative opinions about the SPD regarding administration/staff issues, usually program fees, a need for more/better outreach and communication about activities, staff customer service, and costs/fees in general.*
- *SVS: Top reasons for dissatisfaction, SPD programs/events (35 respondents).*
 - Registration process: difficult registration process (website hard to navigate/not intuitive, programs fill up too quickly).
 - Admin/staff suggestions: Focus on improving customer experience.
- *SVS: When asked in an open-ended format what they (residents) disliked the most about SPD, some residents noted:*
 - “Registration can be complicated for activities.”
 - “I feel like sometimes the registration for events online is a bit difficult. Many times, I’ve gone to register, and it tells me that every single event is full. I think it is a glitch because it can’t possibly be that everything is full. I feel the website could be updated.”
 - “The registration website is terrible.”
 - “Sometimes I have trouble finding things on the app.”
 - “The website could be easier to maneuver.”
 - “The online platform is very hard to use. Some information is not up to date (like reserving the multi-purpose room @ Oakton; the pricing is still for ‘half’ the room instead of paying per how many attendees there are).”

Strategies:

1. Continue evaluating communication channels to improve clarity, consistency, and reach across all platforms (social media, website, e-newsletters, print).
2. Enhance promotion of community events, programs and environmental initiatives through unified marketing campaigns and cross-departmental coordination.
3. Create tailored outreach for new participants to increase awareness of District amenities and opportunities.
4. Review and improve the program registration process to ensure user-friendliness, transparency, and equitable access to high-demand programs.
5. Continue development of staff training and service standards that reinforce responsive, courteous, and consistent customer interactions.
6. Continue managing online business and social media profiles to ensure accuracy, alignment with District standards, and positive engagement.

POLICY AND OPERATIONS

OBJECTIVE 2: CONTINUE TO EVALUATE AND ENHANCE PARTNERSHIPS AND COORDINATION WITH COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Justification:

- *Staff Workshop: a key theme regarding community engagement was strengthening the outreach with schools and new residents.*
- *Stakeholder Interviews: Agency collaboration was a major theme defined during stakeholder interviews, specifically: planning and communicating with a variety of agencies (Village, School Districts, etc.), sharing school facilities and allowing the public to use school grounds for recreation.*

Strategies:

1. Review current partnership agreements—particularly with school districts—to ensure consistency, coordination, and shared benefit.
2. Strengthen collaboration with the Village and school districts through joint planning, programming, and facility use.
3. Explore partnerships with local nonprofits and civic groups to improve outreach to underrepresented or underserved community segments.
4. Identify opportunities for cross-promotion and co-hosted events.
5. Evaluate staff capacity for partnership management and consider dedicated roles or liaisons for interagency coordination.

POLICY AND OPERATIONS

OBJECTIVE 3: CONTINUE TO ADVANCE SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE PRACTICES ACROSS OPERATIONS

Justification:

- *Prior Plans: Multiple sustainable/green initiatives have been implemented at SPD parks and District facilities.*
- *Prior Plans: SPD's 5-Year Capital Plan (2025-2026) Notes planned green-facility improvements for the next 5 years.*
- *Inventory/Analysis: SPD currently supports/advances sustainability initiatives and environmental policy implemented within the Park District.*

Strategies:

1. Broaden renewable energy use and storage capacity across District facilities to reduce environmental impacts and operational costs.
2. Redevelop the approach to public communication/transparency of sustainability metrics.
3. Consider increasing renewable energy capacity and improving energy efficiency (solar retrofits, battery storage systems, LED lighting upgrades, energy monitoring).
4. Consider interpretive signage design and installation within park improvements.

POLICY AND OPERATIONS

OBJECTIVE 4: EVALUATE PRICING AND ACCESS MODELS TO BALANCE AFFORDABILITY, INCLUSIVITY, AND SUSTAINABILITY

Justification:

- *Stakeholder Interviews: highlighted accessibility in communication and programming for underserved and low-income families.*
- *Community Event: facility lowering and maintaining costs was a key theme, community members noted their desire for “everything free” including the Weber Leisure Center offerings.*
- *SVS: 22% of respondents noted negative opinions about the SPD regarding administration/staff issues, usually program fees, a need for more/better outreach and communication about activities, staff service, and costs/fees in general.*
- *SVS: When asked in an open-ended format what they (residents) disliked the most about SPD, some residents noted:*
 - *“more free activities.”*
 - *“With inflation, the formula used to calculate discounts for family’s needs to be adjusted accordingly. I would participate a lot more if I could afford it.”*
 - *“High cost of exercise centers.”*
 - *“No multi family member discount.”*
 - *“My only critique is that the cost of senior trips has almost doubled, which makes it more difficult for people like me on a fixed income.”*

Strategies:

1. Review current facility fee structures to ensure consistency, transparency, and equitable access across demographics.
2. Explore reduced-rate or flexible pricing options for low-income families and underserved populations.
3. Improve public communication around available discounts to strengthen awareness and trust.
4. Continue to seek opportunities to solicit feedback from current participants and users, as well as the community at large, regarding the affordability and value of programs and facilities.





CHAPTER TWO

Prioritize

Action Plan





Overview

This Chapter documents the Prioritize: Action Plan Phase of the Comprehensive Master Planning process.

Purpose

The purpose of the Prioritize: Action Plan Phase is to update and refine existing strategies and actionable items and develop new strategies for the Park District to accomplish over the next five years. The action plan is to act as a guide to assist the Skokie Park District with implementing the strategies over the next five years and will be periodically re-evaluated and adjusted to reflect completed projects and the community’s changing needs.

During this phase, the planning team conducted a preferred strategies and preliminary action plan workshop to further refine strategies for issues and opportunities revealed during the Envision Phase of the process and to determine the remaining need for previous objectives. The strategies were then organized into primary goals that relate to the needs that arose in the previous phase. Following the preferred strategies and preliminary action plan workshop, the planning team met with the project team to review and build upon the proposed strategies. Finally, the planning team met with both staff and the Skokie Park District Board of Commissioners to review the initial priorities and identify the action items to implement over the next five years.

Chapter Outline

The action plan is organized as follows :

- An at-a-glance Action Plan timeline with each year divided into quarters (Q1, Q2, Q3, and Q4) to provide a general idea of when each action or action item step might start or end within a given year
- A detailed summary of the action items is provided in a year-by-year list in chronological order from 2025/2026 - 2031+
- The action items are further organized within each year according to the following categories:
 - i. Programs and Events
 - ii. Parks and Open Space
 - iii. Policies and Operations
 - iv. Facilities
 - v. Existing 5-Year Capital Plan Items

Many of the action plan items include a number and letter combination that corresponds to the goals and strategies outlined in Chapter 1. The letter prefixes used throughout the Action Plan are as follows:

- PE - Programs and Events
- PO - Parks and Open Space
- O - Policy and Operations
- F - Facilities



Current Year: 2025/2026

May Aug Nov Feb
 Jun Sep Dec Mar
 Jul Oct Jan Apr

Quarter 1 Quarter 2 Quarter 3 Quarter 4

Legend

			Programs and Events Strategies
			Parks and Open Space Strategies
			Policy and Operations Strategies
			Facilities Strategies
			SPD 5-Year Capital Plan Action Items

		Acquire Channelside South PO3.2a	Prepare Master Plan for Channelside South PO2.3b
			Prepare Master Plan for Skokie Sports Park East PO2.3a
			Investigate Ways to Improve Safety in All Parks → PO5.1

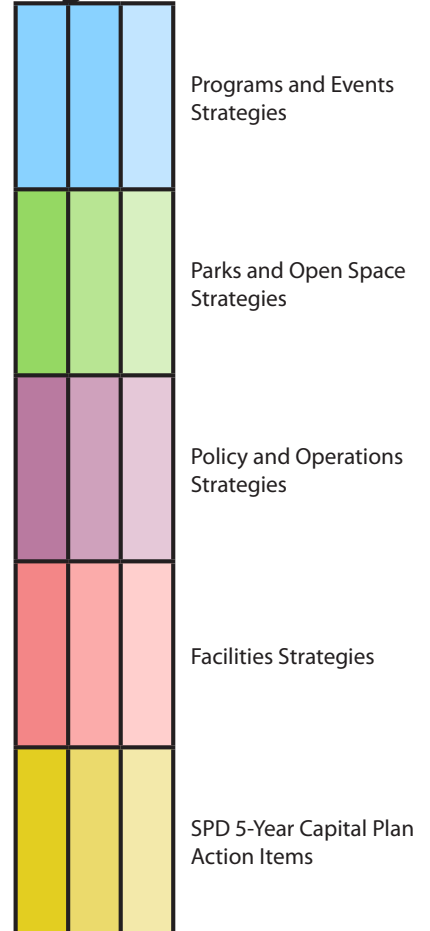
Current Year: 2025/2026

May Aug Nov Feb
 Jun Sep Dec Mar
 Jul Oct Jan Apr

Quarter 1 Quarter 2 Quarter 3 Quarter 4

			Emerson Park Renovations
Terminal Park Renovation Completion		Gleiss Park Renovations	
Lauth Park Renovation Completion		Lyon Park Renovations	
Lee-Wright Park Renovation Completion			
Onondowa'ga Park Renovation Completion			

Legend

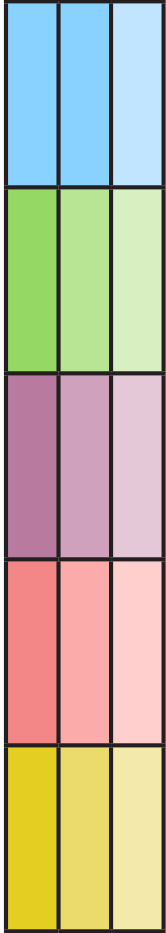


Year 1: 2026/2027

May Aug Nov Feb
 Jun Sep Dec Mar
 Jul Oct Jan Apr

Quarter 1 Quarter 2 Quarter 3 Quarter 4

Legend



Programs and Events Strategies

Parks and Open Space Strategies

Policy and Operations Strategies

Facilities Strategies

SPD 5-Year Capital Plan Action Items

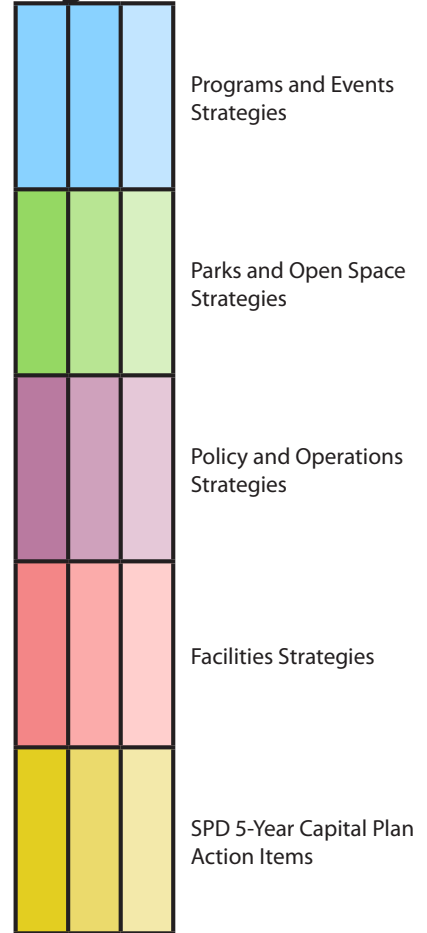
		Referendum Channelside South	Design and Engineer Channelside South
		Referendum Skokie Sports Park East	Design and Engineer Skokie Sports Park East
Investigate Ways to Improve Safety in All Parks (continued) PO5.1			
		Explore Reduced Rate or Flexible Pricing Options O4.2	
Review Current Facility Fee Structures O4.1			

Year 1: 2026/2027

May Aug Nov Feb
 Jun Sep Dec Mar
 Jul Oct Jan Apr

Quarter 1 Quarter 2 Quarter 3 Quarter 4

Legend



Emerson Park Renovations (continued)			
Gleiss Park Renovations (continued)		Lockwood Park Renovations	
Lyon Park Renovations (continued)		Shawnee Park Renovations	
Explore Feasibility of Adaptive Reuse or Small-Scale Additions F3.2			
Conduct a Districtwide Facility Utilization Study F2.1			
Conduct Reviews of Facility Space Allocations F2.4			

Year 2: 2027/2028

May Aug Nov Feb
 Jun Sep Dec Mar
 Jul Oct Jan Apr

Quarter 1 Quarter 2 Quarter 3 Quarter 4

Legend

			Programs and Events Strategies
			Parks and Open Space Strategies
			Policy and Operations Strategies
			Facilities Strategies
			SPD 5-Year Capital Plan Action Items

Design and Engineer Channelside South (continued)			Construct Channelside South
Design and Engineer Skokie Sports Park East (continued)			Construct Skokie Sports Park East
			Channelside Park Trail Renovation PO1.2ai
Explore Reduced Rate or Flexible Pricing Options (continued)			
Lauth Park Tennis/ Pickleball Court Repairs			

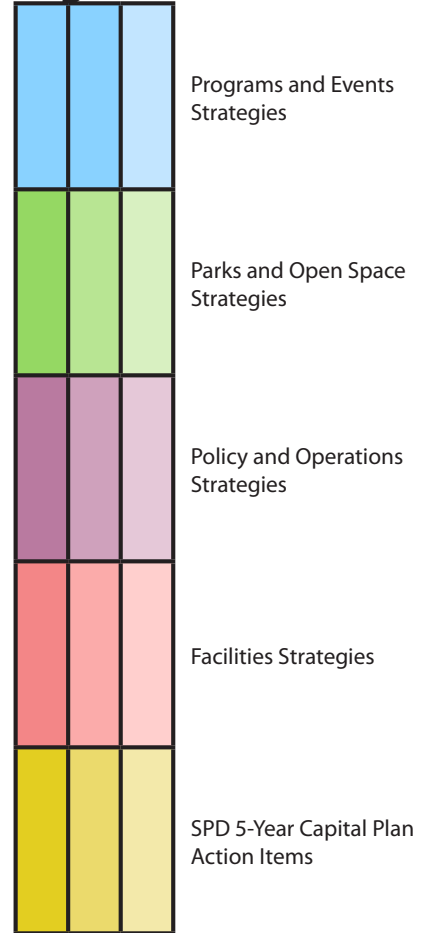
Year 2: 2027/2028

May Aug Nov Feb
 Jun Sep Dec Mar
 Jul Oct Jan Apr

Quarter 1 Quarter 2 Quarter 3 Quarter 4

Legend

Main-Hamlin Tennis Court Repairs			
Lockwood Park Renovations (continued)		Sequoyah Park Renovations	
Shawnee Park Renovations (continued)		Timber Ridge Mid Park Renovations	
Identify Short and Long-Term Opportunities for Facility Expansion F2.5			
Identify Operational Gaps That Impact Program Delivery F2.2			Map Program Scheduling F2.3
Conduct Heatmap Analysis for High-Demand Facilities F2.6			



Year 3: 2028/2029

May Aug Nov Feb
 Jun Sep Dec Mar
 Jul Oct Jan Apr

Quarter 1 Quarter 2 Quarter 3 Quarter 4

Legend

			Programs and Events Strategies
			Parks and Open Space Strategies
			Policy and Operations Strategies
			Facilities Strategies
			SPD 5-Year Capital Plan Action Items

Construct Channelside South (Continued)			
Construct Skokie Sports Park East (continued)			
Review Park Classification for Skokie Sports Park East PO2.1a			
Review Park Classification for Channelside Park South PO2.1a			
Channelside Park Trail Renovation (continued)			

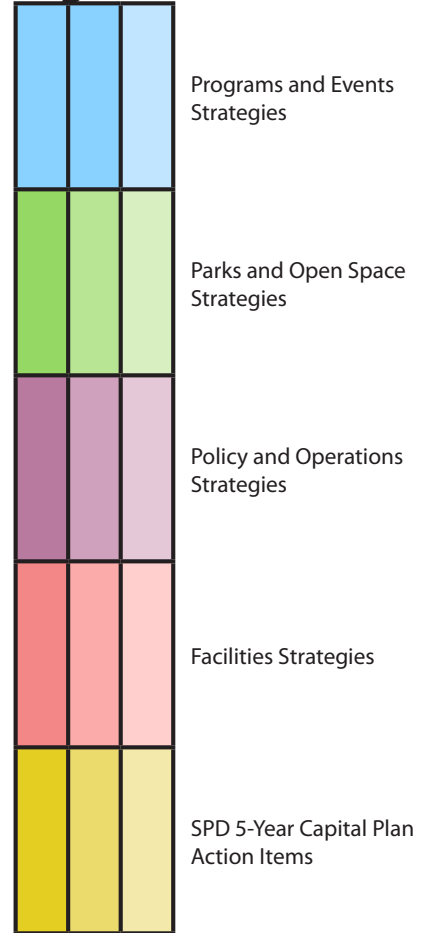
Year 3: 2028/2029

May Aug Nov Feb
 Jun Sep Dec Mar
 Jul Oct Jan Apr

Quarter 1 Quarter 2 Quarter 3 Quarter 4

Sequoyah Park Renovations (continued)			
Timber Ridge Mid Park Renovations (continued)			

Legend



Year 4: 2029/2030

May Aug Nov Feb
 Jun Sep Dec Mar
 Jul Oct Jan Apr

Quarter 1 Quarter 2 Quarter 3 Quarter 4

Legend

			Programs and Events Strategies
			Parks and Open Space Strategies
			Policy and Operations Strategies
			Facilities Strategies
			SPD 5-Year Capital Plan Action Items

			Build Staff Capacity Regarding Role Responsibilities PE3.2
Assess Each Indoor Facility for Potential Reconfiguration or Expansion F3.1			

Year 5: 2030/2031

May Aug Nov Feb
 Jun Sep Dec Mar
 Jul Oct Jan Apr

Quarter 1 Quarter 2 Quarter 3 Quarter 4

Build Staff Capacity Regarding Role Responsibilities (continued)			
Ensure Internal Training Includes Relationship Strengthening Opportunities PE2.6			
Consider Loyalty Incentives for Programs with Low Repeat Participation PE2.3			
Explore Feasibility of Adaptive Reuse or Small-Scale Additions F3.3			

Legend

			Programs and Events Strategies
			Parks and Open Space Strategies
			Policy and Operations Strategies
			Facilities Strategies
			SPD 5-Year Capital Plan Action Items

Current Fiscal Year (Present through April 30, 2026)

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

- Acquire Channelside South
 - Prepare Master Plan for Channelside South
- Prepare Master Plan for Skokie Sports Park East
- Investigate Ways to Improve Safety in All Parks

SPD 5-YEAR CAPITAL PLAN

- Park Renovations, including ADA play surfacing replacements, seating, and paving improvements:
 - Terminal Park - Completion
 - Lauth Park - Completion
 - Lee-Wright Park - Completion
 - Onondowa'ga Park - Completion
 - Emerson Park
 - Gleiss Park
 - Lyon Park

Fiscal Year 1 (May 1, 2026 through April 30, 2027)

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

- Referendum Channelside South
 - Design and Engineer Channelside South
- Referendum Skokie Sports Park East
 - Design and Engineer Skokie Sports Park East
- Investigate Ways to Improve Safety in All Parks (Continued from Current Fiscal Year)

POLICY AND OPERATIONS

- Explore Reduced Rate or Flexible Pricing Options
- Review Current Facility Fee Structure

SPD 5-YEAR CAPITAL PLAN

- Park Renovations, including ADA play surfacing replacements, seating, and paving improvements:
 - Emerson Park (continued from Current Fiscal Year)
 - Gleiss Park (Continued from Current Fiscal Year)
 - Lyon Park (Continued from Current Fiscal Year)
 - Lockwood Park
 - Shawnee Park

FACILITIES

- Explore Feasibility of Adaptive Reuse or Small-Scale Additions
- Conduct a Districtwide Facility Utilization Study
- Conduct Reviews of Facility Space Allocations

Fiscal Year 2 (May 1, 2027 through April 30, 2028)

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

- Design and Engineer Channelside South (Continued from Fiscal Year 1)
 - Construct Channelside South
- Design and Engineer Skokie Sports Park East
 - Construct Skokie Sports Park East
- Channelside Park Trail Renovation

POLICY AND OPERATIONS

- Explore Reduced Rate or Flexible Pricing Options (Continued from Fiscal Year 1)

SPD 5-YEAR CAPITAL PLAN

- Park Renovations, including ADA play surfacing replacements, seating, and paving improvements:
 - Lockwood Park (Continued from Fiscal Year 1)
 - Shawnee Park (Continued from Fiscal Year 1)
 - Sequoyah Park
 - Timber Ridge Mid Park
- Park Tennis Court Repairs
 - Lauth Park
 - Main-Hamlin
- Park Pickleball Court Repairs
 - Lauth Park

FACILITIES

- Identify Short and Long-Term Opportunities for Facility Expansion
- Identify Operational Gaps That Impact Program Delivery
- Conduct Heatmap Analysis for High-Demand Facilities
- Map Program Scheduling

Fiscal Year 3

(May 1, 2028 through April 30, 2029)

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

- Construct Channelside South (Continued from Fiscal Year 2)
 - Review Park Classification for Channelside Park South
- Construct Skokie Sports Park East (Continued from Fiscal Year 2)
 - Review Park Classification for Skokie Sports Park East
- Channelside Park Trail Renovations (Continued from Fiscal Year 2)

SPD 5-YEAR CAPITAL PLAN

- Park Renovations, including ADA play surfacing replacements, seating, and paving improvements:
 - Sequoyah Park (Continued from Fiscal Year 2)
 - Timber Ridge Mid Park (Continued from Fiscal Year 2)

Fiscal Year 4

(May 1, 2029 through April 30, 2030)

PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

- Build Staff Capacity Regarding Role Responsibilities

FACILITIES

- Assess Each Indoor Facility for Potential Reconfiguration of Expansion

Fiscal Year 5

(May 1, 2030 through April 30, 2031)

PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

- Build Staff Capacity Regarding Role Responsibilities (Continued from Fiscal year 4)
- Ensure Internal Training Includes Relationship Strengthening Opportunities
- Consider Loyalty Incentives for Programs with Low Repeat Participation

FACILITIES

- Explore Feasibility of Adaptive Reuse or Small-Scale Additions

Fiscal Year 5+ (May 1, 2031 and Beyond)

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

- Evaluate Need for New Amenity Types and Trends (strategy PO1.3)
- Integrate Sustainable Transportation Into Park Planning (strategy PO4.1)

PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

- Identify Opportunities to Conduct Just-in-Time Marketing and Streamline Re-Enrollment (strategy PE2.1)
- Conduct Targeted Outreach for Popular New User Programs (strategy PE2.2)
- Create Past Customer Outreach Process (strategy PE2.4)
- Collect and Promote Testimonials (strategy PE2.5)
- Identify and Develop Bundled/Sequenced Programs to Ease Participant Transition (strategy PE2.7)
- Review End-of-Life Programs (strategy PE3.3)
- Explore Operation Improving Opportunities for High Resource Demanding Programs (strategy PE3.4)
- Conduct Review and Clean-Up of RecTrac Database (strategy PE3.5)

FACILITIES

- Deepen Facility-Level Energy and Resource Efficiency (strategy F4.1)
- Ensure Facilities Operate with Little Environmental Impact (strategy F4.2)
- Implement Green Purchasing Policies for Materials and Equipment (strategy F4.4)
- Aim for LEED or Equivalent Green Certification on Major Renovations or New Construction (strategy F4.5)
- Leverage Planned Solar Panel Projects to Increase Renewable Energy Use (strategy F4.6)
- Explore Feasibility of Reusable Dishware Programs at Major Facilities (strategy F4.8)
- Prioritize Renovation of Aging Buildings and Invest in Infrastructure Upgrades (strategy F5.1)

Reoccurring Items

In addition to the Action Plan items, there are several items that should occur on a regular basis, often in coordination with or as part of one or more Action Plan items.

Reoccurring Items

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

- Continue to Implement Park District's 5-Year Capital Plan (strategy PO1.1)
- Continue to Monitor Land Availability and Partnership Opportunities (strategy PO3.1)
- Coordinate with Village and Regional Partners to Pursue Incremental Parcels (strategy PO3.3)
- Identify Key Areas for Continued Integration of Resilience Planning (strategy PO4.2)
- Make Sustainability More Visible and Participatory (strategy PO4.3)

POLICY AND OPERATIONS

- Continue Development of Staff Training/Service Standards (strategy O1.5)
- Enhance Promotion of Community Events/Programs/Environment (strategy O1.2)
- Explore Translation/Accessibility/Assistive Tech Tools (strategy O1.7)
- Conduct Climate Vulnerability Assessments for Parks and Facilities (strategy O3.3)
- Continue Evaluating Communication Channels to Improve Clarity (strategy O1.1)
- Create Tailored Outreach for New Participants (strategy O1.3)
- Review and Improve Program Registration Process (strategy O1.4)
- Continue Management of Online Business and Social Media Platforms (strategy O1.6)
- Maintain a Unified Sustainability and Climate Action Framework (strategy O3.1)
- Develop Measurable Sustainability Metrics (strategy O3.2)
- Improve Public Communications (strategy O4.3)
- Broaden Renewable Energy Use and Storage Capacity (strategy O3.4)
- Consider Redeveloped Approach to Public Communication and Sustainability Metrics (strategy O3.5)
- Map Hazard Exposure (strategy O3.6)
- Assess Critical Infrastructure (strategy O3.7)
- Adopt Adaptive Design and Management Measures (strategy O3.8)
- Evaluate and Apply Findings to Inform Capital Projects (strategy O3.9)
- Consider Increasing Renewable Energy Capacity and Efficiency (strategy O3.10)
- Consider Collaborative Green-Driven Events with Village and Partners (strategy O3.11)
- Consider Interpretive Signage Design and Installation Within Park Improvements (strategy O3.12)
- Continue Pricing Evaluation Through community Outreach (strategy O4.4)
- Review Current Partnership Agreements (strategy O2.1)
- Evaluate Staff Capacity for Partnership Management (strategy O2.5)
- Strengthen Collaboration with Village and Surrounding Agencies (strategy O2.2)
- Explore Partnerships with Local Nonprofits and Civic Groups (strategy O2.3)
- Identify Opportunities for Cross-Promotion and Co-Hosted Events (strategy O2.4)

Reoccurring Items

PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

- Use Touchpoints to Broaden Cross-Promotion of Programs (strategy PE1.1)
- Identify Opportunities to Reduce Gender Participation Disparity (strategy PE1.2)
- Conduct Additional Outreach to Understand How to Better Serve Adults (strategy PE1.3)
- Evaluate Opportunities to Better Address Representational Needs and Potential Conflicts (strategy PE1.4)
- Continue to Identify New Program and Event Options Celebrating Diversity (strategy PE1.5)
- Identify and Monitor Key Recreation Program and Service Metrics (strategy PE3.1)
- Continue Addition of Translation Kiosks at Programs and Facilities (strategy PE4.1)

FACILITIES

- Evaluate Facility Needs for High-Impact Programs (strategy F1.1)
- Strengthen Coordination Between Facilities and Programming Operations (strategy F1.2)
- Identify Potential Mismatches Between Program Needs and Available Facility Space (strategy F1.3)
- Apply Camp Registration Knowledge to Internal Processes (strategy F1.4)
- Consider Peak Usage Times, Facility Needs, and Safety Staffing (strategy F1.5)
- Evaluate Ancillary Needs (strategy F1.6)
- Leverage Planned Capital Improvements to Meet Program Demands (strategy F1.7)
- Explore Opportunities for Shared or Multi-Use Programming Areas (strategy F1.8)
- Continue Shared-Use Agreements or Partnerships During Peak Demand Periods (strategy F3.4)
- Support Planned Facility Enhancements (strategy F3.5)
- Minimize Waste Generation and Expand Recycling and Reuse Efforts (strategy F4.7)
- Incorporate Sustainability Considerations Into Long-Term Facility Planning and Renovations (strategy F4.9)
- Continue Building Retrofits, Upgrades, and Smart Building Systems as Noted in the 5-Year Capital Plan (strategy F4.3)
- Align 5-Year Capital Plan with Evolving Community Priorities and Sustainability Goals (strategy F5.2)
- Consider Indoor Swimming Facility*

*Skokie Park District acknowledges that a request for an indoor swimming pool or aquatic facility was voiced by residents during the engagement phase of the master planning process. Due to the amount of space needed and the high costs of building, operating, and maintaining such a facility, Park District leadership has chosen to prioritize other items over the next five years. However, the Park District will continue to consider an indoor pool or aquatic center as opportunities for space and funding arise.





CHAPTER THREE

Analyze

Inventory & Analysis





Overview

The Analyze: Inventory and Analysis Chapter provides a description and illustration of the existing conditions of the Skokie Park District, developing a baseline understanding of the District's assets and programs.

Purpose

This chapter documents the inventory and analysis accomplished during the Analyze Phase of the comprehensive master planning process. This phase describes the context in which the District operates, the recreation services they provide, and the patrons that utilize parks, facilities, and programs.

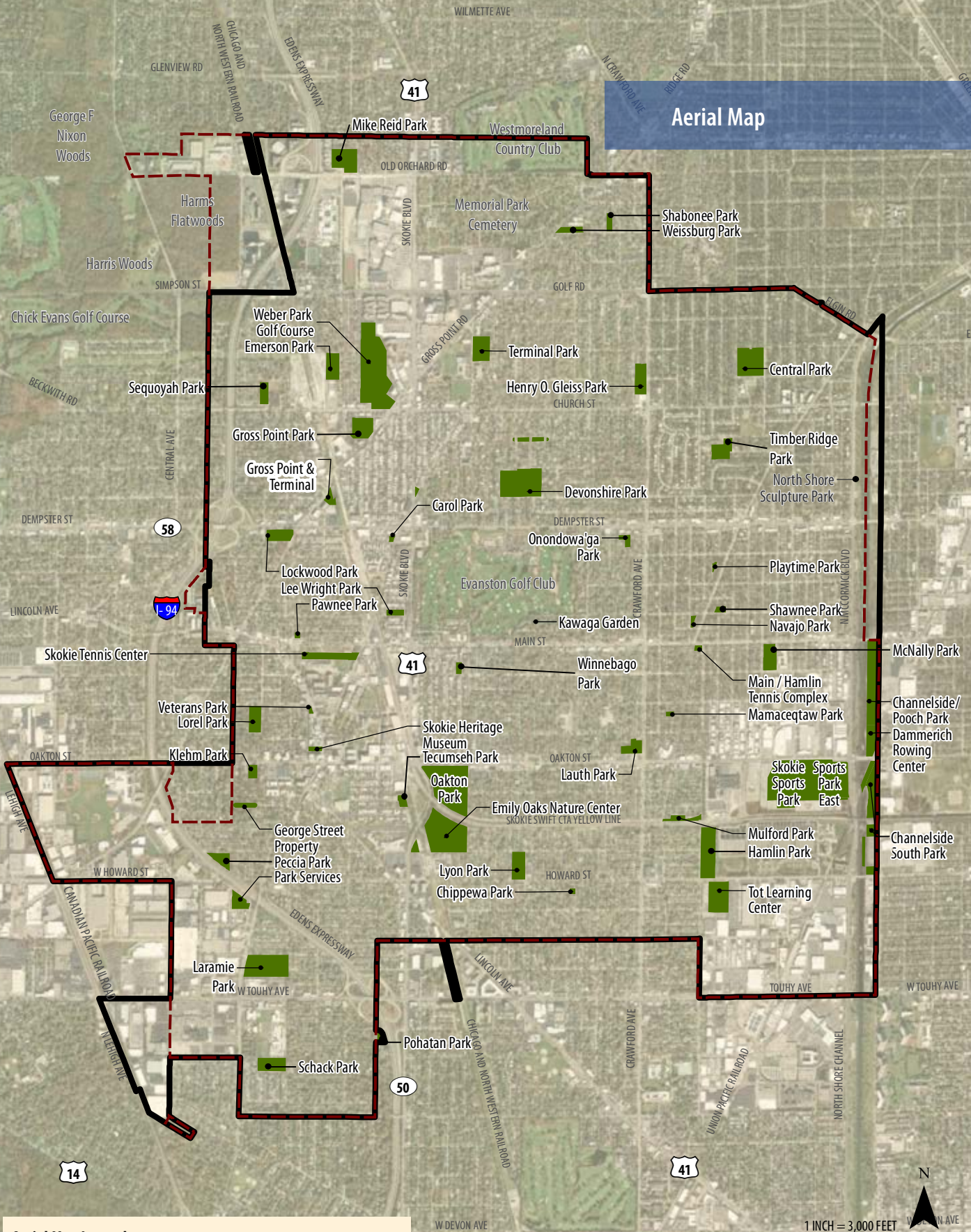
The following chapter defines the community's demographic context and provides detailed maps of the Park District that identify parks, open space, and other relevant land uses. It also includes the level of service analysis for parks and amenities, benchmarking the District's total acreage of parks and open space and the number of amenities to local, state, and national benchmarks. A distribution mapping analysis of the geographic location of parks is also found in this chapter. Finally, a program analysis was completed using District records and staff assessments.

This information provides insight into how the Park District compares to recognized benchmarks in terms of parks, open space, and recreation amenities.

Chapter Outline

- Demographics
- Existing Conditions
- Asset Inventory
 - Park Classifications
 - Park & Open Space Inventory Matrix
 - Indoor Facility Inventory Matrix
- Level of Service Analysis
 - Acreage
 - Distribution
 - Mini Park Distribution Analysis
 - Neighborhood Park Distribution Analysis
 - Community Park Distribution Analysis
 - Overall Park Distribution Analysis
 - Amenities
 - Amenity Distribution Analysis
 - Facility Square Footage
- Program Assessment

Aerial Map



Aerial Map Legend

- District Boundary
- Village of Skokie
- SPD Park

1 INCH = 3,000 FEET

0 750 1,500 3,000 FEET

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Demographics

The demographic review utilized the Environmental Systems Research Institute (Esri) Business Analyst Online (BAO) software to gather up-to-date demographic data necessary to gain an understanding of the Park District and its context.

Summary

According to 2024 estimates, the Skokie Park District has a population of 64,598. Total population numbers from 2020 indicate the population is decreasing at an annual rate of -0.61%. The population is expected to continue decreasing into 2029, where the population is projected to be 62,641. The Park District's population is falling at a faster rate than the state at -0.34% while the national population is growing at a rate of 0.38%.

There are 23,455 households within the Park District. According to the US Census, a household "includes all the persons who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence." Although the overall population has decreased since 2020, the number of households increased, indicating a larger portion of the population is living with at least one other person. Out of these 23,455 households, 71.9% (16,860) are families, which is lower than the percent from 2020 (73.5%), indicating a gradual shift toward a higher proportion of non-family households, where more residents are either living alone, with roommates, or in other non-family arrangements. A family is defined as a household in which one or more people are related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption. The average household size is 2.72. This is a small decrease from 2020 (2.81) and the number is projected to shrink further to 2.65 by 2029.

Age Distribution

With a median age of 43.3, the Park District has a mature, aging population. According to 2024 estimates, 47.7% of the population is over the age of 45. This percent is expected to increase to 49.0% in 2029, which is consistent with the projected median age increase to 44.2 over the next five years. The aging active adult (55+) and senior (65+) populations are, and will continue to be, a major District demographic as well.

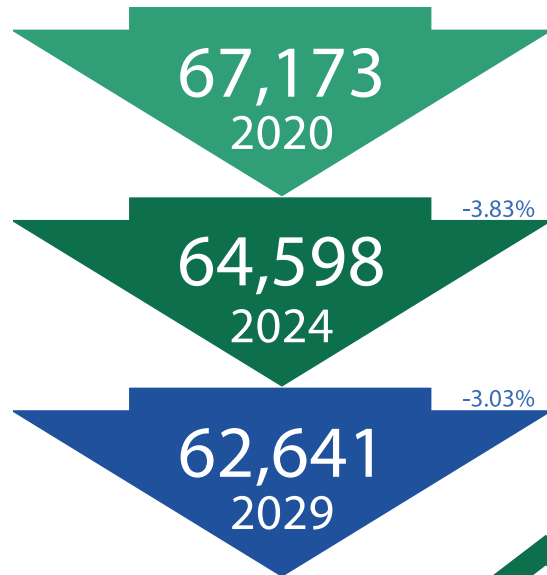
Race and Ethnicity

According to Esri, the Skokie Park District has a diversity index of 72.8. The diversity index captures the racial and ethnic diversity of a geographic area in a single number, 0 to 100, and allows for efficient analysis of diversity throughout the U.S. The Diversity Index is "the likelihood that two persons, selected at random from the same area, would belong to a different race or ethnic group." According to demographic estimates, 51.4% of Park District residents indicate their race as White and 27.7% report their race as "Asian Alone", which results in a high diversity index. In addition, 8.0% report as "Black Alone", 7.8% report "Two or More Races," and 4.6% as "Some Other Race Alone". The remaining 0.5% of the population reported their race as American Indian alone. Separately, 10.6% of the population identifies as Hispanic. Skokie's diversity index is expected to increase by 2029 as the minority racial and ethnic groups are projected to increase over the next five years.

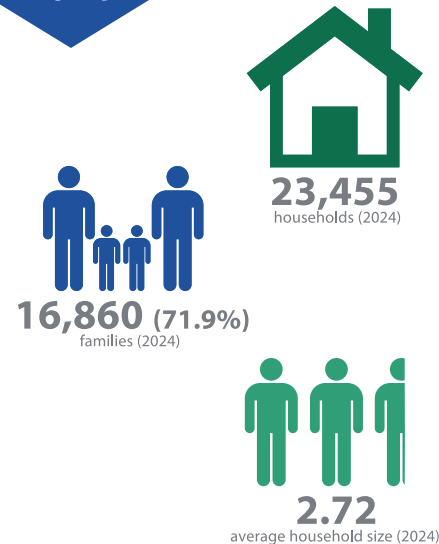
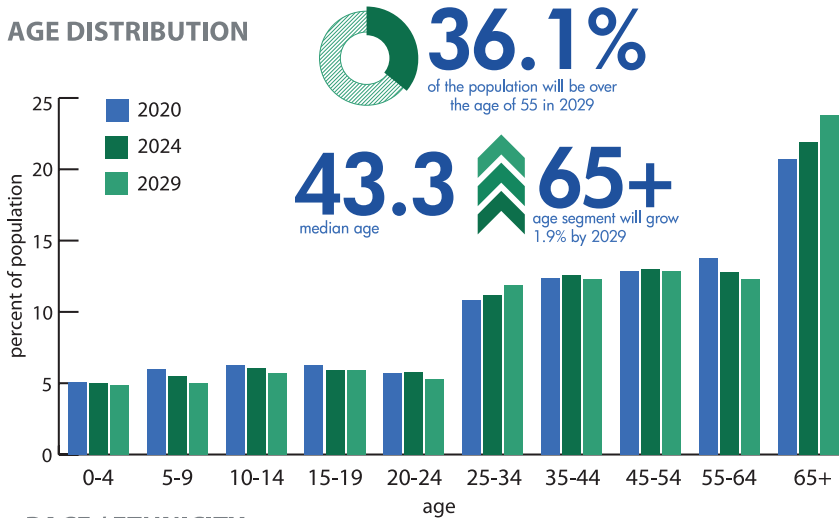
Income

The Skokie Park District median household income of \$91,648 in 2024 is significantly higher than both the state and national medians of \$81,015 and \$79,068, respectively. It is expected that median household income in the District will increase at a rate of about 2.99% per year. This is higher than the projected growth for both the state and the nation (2.70% and 2.95%, respectively), therefore the median household income for Park District residents will still be above the state and national median in 2029. Overall, the percent of Skokie Park District residents in each income group is comparable to the state and national trends. Although lower than the state and national population (19.1% and 19.7%, respectively), 10.27% of District households fall below the federal poverty level, which was defined as \$31,200 for a family of four in 2024.

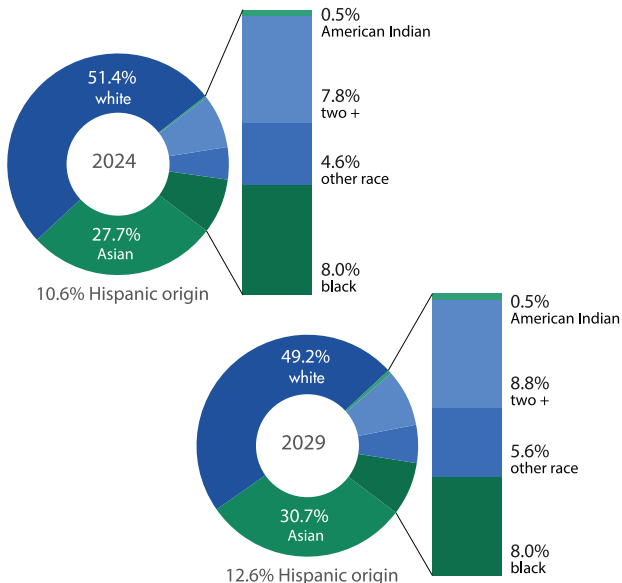
TOTAL POPULATION



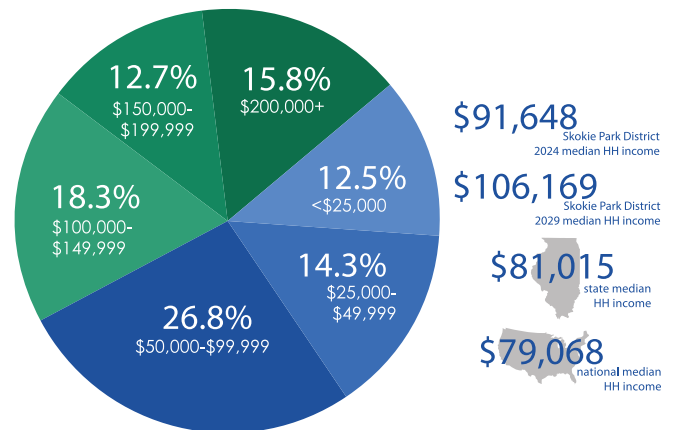
AGE DISTRIBUTION



RACE / ETHNICITY



INCOME DISTRIBUTION





Existing Conditions

The first step in the comprehensive planning process is to understand the Park District's surroundings and the existing conditions of the District's assets including land use and open space.

Land Use

The majority of the Skokie Park District is located within the Village of Skokie Zoning District and predominately consists of residentially zoned property. Most of these lots are designated for single-family homes, while multi-family development is generally located near the center of the Village. The remaining land uses are a mix of business, light industrial and public land. While public and commercial land is located throughout the Village, industrial use is concentrated in the southeast, southwest, and northwest corners of the Village. The Skokie zoning map can be found in the Appendix.

Open Space Providers

The Park District is one of many open space and outdoor recreation providers within the community. The Forest Preserve District of Cook County and other agencies provide regional active and passive recreation opportunities while preserving significant open space assets adjacent to the District boundary. School Districts also provide outdoor recreation opportunities at elementary, middle, and high school properties. Private agencies provide pay-to-play opportunities such as golf courses. The map to the right displays public and private open spaces within the Skokie Park District.

Public Open Space

Park District, Municipal, Forest Preserve District, and State land

The Skokie Park District owns more than 245 acres of active and passive open space and over 250,000 square feet of indoor facility space. The Forest Preserve District of Cook County owns nearly 10 acres and the Village of Skokie owns nearly 75 acres of open space within the District boundaries.

Institutional Open Space

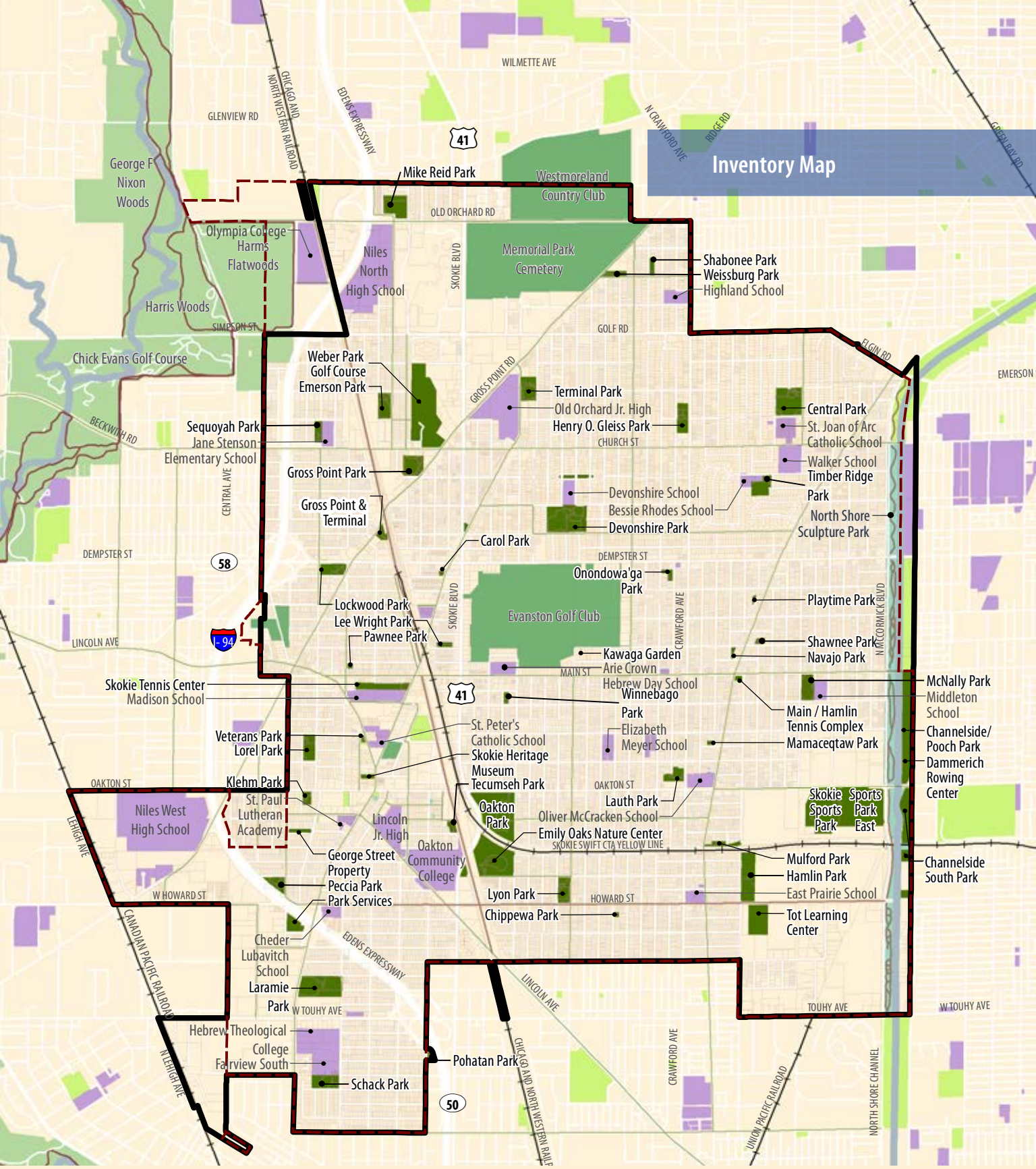
Elementary, Middle, and High Schools; Colleges / Universities

There are eight elementary school districts and two high school districts serving Park District residents. In addition to public schools, there are eight private elementary and high schools within the Park District, as well as 23 specialty schools. Over 300 acres of public and private school open space is available to Park District residents.

Private Open Space

There are two privately-owned golf courses fully or partially within the Park District boundaries. The Westmoreland Country Club (64.04 acres) and Evanston Golf Club (162.55 acres) each offer 18-hole golf courses and other outdoor recreation amenities. Part of the 18-hole Westmoreland Country Club also overlaps with the Skokie Park District boundary.

Inventory Map



Inventory Map Legend

- District Boundary
- Local Trail
- Regional Trail
- SPD Park
- Private Open Space
- Village of Skokie
- Park Path
- Forest Preserve Trail
- Forest Preserve
- Village Open Space
- School
- Adjacent Park District Park

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1 INCH = 3,000 FEET

0 750 1,500 3,000 FEET



Asset Inventory

As a part of the planning process, the planning team referenced the guidelines outlined by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) - Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines Manual.

NRPA recommends creating a park classification system to serve as a guide for organizing an agency's parks. Park, Recreation, and Greenway Classification Guidelines are expressions of the minimum amount and development of land a community should provide for different classifications or types of parks, open space, and greenways.

Mini park, neighborhood park, community park, large urban park, and sports complexes are the five classifications for parks recognized by the NRPA. Commonly, school parks serve similar functions as neighborhood parks and large urban parks and sports complexes are included in the community park category.

These categories are based on size, function, and use. Mini parks are the smallest and most limited in function, while community parks are typically the largest parks of a system and serve a variety of functions for the community. Other open space categories recognized by the NRPA are natural areas; trails, corridors or linear Parks; and special use. Undeveloped parks are sites not yet developed for meaningful access. This category is recognized for planning purposes but is not an NRPA category.

These classifications are vital to a comprehensive level of service analysis. In the park and open space matrix on the following pages, amenities were quantified to understand the District's total recreational offerings.

The District's indoor space was also inventoried. It consists of a comprehensive list of the District's assets.

Active Parks

In addition to these park classifications, NRPA provides additional recommendations based on type of park use. Mini, neighborhood, and community parks are considered active parks due to the variety and types of recreation amenities they typically provide. These active parks are designed to meet day-to-day resident recreation needs compared to the other park types which are more specialized or have more limited functions.

These classifications are vital to a comprehensive level of service analysis. In the park and open space matrix on the following pages, amenities were quantified to understand the District's total recreational offerings.

PARK CLASSIFICATIONS

	Classification	General Description	Location Criteria	Size Criteria	Park District Parks
Active Parks	Mini Park	Mini Parks meet the need for a walkable, drop-in recreation experience. Appropriate elements in these parks include playgrounds, picnic areas, and seating. These parks usually do not include parking. Are used to address limited, isolated, or unique recreational needs.	0.25 mile distance in a residential setting.	Typically 1 acre or less in size.	Carol Park, Chippewa Park, Lee Wright Park, Mamaceqtaw Park, Mulford Park, Navajo Park, Onondowa'ga Park, Pawnee Park, Playtime Park, Pohatan Park, Shabonee Park, Shawnee Park, Tecumseh Park, Allan A. Weissburg Park, Winnebago Park
	Neighborhood Park	Neighborhood Parks remain the basic unit of the park system and are generally designed for informal active and passive recreation and community gathering spaces. Elements in these parks often include playgrounds, picnic areas, a sports field and/or court, and trail systems. Neighborhood Parks serve as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood.	0.25 to 0.5 mile distance and uninterrupted by non-residential roads and other physical barriers.	Typically 1 to 5 acres.	Emerson Park, Henry O. Gleiss Park, Gross Point Park, Hamlin Park, Lauth Park, Lockwood Park, Lorel Park, Donald W. Lyon Park, McNally Park, Mike Reid Park, Peccia Park, Norman Schack Park, Sequoyah Park, Timber Ridge Park
	Community Park	Community Parks focus on meeting community-wide recreation needs. These parks may preserve unique landscapes and often serve the community as gathering places and for general athletics. Elements in these parks typically include playgrounds, pavilions, trails and path systems, and multiple sport courts and fields and serve a broader purpose than the neighborhood park.	Usually serves two or more neighborhoods and 0.5 to 3 mile distance.	As needed to accommodate desired uses. Minimum of 20 acres.	Central Park, Devonshire Park, Laramie Park, Oakton Park, Terminal Park
	Natural Area	Natural areas include conservation and wildlife areas, wooded areas, and waterways that are maintained for the most part in their natural state.	Service radius is unlimited.	No applicable standard.	Emily Oaks Nature Center, Kawaga Garden / Stein Property, Klehm Park
	Special Use	Special use facilities focus on meeting specialized community-wide recreation needs. Examples of these spaces, both indoor and outdoor, include golf courses, nature centers, and museums. Unlike Active Parks, they are not intended to meet the average visitors daily drop-in recreation needs.	No applicable standard.	Variable, depending on desired amenity.	Channelside / Pooch Park, Dammrich Rowing Center, Gross Point and Terminal Park, Main Hamlin Tennis Complex, Park Services, Skokie Heritage Museum, Skokie Park Tennis Center, Skokie Sports Park, Skokie Sports Park East, Tot Learning Center, Veterans Park, Weber Park and Golf Course
	Trail / Linear Park	Effectively tie park system components together to form a continuous park environment.	Resource availability and opportunity.	No applicable standard.	Skokie Valley Trail Exercise Station, George Street Parkway
	Undeveloped	Lands owned by the agency, but not yet developed with any amenities to provide meaningful access to the site such as trails, seating areas, and other passive and active recreation amenities.	No applicable standard.	No applicable standard.	Channelside South Park

Park & Open Space Matrix

The following matrix is the inventory of the Park District’s parks and open spaces, grouped by park classification. This table includes information on the park size and available amenities for each of the owned and maintained sites at the time of the comprehensive master planning process to present a complete review of the Park District’s outdoor recreation offerings.

This matrix also notes amenities beyond their useful life, indicated in red. These are amenities that have aged beyond the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) useful life criteria which sets expected lifespans, in years, for recreation amenities and provides evaluation criteria for assessing amenity condition. Amenities that are beyond their useful life are deducted from the Park District total and should be evaluated for maintenance or replacement.

Certain amenities included in this matrix do not have standardized or universally accepted definitions, and therefore cannot be consistently benchmarked across agencies. These amenities are identified in the table with an “X” to indicate their presence at a site, rather than being counted numerically. In contrast, amenities that are clearly defined and commonly benchmarked within the parks and recreation industry are quantified and reflected as numeric totals. This distinction ensures clarity in reporting while maintaining consistency with industry standards for comparison and analysis.

	ACREAGE		TRAILS		INDOOR FACILITIES			DAY USE AMENITIES					SPORTS COURTS AND AMENITIES						
	Acreege - Ovn	Acreege - Lease / Manage	Regional Trail Access	Multi-Use Trails (Miles)	Nature / Interpretive Trails	Indoor Program / Support Facility	Permanent Restrooms	Concessions	Little Free Libraries	Fitness Stations	Dog Park	Picnic Shelter	Playground	Basketball - Full Court	Basketball - Half Court	Basketball - Milled and Repaved	Volleyball Court	Pickleball Court	Pickleball Court - Milled and Repaved
PARK AND OPEN SPACE SYSTEM																			
Mini Parks																			
Allan A. Weissburg Park	1.7			0.16					1			1							
Carol Park	0.4											1							
Chippewa Park	0.3											1		1					
Lee Wright Park	1.1								1			1		1					
Mamaceqtaw Park	0.5											1							
Mulford Park	1.1			0.13					1			1	1			1			
Navajo Park	0.6											1		1		1			
Onondowa'ga Park	1.2			0.1								1	1						
Pawnee Park	0.3											1							
Playtime Park	0.2											1	1			1			
Pohatan Park	1.3								1			1	1			1			
Shabonee Park	1.2											1	1			1			
Shawnee Park	0.8								1			1	1						
Tecumseh Park	1.4		X	0.1					1			1	1			1			
Winnebago Park	0.8											1	1			1			
Mini Park Acreage	12.8	0.0																	
	12.8																		

Park & Open Space Matrix

	ACREAGE		TRAILS		INDOOR FACILITIES			DAY USE AMENITIES					SPORTS COURTS AND AMENITIES							
	Acreage - Own	Acreage - Lease / Manage	Regional Trail Access	Multi-Use Trails (Miles)	Nature / Interpretive Trails	Indoor Program / Support Facility	Permanent Restrooms	Concessions	Little Free Libraries	Fitness Stations	Dog Park	Picnic Shelter	Playground	Basketball - Full Court	Basketball - Half Court	Basketball - Milled and Repaved	Volleyball Court	Pickleball Court	Pickleball Court - Milled and Repaved	
Neighborhood Parks																				
Emerson Park	5.0			0.25					1			1	1							
Henry O. Gleiss Park	4.4			0.25								1	1	2						
Gross Point Park	5.0			0.28		X					1	1	1		1					
Hamlin Park		8.5		0.12	X		X		1			1	1					1		
Lauth Park	2.9								1			1			2	2				
Lockwood Park	5.0			0.16					1				1	2						
Lorel Park	4.4			0.33			X		1			1	1	1		1				
Lyon, Donald W. Park	4.0			0.35			X		1			1	1	1		1				
McNally Park	5.3											1								
Mike Reid Park	5.9			0.36	X				1	4		1	1		3				4	
Peccia Park	3.1			0.21					1			1	1	1		1	1			
Schack, Norman Park	4.2			0.27			X		1			1	1	2						
Sequoyah Park	1.7			0.19								1								
Timber Ridge Park*	4.0			0.15			X					1	3							
Neighborhood Park Acreage		54.9	8.5																	
		63.4																		
Community Parks																				
Central Park	10.0			0.44		X	X			4		1	1	1	2	3				
Devonshire Park	13.0			0.85		X	X		1			1	1	2						
Laramie Park	11.6			1.00			X		1	4		2	1	2		2		2	2	
Oakton Park	19.1			0.33		X	X	X	1			1	1	1		1		6		
Terminal Park	4.9			0.21			X		1			1	1	2		2				
Community Park Acreage		58.6	0.0																	
		58.6																		
*Timber Ridge Park: 2 of 3 playgrounds are beyond useful life																				
		126.3	8.5																	
ACTIVE PARK HOLDINGS		134.8	1	6.24	2	2	11	1	19	12	0	12	35	28	10	23	1	13	2	



SPORTS COURTS AND AMENITIES													WATER-BASED AMENITIES				NATURAL FEATURES			LAWN GAME AMENITIES					
Tennis Court	Tennis Court - Milled and Repaved	Tennis Court with Pickleball Overlay	Tennis Court with Pickleball Overlay - Milled and Repaved	Baseball / Softball Field	Batting Cages	Cricketer Field	Futsal Court	Soccer Field	Foot Golf Course (Holes)	Golf Driving Range (Bays)	Golf Course (Holes)	Miniature Golf (holes)	Skate Park	Boat Launch	Ice Skating Rink	Sled Hill	Splash Pad	Swimming Pool	Creek / River / Open Water	Natural Area	Community Gardens	Baggo	Pelotaque	Ping Pong	Teqball

		2	2																						
		2																							
1				1					2											X					
		2	2	1																					
		1		1																					
2	2			1																X					
				2																X					1
							1	1												X					
		2	2													1				X					
								1																	

4	4			2												1			X						
3	3			1													1		X						
2	2			2				3											X			2		1	
2	2			2														1	X			1	1		
		2	2	1																					

14	13	13	8	15	0	0	1	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	8	1	3	1	1	1
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Park & Open Space Matrix

	ACREAGE		TRAILS			INDOOR FACILITIES			DAY USE AMENITIES				SPORTS COURTS AND AMENITIES						
	Acreage - Own	Acreage - Lease / Manage	Regional Trail Access	Multi-Use Trails (Miles)	Nature / Interpretive Trails	Indoor Program / Support Facility	Permanent Restrooms	Concessions	Little Free Libraries	Fitness Stations	Dog Park	Picnic Shelter	Playground	Basketball - Full Court	Basketball - Half Court	Basketball - Milled and Repaved	Volleyball Court	Pickleball Court	Pickleball Court - Milled and Repaved
OTHER DISTRICT OPEN SPACE & FACILITIES																			
Natural Areas																			
Emily Oaks Nature Center	13.0		X	0.31	X	X	X						3	1					
Kawaga Garden / Stein Property	0.10			0.04															
Klehm Park	1.40			0.1															
Natural Area Acreage		14.5		0.0															
		14.5																	
Special Use																			
Channelside / Pooch Park		11.6		0.4							1	2	1						
Dammrich Rowing Center		3.4		0.12		X	X						1						
Gross Point and Terminal Property		1.2		0.1															
Main Hamlin Tennis Complex	0.6																		
Service Center	2.9					X													
Skokie Heritage Museum	0.3					X													
Skokie Park Tennis Center	9.3			0.21															
Skokie Sports Park		17.4				X	X	X				1							
Skokie Sports Park East		17.4		0.6	X														
Tot Learning Center	7.0					X						3							
Veterans Park	0.3																		
Weber Park and Golf Course	25.8					X													
Special Use Acreage		46.2		51.0															
		97.2																	



Park & Open Space Matrix

	ACREAGE		TRAILS			INDOOR FACILITIES			DAY USE AMENITIES				SPORTS COURTS AND AMENITIES							
	Acreage - Own	Acreage - Lease / Manage	Regional Trail Access	Multi-Use Trails (Miles)	Nature / Interpretive Trails	Indoor Program / Support Facility	Permanent Restrooms	Concessions	Little Free Libraries	Fitness Stations	Dog Park	Picnic Shelter	Playground	Basketball - Full Court	Basketball - Half Court	Basketball - Milled and Repaved	Volleyball Court	Pickleball Court	Pickleball Court - Milled and Repaved	
Trails, Corridors, and Linear Parks / Greenways																				
Skokie Valley Trail Exercise Station										4										
George Street Parkway	1.3																			
Trail, Corridor and Linear Park Acreage	1.3	0.0																		
	1.3																			
Undeveloped Park																				
Channelside South Park																				
Undeveloped Park Acreage	0.0	0.0																		
	0.0																			
	188.3	59.5																		
TOTAL DISTRICT HOLDINGS	247.8		2	8.12	4	9	14	2	19	16	1	19	40	28	10	23	1	13	2	

BEYOND USEFUL LIFE AMENITIES AT CURRENT STANDARDS	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	9	18	5	0	0	0	0
	9	14	2	19	16	1	9	31	10	5	23	1	13	2

Acreage information was derived from GIS data obtained from the District's recognized park acreage standards.

*all text in red indicates an amenity is beyond its useful life.

INDOOR FACILITIES	DAY USE AMENITIES				SPORTS COURTS AND AMENITIES								
Indoor Program / Support Facility	Restrooms	Concessions	Little Free Libraries	Fitness Stations	Dog Park	Picnic Shelter	Playground	Basketball - Full Court	Basketball - Half Court	Basketball - Milled and Repaved	Volleyball Court	Pickleball Court	Pickleball Court - Milled and Repaved



Indoor Facility Matrix

The following matrix is the inventory of the Park District's indoor facilities, grouped by specific use. This table includes information on the facility size and available amenities for each at the time of the Comprehensive Master Planning Process to present a complete review of the Park District's indoor recreation offerings.

	SQUARE FOOTAGE	RESTROOMS		ADMIN		ACTIVITY ROOMS						RECREATION AND FITNESS						OTHER				
		Restrooms	Locker Rooms	Reception Desk	Office	Kitchen	Concessions	Banquet / Community	Classroom / Multipurpose	Art Room	Teen Room	Auditorium	Gymnasium	Indoor Turf	Fitness / Weight Room	Aquatics	Indoor Activity Courts	Dance	Storage	General	Greenhouse	Maintenance
INDOOR FACILITIES																						
Recreation & Fitness Programming																						
Devonshire Cultural Center		2		1		3		6	1								1	7			2	
Devonshire Playhouse	31,665	2									1							4				
Devonshire Preschool		5																3				
Oakton Community Center		7		1	7	2		1	3									4			2	
Exploratorium	28,270	3		1	1																1	
Weber Leisure Center	69,242	6	4	2	14	1		1				2	1				2	9	2		2	
Recreation & Fitness Programming	129,177																					
Single-Use																						
Dammrich Rowing Center	9,138	2			1													2	1		1	
Emily Oaks Nature Center	12,485	4		1	2	1		1	5									3		1	2	
Skatium	48,891		8	1	5		1		1									4			2	
Skokie Sports Park Tee Structure	4,400																					
Club House	2,450	2		1	1		1	1										1				
Skokie Heritage Museum	2,838	2			1			1	1									1				
Log Cabin	345								1													
Tot Learning Center	14,350	10		1	2	1		1	7												2	
Single-Use	94,897																					
Aquatics																						
Devonshire Aquatic Center	5,150	2	2		1		1											2			1	
Skokie Water Playground	13,055	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	2									2			2	
Aquatics	18,205																					
Maintenance																						
Service Center	10,431	2	2	1	1	1												3			2	
Shop (Skokie Sports Park)	3,600	1																1			1	
Maintenance	14,031																					
TOTAL SQUARE FOOTAGE																						
	256,310	52	18	11	37	10	4	7	27	1	0	1	2	0	1	0	0	3	46	3	1	20
	Total Square Footage	Restrooms	Locker Rooms	Reception Desk	Office	Kitchen	Concessions	Banquet / Community	Classroom / Multipurpose	Art Room	Teen Room	Auditorium	Gymnasium	Indoor Turf	Fitness / Weight Room	Aquatics	Indoor Activity Courts	Dance	Storage	General	Greenhouse	Maintenance
	SQUARE FOOTAGE	RESTROOMS		ADMIN																		





Level of Service Analysis

This level of service analysis evaluates how well the Skokie Park District’s parks, facilities, and amenities are serving the current needs of the community. Level of service is evaluated through four different methods.

The development of a level of service standard for parks and recreation began in the 1980s with the development of levels of service for other infrastructure such as water, stormwater drainage, sewer systems, and transportation. These benchmarks provide agency officials with the ability to respond to growing communities, evolving demographics, and changing needs. It is important to note however, that these benchmarks are not strict rules that all communities should follow. These level of service benchmarks are simply another gauge for agencies to use when determining future needs and services.

According to the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), the level of service is a quantification of the park and recreation delivery philosophy and policy of a community. Its basic utility is in meeting a legal and/or economic requirement of quality service and equity. As a basic rule, a level of service benchmark should:

- Be practical and achievable
- Provide for an equitable allocation of park and recreation resources throughout a community with equal opportunity access for all citizens
- Reflect the real-time demand of the citizens for park and recreation opportunities

The level of service standard uses four measurements to help a community evaluate the comprehensiveness and equability of their current park and recreation offerings. These are:

1. **Acreage:** A calculation of the minimum amount of land required to provide all of the recreation activities and facilities required to support such activities
2. **Distribution:** An evaluation of how equitably park and open space sites are placed throughout the community, as well as how accessible existing sites are to residents
3. **Amenities:** A calculation of the minimum number of amenities and facilities required to meet state and/or national averages
4. **Square Footage:** A calculation of the minimum amount of indoor square footage required to provide all of the recreation programs and services

Historically, level of service analyses focused primarily on total park acreage, often using a national standard of 10 acres per 1,000 residents. Over time, park and recreation professionals recognized that this approach did not account for differences in community character, facility types, amenities, or geographic distribution. As a result, the NRPA now recommends using community-specific benchmarks rather than relying solely on national averages.

To support this approach, NRPA developed Park Metrics, an online benchmarking tool that allows park and recreation agencies to compare their systems with similar agencies based on factors such as population, budget, staffing, and services offered. Park Metrics includes thousands of data points from hundreds of agencies nationwide, providing more relevant and meaningful comparisons to inform local planning decisions.

The level of service analyses included in this Comprehensive Master Plan reference NRPA guidance, Park Metrics benchmarks, and applicable local and regional standards established by the State of Illinois and the planning team.



Acreage

Acreage level of service benchmarks are calculations of the recommended amount of land required to provide all of the recreation activities and facilities required to support such activities.

The NRPA's population ratio method (acres/1,000 population) emphasizes the direct relationship between recreation spaces and people and is the most common method of estimating an agency's level of service for parkland and open space. In addition to the baseline of 10 acres/1,000 population used in this analysis, Park Metrics benchmarks are also used to understand how the Skokie Park District compares to agencies of similar population size.

Based on the NRPA benchmark of 10 acres per 1,000 population, 645.98 acres of mini, neighborhood, and community park space is recommended for the Skokie Park District. The table on the right designates these park assets as "Active Recreation Areas." With 134.8 acres of open space dedicated to mini, neighborhood and community park uses, the District is 511.17 acres below this benchmark. The District has a level of service of 2.09 acres per 1,000 population, which is below the adopted baseline of 10 acres per 1,000.

When all District-owned and maintained open space is added to the level of service analysis, the District is 398.17 acres below the benchmark.

This level of service gauge includes Special Use Sites, Natural Areas, and Greenways in addition to mini, neighborhood, and community parks. The District has an overall level of service of 3.84 acres per 1,000 population.

Skokie is a densely populated, urban, land locked community with minimal undeveloped land available for acquisition. Based on this, the agency has adopted a goal of 5 acres per 1,000 population in alignment with NRPA's 2024 Agency Performance Review for the lower quartile of all agencies.

While the target is based on the lower quartile of urban communities outlined in the NRPA report, this goal reflects a practical strategy to address the need for recreational space while considering the limitations of urban density. It emphasizes the importance of providing essential green spaces and recreational amenities, even in areas where land availability is constrained. This approach ensures

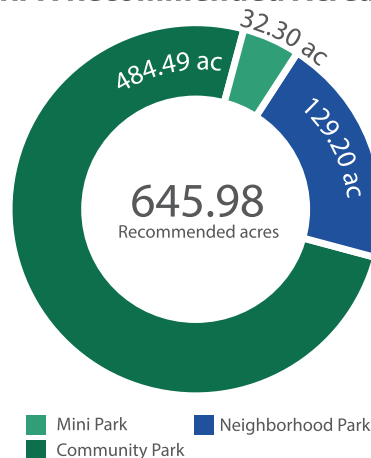
that residents have access to parks and outdoor spaces that enhance quality of life, promote physical and mental well-being, and support environmental sustainability.

The Park Metrics database was referenced to understand how the Skokie Park District compares to agencies across the nation with similar population sizes. The Skokie Park District has a 2024 population of 64,598. Out of over 600 agencies reporting, there were 27 agencies with populations between 60,000 and 70,000 across the U.S. Park Metrics provided information on the following level of service benchmarks:

- Total Number of Parks
- Total Park Acres
- Total Acres Managed
- Acres of Parks per 1,000 Residents

The Skokie Park District has 34 parks that total 247.81 acres, which is higher than the median of 24 total parks but lower than the median of 268 acres as reported by Park Metrics.

NRPA Recommended Acreage



Level of Service Analysis: 10 acres / 1,000 population

OWNED / LEASED ACTIVE RECREATION AREAS

Classification	SPD Acreage (Total)	SPD Existing Level of Service (acres / 1,000 population)	IAPD/NRPA Recommended Acreage	IAPD/NRPA Recommended Level of Service (acres / 1,000 population)	Above / Below Recommendation (acre)	Above / Below Recommendation (%)
Mini Park	12.81	0.20	32.30	0.50	-19.49	39.66%
Neighborhood Park	63.40	0.98	129.20	2.00	-65.80	49.07%
Community Park	58.60	0.91	484.49	7.50	-425.89	12.10%
Total Active Recreation Areas	134.81	2.09	645.98	10.00	-511.17	20.87%

Recommended acreage is based off the existing population of 64598

ALL SPD MANAGED OPEN SPACE

Classification	SPD Acreage (Total)	SPD Existing Level of Service (acres / 1,000 population)	IAPD/NRPA Recommended Acreage	IAPD/NRPA Recommended Level of Service (acres / 1,000 population)	Above / Below Recommendation (acre)	Above / Below Recommendation (%)
Mini Park	12.81	0.20	32.30	0.50	-19.49	39.66%
Neighborhood Park	63.40	0.98	129.20	2.00	-65.80	49.07%
Community Park	58.60	0.91	484.49	7.50	-425.89	12.10%
Natural Areas	14.50	0.22	0.00	0.00	14.50	N/A
Special Use	97.20	1.50	0.00	0.00	97.20	N/A
Greenways	1.30	0.02	0.00	0.00	1.30	N/A
Total SPD Open Space	247.81	3.84	645.98	10.00	-398.17	38.36%

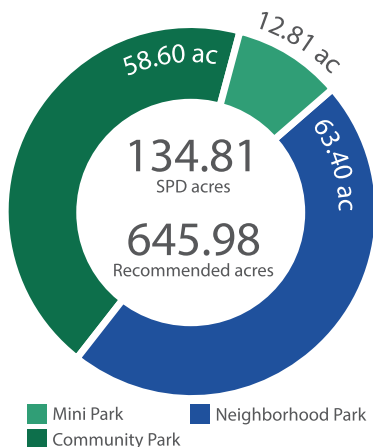
Recommended acreage is based off the existing population of 64598

ALL PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

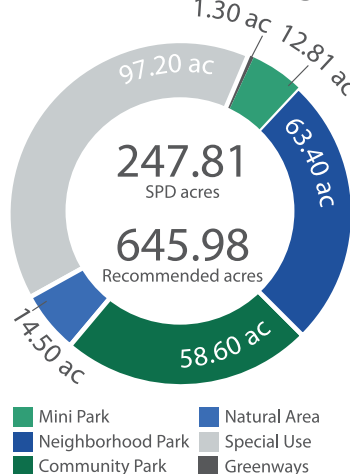
Classification	SPD Acreage (Total)	SPD Existing Level of Service (acres / 1,000 population)	IAPD/NRPA Recommended Acreage	IAPD/NRPA Recommended Level of Service (acres / 1,000 population)	Above / Below Recommendation (acre)	Above / Below Recommendation (%)
SPD Total Parks & Open Space	247.81	3.84	645.98	10.00	-398.17	38.36%
Other Public Open Space	145.73	2.26	0.00	0.00	145.73	N/A
School Open Space	306.60	4.75	0.00	0.00	306.60	N/A
Forest Preserve Open Space	9.70	0.15	0.00	0.00	9.70	N/A
Total Public Open Space	709.84	10.99	645.98	10.00	63.86	109.89%

Recommended acreage is based off the existing population of 64598

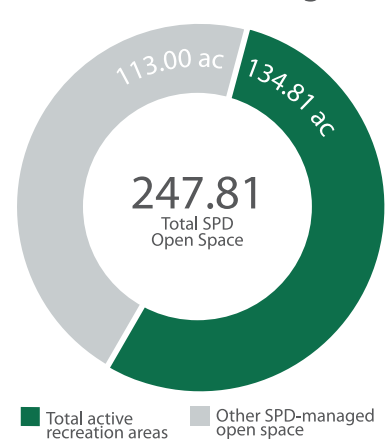
SPD Active Recreation Acreage



SPD-Owned Acreage



SPD Total Acreage



Distribution

Planning areas are used to analyze park distribution, land acquisition, and park facility redevelopment needs. Planning areas are delineated by major pedestrian barriers, including major roads or highways, railroad corridors, and natural features.

The location and geographic distribution of parks can offer an indication of how well an agency is serving its residents. Understanding where parks are located in relation to residential development determines who is underserved. This analysis may reveal the need for acquisition to expand service or may show that the Park District is serving the residents well and should focus on maintaining or updating existing assets.

Methodology

In the Skokie Park District, arterial roads and the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad serve as the main pedestrian barriers which resulted in 38 planning areas.

A service area, illustrated in the following maps with an orange halo, was created around each active park. The shape of each service area is determined by analyzing the existing road and sidewalk infrastructure to identify the actual route and distance one has to travel to access the park. The size of the service area is dependent upon the park classification and is either a quarter-, half-, or one-mile. The table on page 63 notes the various recommended service area distances for mini, neighborhood, and community parks. This analysis is only applied to District-provided active parks. Open space, special use, natural areas, and undeveloped sites are not included in this analysis.

Since planning area boundaries are considered barriers to safe or comfortable pedestrian access, and mini and neighborhood parks are considered walk-to

(walkable) destinations, service area buffers for mini and neighborhood parks were truncated to the planning area boundaries in which the park is located. For community parks, the boundaries were not truncated because these parks are seen as drive-to destinations.

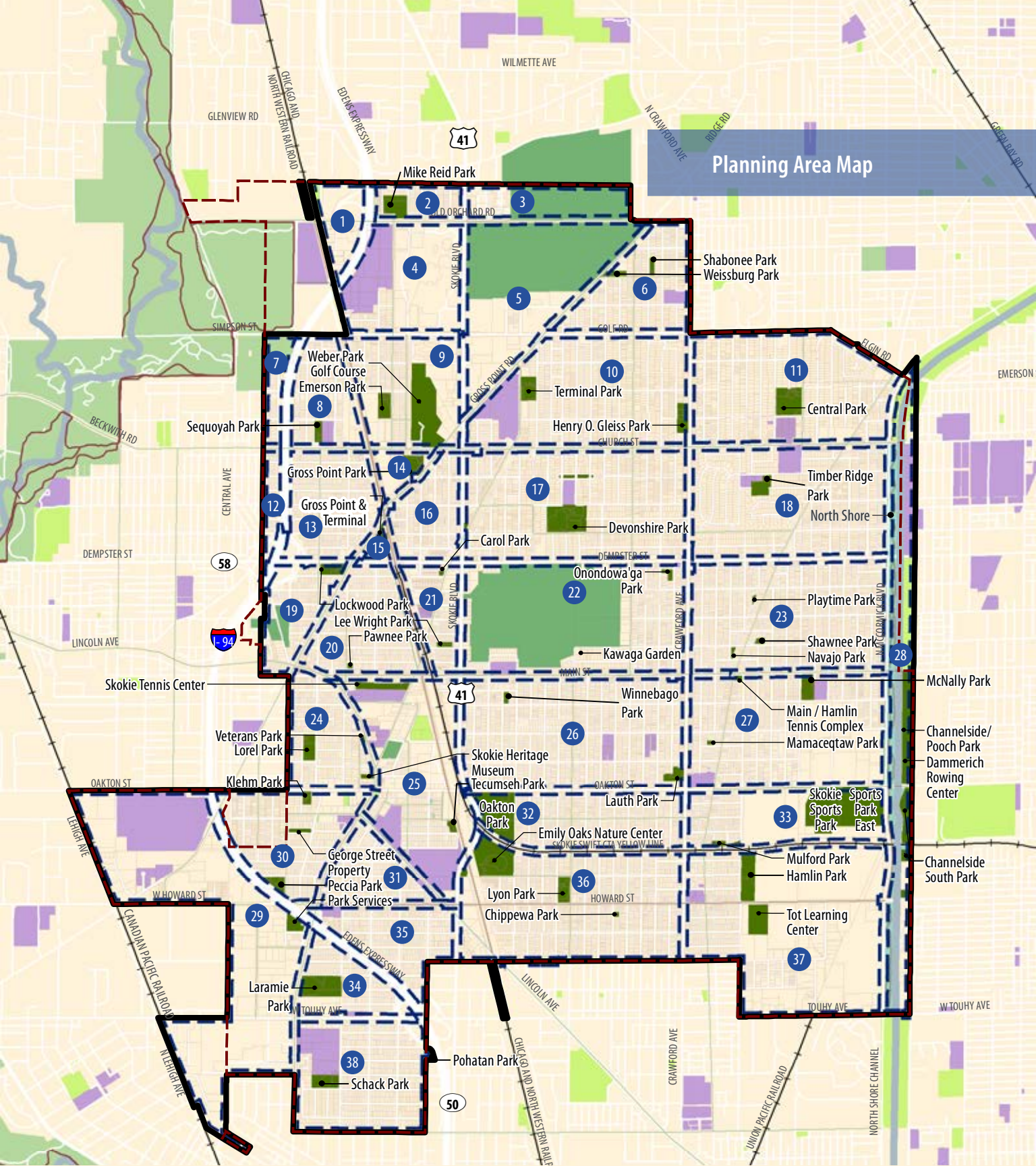
Finally, overlaying service area maps reveal which areas are most and least served by the existing park system. The orange service area buffers overlap to form a gradient that illustrates the degree to which residents are served. Residents who fall within the darker, more opaque orange areas are served by multiple parks and their amenities. Population for each planning and service area further informed the level of service analysis.

PA Population Explanation

The U.S. Census measures population by Census blocks, which are defined as “statistical areas bounded by visible features such as roads, streams, and railroad tracks, and by invisible boundaries such as property lines, city, township, school district, county limits and short line-of-sight extensions of roads.” Planning areas are bounded by similar visible features, although the Planning Areas shown on the following maps may not match up with the Census block boundaries for the community. Because of this, the Planning Area populations are estimations and the total may differ from the total population determined using the Park District boundary.

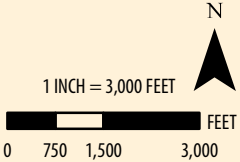
Planning Area	Total Population
1	101
2	721
3	772
4	226
5	513
6	1,227
7	213
8	829
9	2,090
10	3,161
11	2,738
12	266
13	1,319
14	526
15	0
16	3,635
17	3,983
18	3,018
19	841
20	1,488
21	2,363
22	1,488
23	4,296
24	1,785
25	3,400
26	6,186
27	2,341
28	74
29	128
30	1,816
31	1,169
32	1,803
33	612
34	672
35	1,191
36	4,407
37	1,155
38	1,984

Planning Area Map



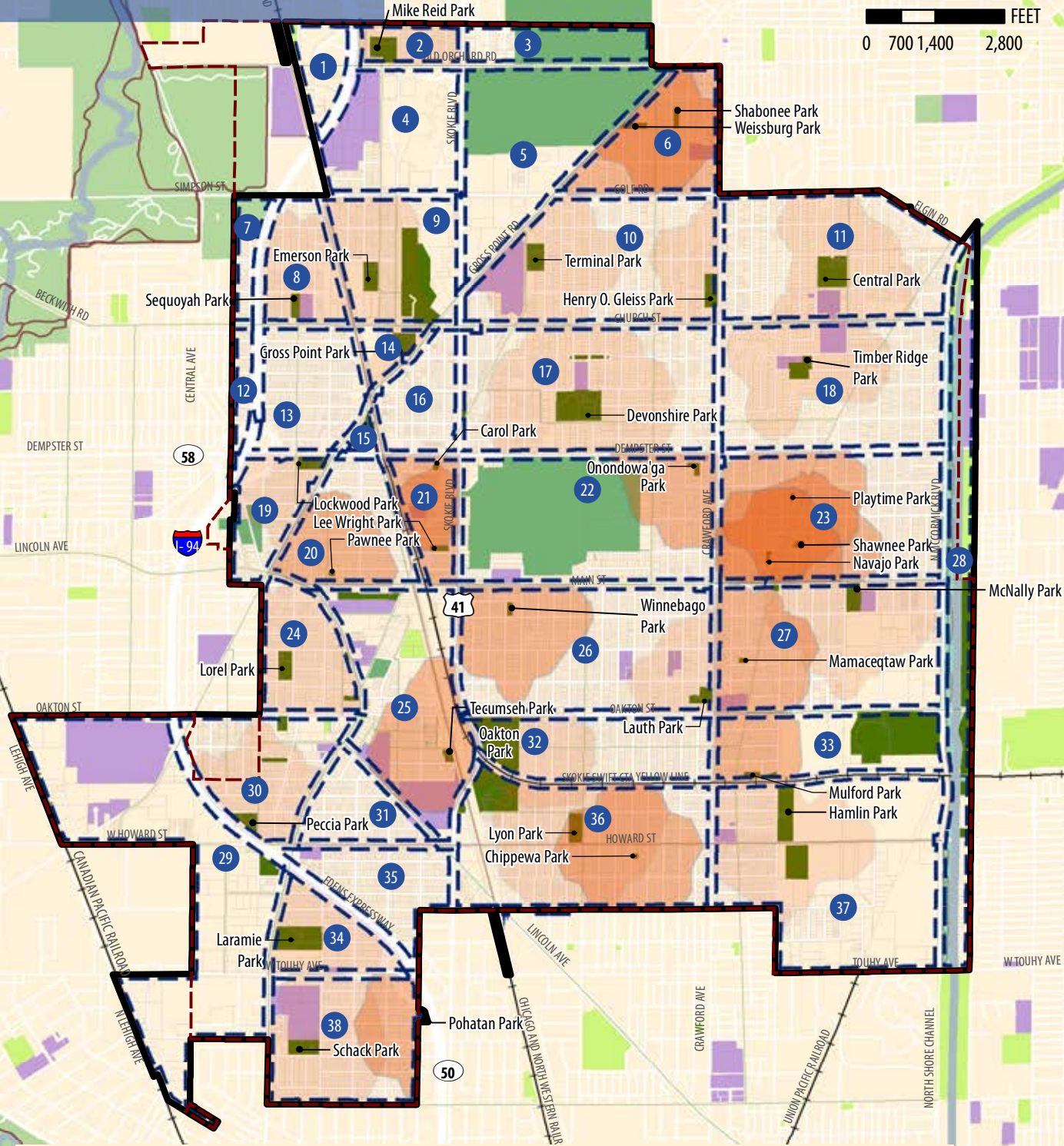
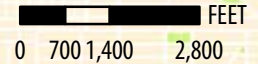
Planning Area Map Legend

- District Boundary
- Planning Areas
- Forest Preserve
- Private Open Space
- Adjacent Park District Park
- Village of Skokie
- SPD Park
- School
- Village Open Space



Mini Park Level Of Service

1 INCH = 3,000 FEET



Mini Park Service Area Map Legend

- Planning Areas
- SPD Park
- Forest Preserve
- Private Open Space
- 0.25-Mile Service Area
- School
- Adjacent Park District Park
- Village Open Space

Planning Area	Population Served	Percent Served	Population Not Served
1	0	0.0%	101
2	721	100.0%	0
3	0	0.0%	772
4	0	0.0%	226
5	0	0.0%	513
6	1,227	100.0%	0
7	0	0.0%	213
8	734	88.5%	95
9	833	39.9%	1,257
10	2,178	68.9%	983
11	1,500	54.8%	1,238
12	0	0.0%	266
13	0	0.0%	1,319
14	526	100.0%	0
15	0	N/A	0
16	0	0.0%	3,635
17	2,079	52.2%	1,904
18	1,209	40.1%	1,809
19	417	49.6%	424
20	1,050	70.6%	438
21	2,363	100.0%	0
22	715	46.2%	834
23	2,565	59.7%	1,731
24	1,785	100.0%	0
25	1,798	52.9%	1,602
26	4,095	66.2%	2,091
27	2,238	95.6%	103
28	0	0.0%	74
29	0	0.0%	128
30	1,054	58.0%	762
31	0	0.0%	1,169
32	614	34.1%	1,189
33	612	100.0%	0
34	672	100.0%	0
35	0	0.0%	1,191
36	3,228	73.3%	1,179
37	997	86.3%	158
38	1,889	95.2%	95

Mini Park Distribution Analysis

Mini parks meet the need for a walkable, drop-in recreation experience. Appropriate elements in these parks include playgrounds, picnic areas, and seating opportunities.

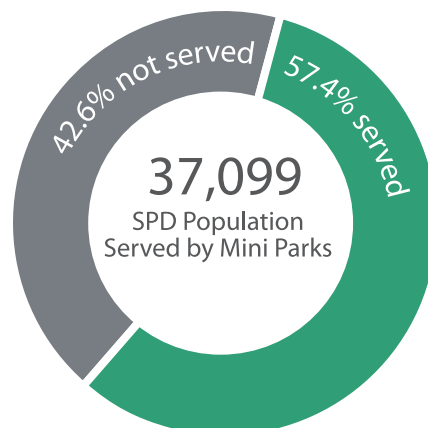
The purpose of the mini park distribution analysis is to determine which planning areas are underserved by the Park District’s existing mini park land holdings. The Skokie Park District has 15 mini parks between 0.2 and 1.7 acres in size.

The map to the left illustrates the quarter-mile (0.25-mile) service area reach for mini park service shown in orange. In addition to mini park locations, quarter-mile service areas are shown for neighborhood and community parks as these parks can serve the function of a mini park for those residents within a quarter-mile distance from the park.

The map illustrates where mini park service is concentrated within the Park District. More than half of the Skokie Park District residents, 57.4%, have access to an active recreation park within a 0.25-mile walk of their homes. Mini park service is heavily concentrated in planning areas 2, 6, 8, 14, 21, 24, 27, 33, 34, 37 and 38, with over 75% of the population in each area served by a park. Mini park service is scattered throughout the Park District.

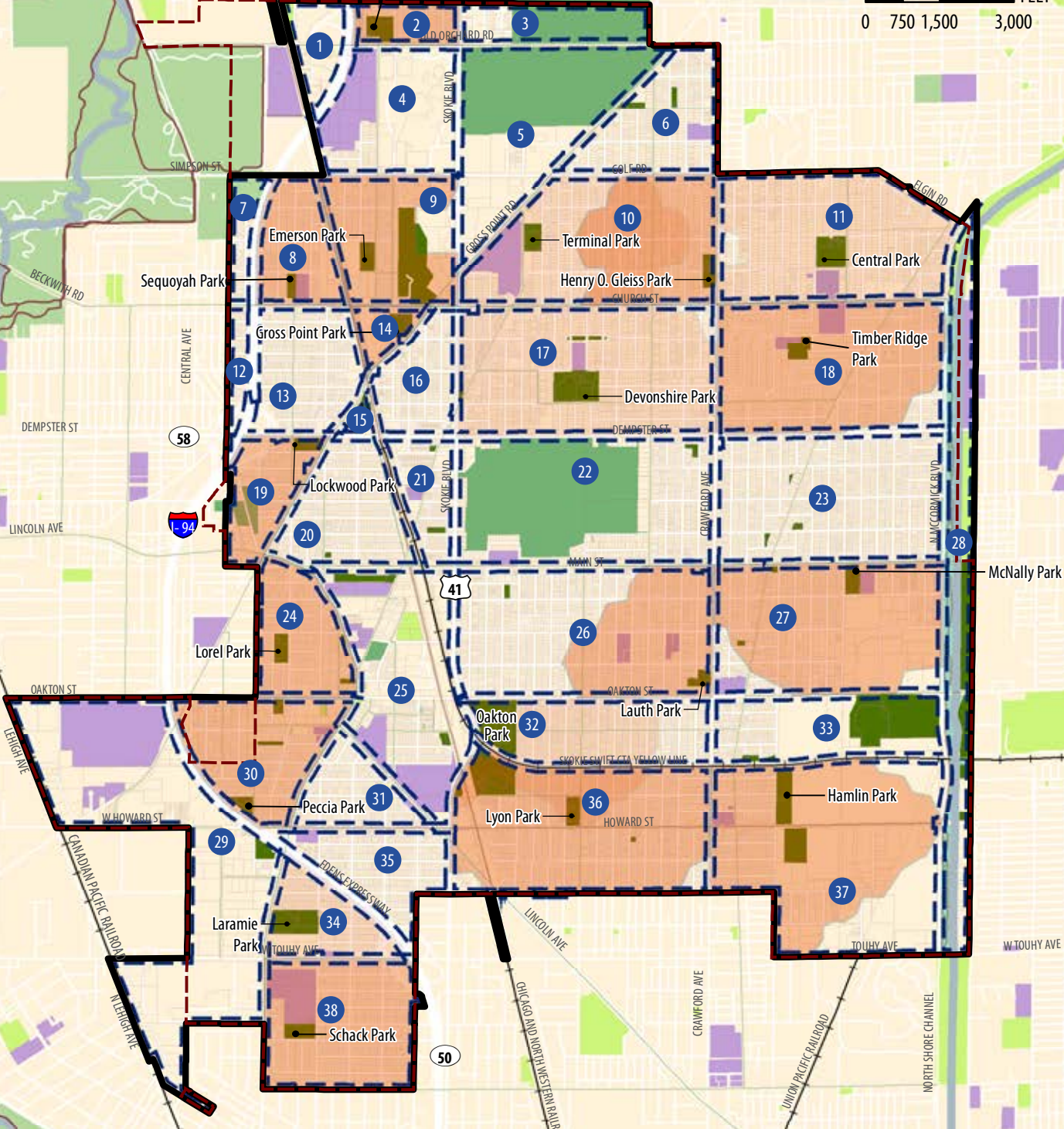
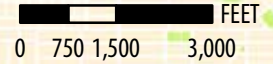
The most significant service gaps are in planning areas 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 12, 16, 28, 29, 31, and 35 where 0% of the population is served. In terms of population, planning areas 9, 11, 13, 16, 17, 18, 23, 25, 26, 31, 32, 35 and 36 have the largest gaps in service with over 1,000 unserved residents in each.

Despite the existing service gaps, some Park District residents may be finding active recreation access through other providers such as available public school properties.



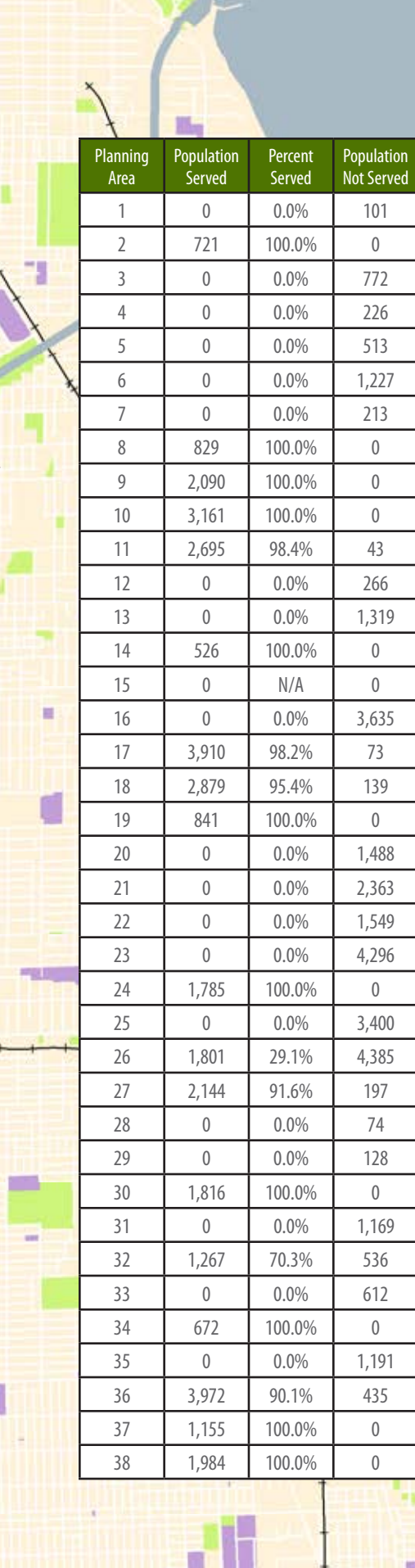
Neighborhood Park Level of Service

1 INCH = 3,000 FEET



Neighborhood Park Service Area Map Legend

- Planning Areas
- SPD Park
- Forest Preserve
- Private Open Space
- 0.5-Mile Service Area
- School
- Adjacent Park District Park
- Village Open Space



Planning Area	Population Served	Percent Served	Population Not Served
1	0	0.0%	101
2	721	100.0%	0
3	0	0.0%	772
4	0	0.0%	226
5	0	0.0%	513
6	0	0.0%	1,227
7	0	0.0%	213
8	829	100.0%	0
9	2,090	100.0%	0
10	3,161	100.0%	0
11	2,695	98.4%	43
12	0	0.0%	266
13	0	0.0%	1,319
14	526	100.0%	0
15	0	N/A	0
16	0	0.0%	3,635
17	3,910	98.2%	73
18	2,879	95.4%	139
19	841	100.0%	0
20	0	0.0%	1,488
21	0	0.0%	2,363
22	0	0.0%	1,549
23	0	0.0%	4,296
24	1,785	100.0%	0
25	0	0.0%	3,400
26	1,801	29.1%	4,385
27	2,144	91.6%	197
28	0	0.0%	74
29	0	0.0%	128
30	1,816	100.0%	0
31	0	0.0%	1,169
32	1,267	70.3%	536
33	0	0.0%	612
34	672	100.0%	0
35	0	0.0%	1,191
36	3,972	90.1%	435
37	1,155	100.0%	0
38	1,984	100.0%	0

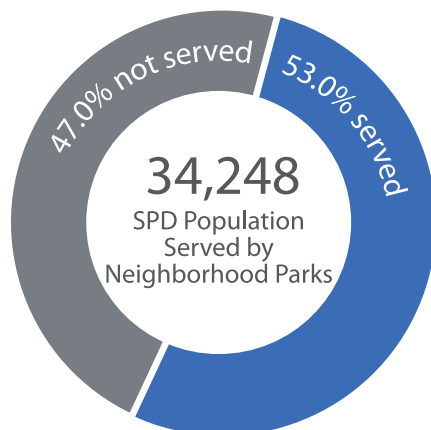
Neighborhood Park Distribution Analysis

Neighborhood parks remain the basic unit of the park system and are generally designed for informal active and passive recreation and community gathering spaces.

The purpose of the neighborhood park distribution analysis is to determine which planning areas are under-served by the Park District’s existing neighborhood park land holdings. Currently, the Park District has 14 neighborhood parks that range from 1.7 acres to 8.5 acres in size.

The map on the left illustrates the half-mile (0.5-mile) service area reach for neighborhood parks. This plan also illustrates a half-mile service area (shown in orange) for community parks, as these parks can serve the function of a neighborhood park for residents within a 0.5-mile from the park. According to NRPA’s Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines, neighborhood park service areas do not include residents who must cross a planning area boundary to reach the park. Service areas are truncated to all planning area boundaries.

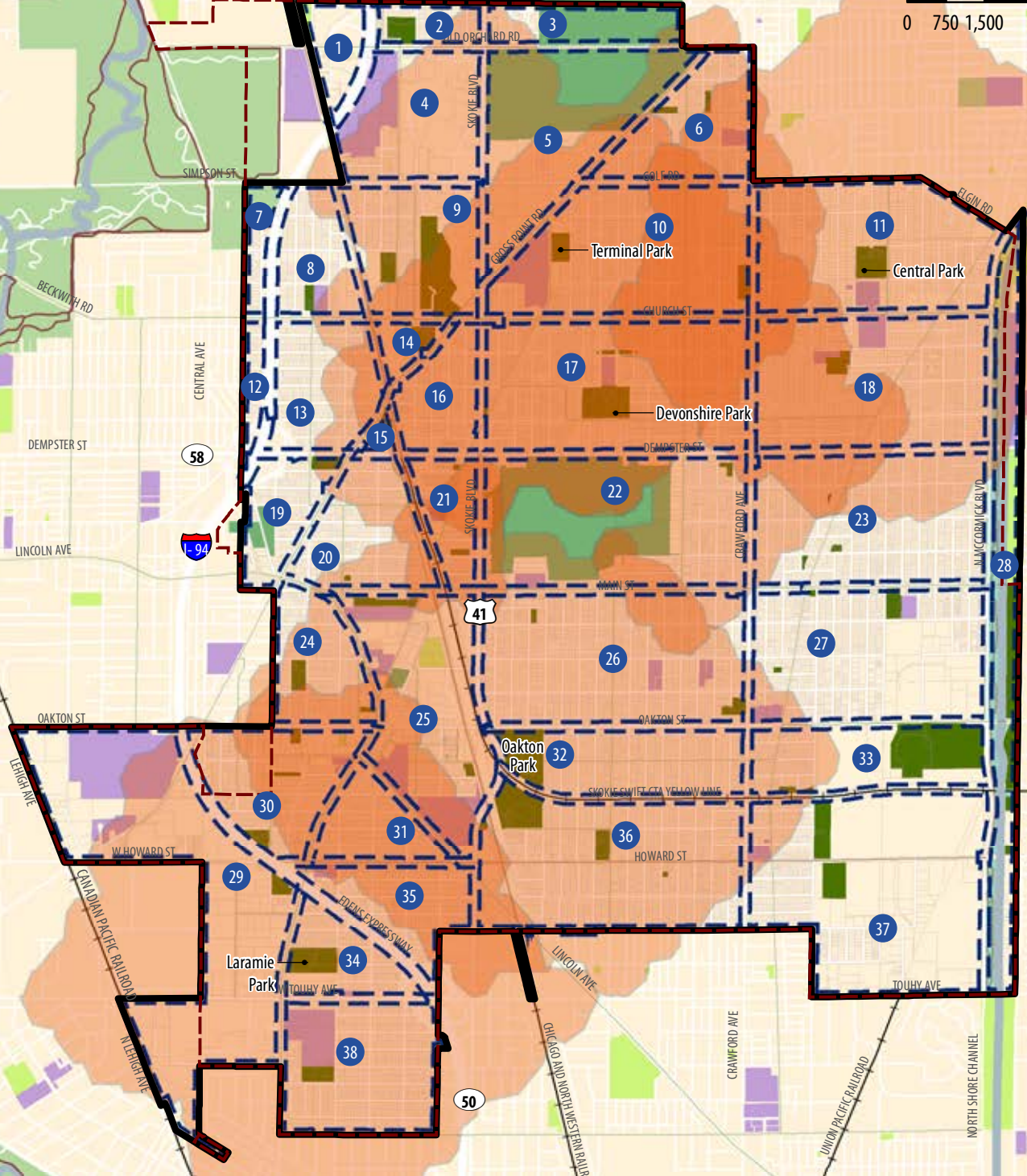
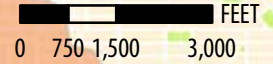
In total, 34,248 people, or 53.0%, of Skokie Park District residents are served by a neighborhood or community park within a 0.5-mile walk of their home. Planning Areas 2, 8, 9, 10, 14, 19, 24, 30, 34, 37, and 38 are the best-served areas, all having 100% of their residents served. The largest service gaps for neighborhood parks are Planning Areas 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 16, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 28, 29, 31, 33, and 35 where 0% of the population is served. In total, 24,542 people do not have access to a neighborhood or community park. Although the percent of unserved residents is important, it is also important to note the number of unserved residents in planning areas with partial service coverage. Although planning area 26 does have some neighborhood park service coverage, there are over 4,300 residents who do not have access to an active park within a half mile of their home.



Despite the existing service gaps, some Park District residents may be finding active recreation access through other providers such as available public school properties.

Community Park Level of Service

1 INCH = 3,000 FEET



Community Park Service Area Map Legend

- Planning Areas
- SPD Park
- Forest Preserve
- Private Open Space
- 1.0-Mile Service Area
- School
- Adjacent Park District Park
- Village Open Space

Planning Area	Population Served	Percent Served	Population Not Served
1	0	0.0%	101
2	116	16.1%	605
3	230	29.8%	542
4	226	100.0%	0
5	513	100.0%	0
6	1,192	97.2%	35
7	0	0.0%	213
8	200	24.1%	629
9	2,090	100.0%	0
10	3,161	100.0%	0
11	2,738	100.0%	0
12	0	0.0%	266
13	640	48.5%	679
14	526	100.0%	0
15	0	N/A	0
16	3,635	100.0%	0
17	3,983	100.0%	0
18	3,018	100.0%	0
19	35	4.2%	806
20	1,032	69.4%	456
21	2,363	100.0%	0
22	1,549	100.0%	0
23	2,177	50.7%	2,119
24	1,640	91.9%	145
25	3,400	100.0%	0
26	6,083	98.3%	103
27	157	6.7%	2,184
28	74	48.7%	38
29	122	95.3%	6
30	1,816	100.0%	0
31	1,169	100.0%	0
32	1,803	100.0%	0
33	612	100.0%	0
34	672	100.0%	0
35	1,191	100.0%	0
36	4,260	96.7%	147
37	303	26.2%	852
38	1,984	100.0%	0

Community Park Distribution Analysis

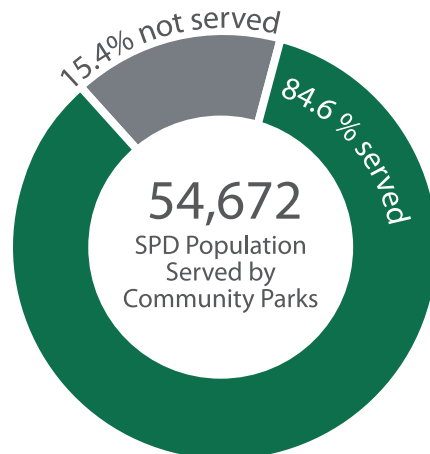
Community parks focus on meeting community-wide recreation needs. These parks may preserve unique landscapes and often serve as event and recreational team sport spaces.

The purpose of the community park distribution analysis is to determine the location of gaps in community park service area coverage. Currently, the Park District has five community parks that are between 4.9 acres and 19.1 acres in size.

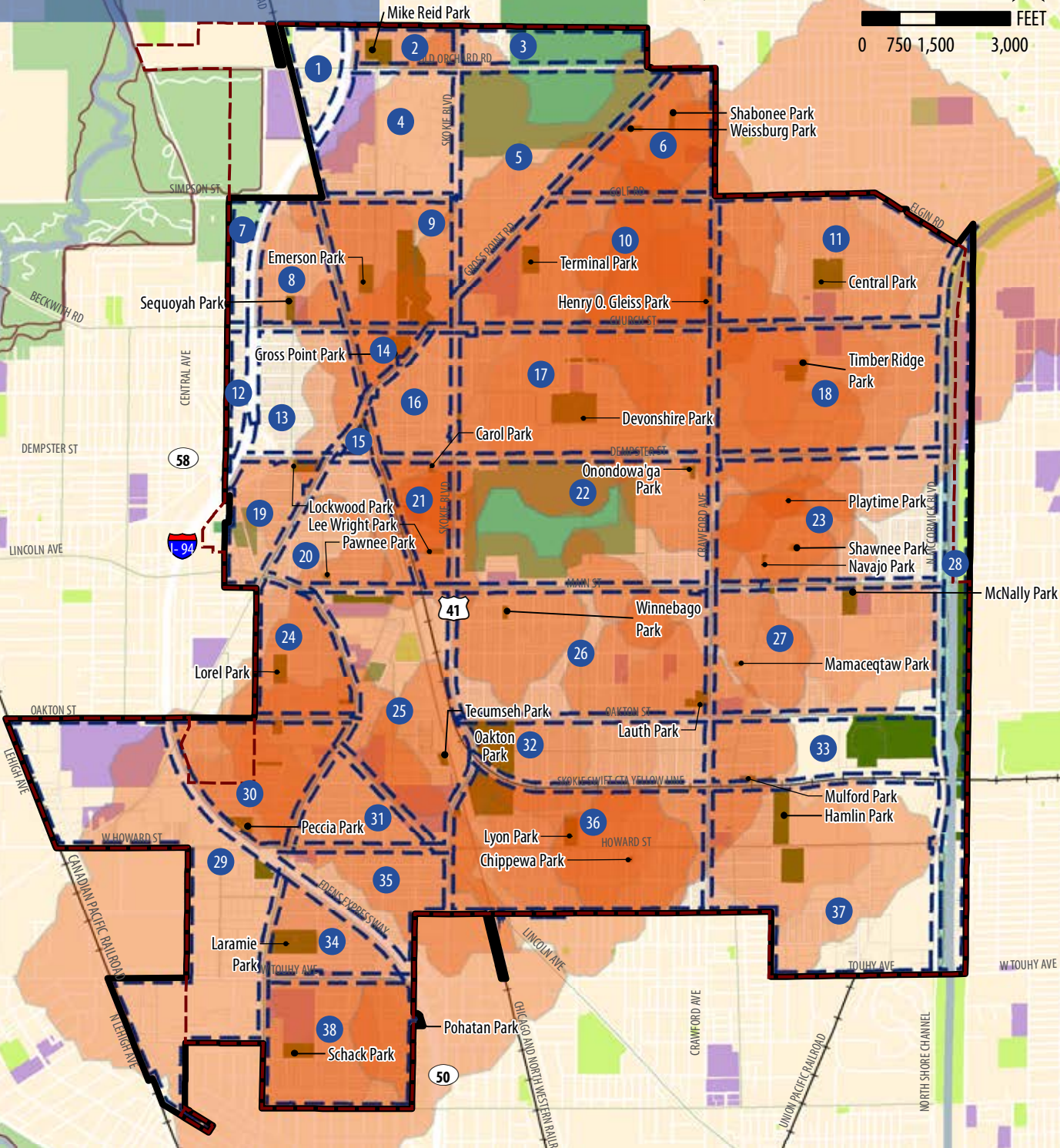
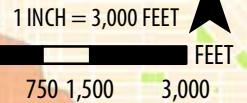
The map on the left illustrates the one-mile (1-mile) service area reach for community parks, shown in orange. Unlike mini and neighborhood parks, community parks are considered drive-to recreation destinations so service areas are not limited to the boundary of the planning area in which they are located. Service areas for these drive-to destinations may cover multiple planning areas and may also extend past municipal boundaries. It is common for local residents who do not live within the boundary to utilize these spaces as well. Unlike mini and neighborhood park spaces, community parks serve a unique recreation need that cannot be met by smaller active recreation open spaces, most schools, or by passive-use parks.

Even though community parks are only located in six of the Park District’s planning areas, the community park service areas extend into 35 out of 38 planning areas. In total, 54,672 (84.6%) of Skokie Park District residents reside within a 1.0-mile drive of a community park.

Nineteen planning areas, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 14, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22, 25, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, and 38 serve 100% of their residents with community park access. No residents in planning areas 1, 7, and 12 are served by community parks. When considering population, additional community park access is most needed in Planning Areas 2, 3, 8, 13, 19, 23, 27, and 37 with over 500 residents in each area not living within a 1-mile service area reach of a community park.



Overall Level of Service



Overall Park Service Area Map Legend

- Planning Areas
- Service Area
- SPD Park
- Forest Preserve
- Private Open Space
- School
- Adjacent Park District Park
- Village Open Space

Planning Area	Population Served	Percent Served	Population Not Served
1	0	0.0%	101
2	721	100.0%	0
3	230	29.8%	542
4	226	100.0%	0
5	513	100.0%	0
6	1,227	100.0%	0
7	0	0.0%	213
8	829	100.0%	0
9	2,090	100.0%	0
10	3,161	100.0%	0
11	2,738	100.0%	0
12	0	0.0%	266
13	640	48.5%	679
14	526	100.0%	0
15	0	N/A	0
16	3,635	100.0%	0
17	3,983	100.0%	0
18	3,018	100.0%	0
19	841	100.0%	0
20	1,488	100.0%	0
21	2,363	100.0%	0
22	1,549	100.0%	0
23	3,384	78.8%	912
24	1,785	100.0%	0
25	3,400	100.0%	0
26	6,186	100.0%	0
27	2,341	100.0%	0
28	36	48.7%	38
29	122	95.3%	6
30	1,816	100.0%	0
31	1,169	100.0%	0
32	1,803	100.0%	0
33	612	100.0%	0
34	672	100.0%	0
35	1,191	100.0%	0
36	4,297	97.5%	110
37	1,155	100.0%	0
38	1,984	100.0%	0

Overall Park Distribution Analysis

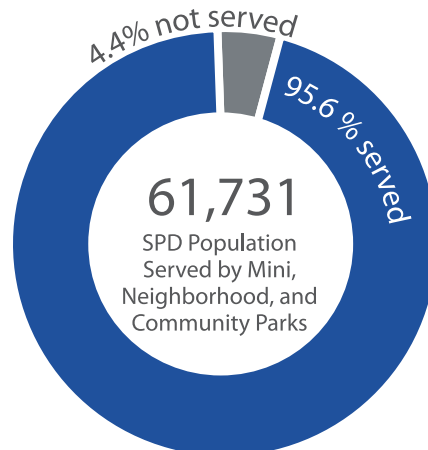
The overall service area analysis illustrates the District-wide deficiencies for mini, neighborhood, and community park assets combined.

The map on the left illustrates the service areas for all mini (quarter-mile), neighborhood (half-mile), and community (one-mile) parks. Per NRPA guidelines, the mini and neighborhood park service areas are truncated to the boundaries of the individual planning areas in which they reside. Community parks are considered drive-to destinations, so those service areas are not truncated to the planning area boundaries. Natural areas, special use parks, undeveloped parks, and trails, corridors, and linear parks/greenways are not included in this analysis.

In total, 95.6% of Park District residents live within at least one active park service area. This is above the planning team’s database median of 89.8% service. Gaps in service are present in planning areas 1, 7, and 12 which serve 0% of their residents. Planning areas 3, 7, 12, 13, and 23 all have more than 200 unserved residents. In total, 2,867 Park District residents are unserved.

Parks are well distributed throughout the Park District. Residents who are served by multiple service areas, as shown by the darkest gradients of orange on the map to the left, are located in the central portion of the District. Those with limited or no access to any of the Skokie Park District parks are primarily located in the far western and southeastern portions of the District.

Despite the existing service gaps, some Skokie Park District residents may be finding active recreation access through other providers, such as available public school properties, for mini and neighborhood park service. However, community park service from other recreation providers is likely not available.



Amenities

In addition to park acreage and distribution, another measure of Level of Service is the total recreation amenities available to residents. These benchmarks come from the Illinois Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) and the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Park Metrics.

SCORP Comparison

Based on the Illinois SCORP, the Skokie Park District meets or exceeds the recommended number of amenities for 13 of the 42 amenities outlined in the chart on the following page. Amenities that meet or exceed the benchmark are identified by black or green text in the “Above / Below Benchmark” column.

Items with red text noted in the “Above / Below Benchmark” column are below the benchmark. The five amenities furthest below the benchmarks according to the comparison against SCORP averages are:

- Swimming Beaches (linear ft.): -1,094.3
- Hiking Trails: -29.7
- Fishing Pier / Docks / Access: -26.4
- Cross-Country Trails: -25.8
- Marina Slips: -17.6

Because the Skokie Park District is a land locked district, some of the deficiencies noted, such as swimming beaches and marina slips, are to be expected. Meeting the recommendations for these amenities may not be a priority for the Park District.

Focusing on items that are relevant to the character and service role of the Skokie Park District, several amenities represent potential priorities for future consideration. These land-based and community-oriented amenities align more directly with the District’s setting and recreation framework. Applicable amenities include:

- Hiking Trails: -29.7
- Cross-Country Trails: -25.8
- Volleyball Courts: -10.0
- Bicycle Trails: -6.6
- Tennis Courts (Mill and Resurface): -3.7

These amenities may warrant further evaluation in alignment with community needs, available space, and long-term planning objectives.



Existing Population 2024

Skokie Park District			Illinois Facility Average		Above / Below Benchmark	Ranking
Existing # of Facilities (total)	Existing # of Facilities at current standards	Existing # of Facilities per 1,000 population	Total # of Facilities needed to meet IL Average	IL Average # of Facilities per 1,000 population	Above / Below Benchmark	Highest to Lowest Need

WATER-BASED FACILITIES

Fishing Pier / Docks / Access	0	0	0.00	26.4	0.41	-26.4	3
Boat Launch Ramps / Access	1	1	0.02	7.8	0.12	-6.8	11
Canoe only access areas	2	2	0.03	2.5	0.04	-0.5	29
Marina Slips	0	0	0.00	17.6	0.27	-17.6	5
Swimming Pools	2	2	0.03	1.8	0.03	0.2	33
Swimming Beaches (linear ft.)	0	0	0.00	1094.3	16.94	-1,094.3	1
Spray Grounds / Splash Pads	1	1	0.02	1.9	0.03	-0.9	23

TRAILS

Multi-Use Trails (Miles)	8.12	8.12	0.13	10.5	0.16	-2.4	19
Hiking Trails	0	0	0.00	29.7	0.46	-29.7	2
Bicycle Trails	0	0	0.00	6.6	0.10	-6.6	12
Physical Fitness Trails (Stations)	16	16	0.25	14.2	0.22	1.8	39
Nature / Interpretive Trails (Miles)	4	4	0.06	3.5	0.05	0.5	34
Cross-Country Trails	0	0	0.00	25.8	0.40	-25.8	4
Snowmobile Trails	0	0	0.00	7.1	0.11	-7.1	10
Ski Trails	0	0	0.00	11.6	0.18	-11.6	8

DAY USE FACILITIES

Dog Parks	1	1	0.02	0.5	0.01	0.5	35
Picnic Shelters	19	9	0.14	13.3	0.21	-4.3	13
Playgrounds	40	31	0.48	26.1	0.40	4.9	41
Interpretive Centers	0	0	0.00	0.6	0.01	-0.6	24

SPORTS COURTS AND FACILITIES

Basketball Courts (full depth replacement)	38	15	0.23	16.1	0.25	-1.1	22
Basketball Courts (mill and resurfaced)	38	23	0.36	16.1	0.25	6.9	42
Volleyball Courts	1	1	0.02	11.0	0.17	-10.0	9
Pickleball Courts (full depth replacement)	13	13	0.20	ISD	ISD	ISD	
Pickleball Courts (mill and resurfaced)	13	13	0.20	ISD	ISD	ISD	
Tennis Courts (full depth replacement)	38	28	0.43	31.7	0.49	-3.7	14
Tennis Courts (mill and resurfaced)	38	33	0.51	31.7	0.49	1.3	38
Baseball / Softball Fields	15	15	0.23	16.8	0.26	-1.8	20
Football Fields	0	0	0.00	3.5	0.05	-3.5	15
Soccer Fields	14	14	0.22	11.5	0.18	2.5	40
Field Hockey	0	0	0.00	0.0	0.00	0.0	31
Running Tracks	0	0	0.00	3.2	0.05	-3.2	16
Golf Driving Range	1	1	0.02	0.0	0.00	1.0	37
Golf Course (9-Hole Course)	1	1	0.02	0.3	0.01	0.7	36
Golf Course (18-Hole Course)	0	0	0.00	0.5	0.01	-0.5	27
Frisbee Golf	0	0	0.00	0.5	0.01	-0.5	28
Skate Park	1	1	0.02	1.1	0.02	-0.1	30
Ice Rinks	0	0	0.00	2.6	0.04	-2.6	18
Bocce Court	0	0	0.00	0.0	0.00	0.0	31
Horseshoe Pits	0	0	0.00	15.6	0.24	-15.6	6
Shuffleboard courts	0	0	0.00	2.9	0.05	-2.9	17
Archery Ranges	0	0	0.00	1.3	0.02	-1.3	21
Rifle Pistol Ranges	0	0	0.00	0.6	0.01	-0.6	24



Park Metrics Comparison

In addition to the SCORP averages, the planning team referenced NRPA's Park Metrics to identify how the Skokie Park District compares to other agencies throughout the U.S. with populations between 60,000 and 70,000. Park Metrics provided information about the total population per facility for 33 recreation facilities and amenity types.

The table compares the total number of Park District-owned and managed facilities to agencies with similar populations. According to Park Metrics benchmarks, the District meets or exceeds the total number of these facility / amenity types:

- Community Center
- Ice Skating Rink (Indoor)
- Nature / Interpretive Center
- Aquatic Centers
- Playgrounds
- Fitness Stations
- Basketball Courts
- Pickleball Courts
- Tennis Courts
- Diamond Fields



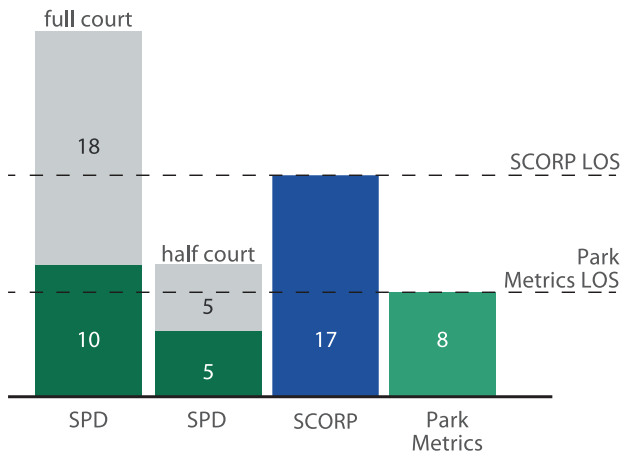
Existing Population 2024

Skokie Park District			Park Metrics Facility Median	Above / Below Benchmark	Ranking	
Existing # of Facilities (total)	Existing # of Facilities at current standards	Existing # of Facilities per population	Total # of Facilities needed to meet Park Metrics median	Above / Below Benchmark	Highest to Lowest Need	
INDOOR FACILITIES						
Recreation Center	1	1	0.02	1.1	-0.1	13
Community Center*	2	2	0.03	1.0	1.0	21
Senior Center	0	0	0.00	1.0	-1.0	8
Teen Center	0	0	0.00	1.1	-1.1	5
Stadium	0	0	0.00	1.0	-1.0	9
Ice Skating Rink (Indoor)	2	2	0.03	1.0	1.0	22
Arena	0	0	0.00	0.9	-0.9	10
Performing and / or Visual Arts Center*	1	1	0.02	1.0	0.0	16
Nature / Interpretive Center	2	2	0.03	1.0	1.0	20
WATER-BASED FACILITIES						
Aquatic Centers**	2	2	0.03	1.1	0.9	19
Swimming Pools (Outdoor)**	2	2	0.03	2.1	-0.1	12
Spray Grounds / Splash Pads	1	1	0.02	1.0	0.0	14
DAY USE FACILITIES						
Dog Parks	1	1	0.02	1.0	0.0	18
Picnic Shelters	19	9	0.14	ISD	ISD	
Playgrounds	40	31	0.48	25.1	5.9	25
Fitness Stations	16	16	0.25	2.0	14.0	32
SPORTS COURTS AND FACILITIES						
Basketball Courts (full depth replacement)	38	15	0.23	7.4	7.6	29
Basketball Courts (mill and resurfaced)	38	23	0.36	7.4	15.6	33
Volleyball Courts	1	1	ISD	3.4	-2.4	3
Pickleball Courts (full depth replacement)	13	13	0.20	6.4	6.6	26
Pickleball Courts (mill and resurfaced)	13	13	0.20	6.4	6.6	26
Tennis Courts (full depth replacement)	25	19	0.29	11.3	7.7	30
Tennis Courts (mill and resurfaced)	24	19	0.29	11.3	7.7	30
Tennis Courts with Pickleball Overlay (full depth replacement)	13	9	0.14	6.3	2.7	24
Tennis Courts with Pickleball Overlay (mill and resurfaced)	13	13	0.20	6.3	6.7	28
Diamond Fields	15	15	0.23	13.8	1.2	23
Rectangular Fields	14	14	0.22	16.6	-2.6	2
Rectangular Fields - Synthetic Turf	0	0	0.00	2.9	-2.9	1
Golf Driving Range	1	1	0.02	1.9	-0.9	11
Golf Course (9-Hole Course)	1	1	0.02	1.0	0.0	15
Golf Course (18-Hole Course)	0	0	0.00	1.0	-1.0	6
Disc Golf (Course)	0	0	0.00	1.0	-1.0	7
Skate Parks	1	1	0.02	1.0	0.0	17
Ice Rinks (Outdoor)	0	0	0.00	1.9	-1.9	4

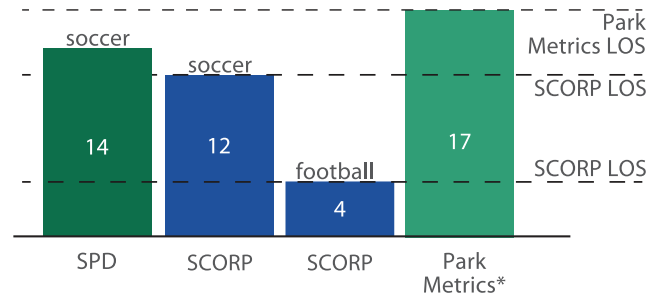
*Devonshire Cultural Center is included in both categories because it serves both functions
 **Devonshire and Oakton (Skokie Water Playground) pools are included in both categories because they serve both functions



SCORP - Park Metrics Key Comparison Graphics - Amenities Level of Service (LOS)

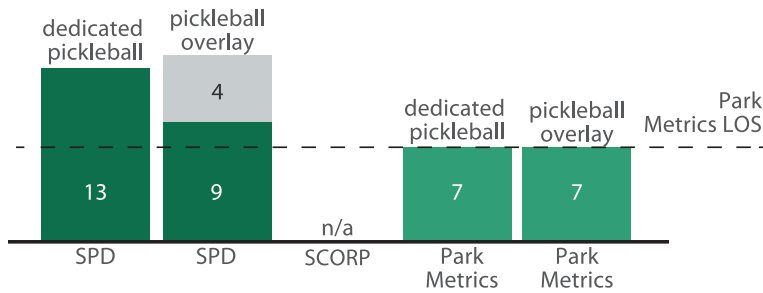


BASKETBALL COURTS

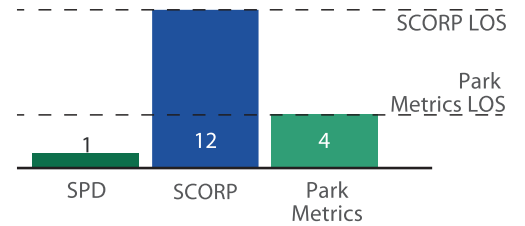


RECTANGULAR FIELDS

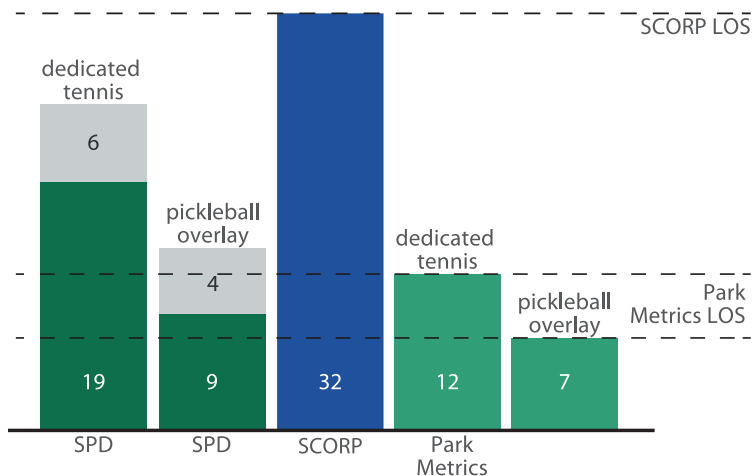
*includes soccer, football, and lacrosse



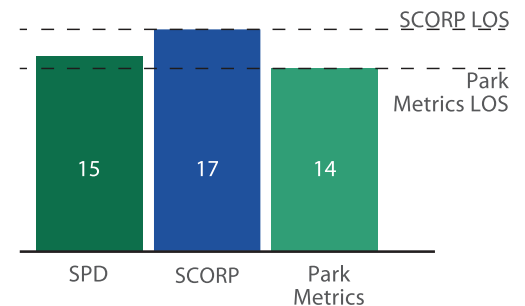
PICKLEBALL COURTS



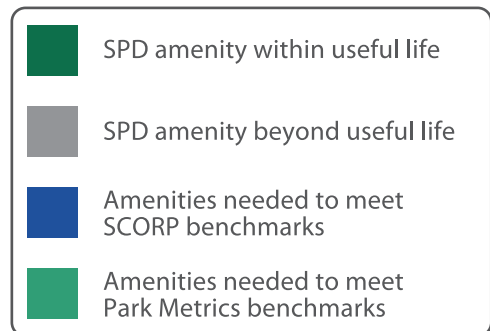
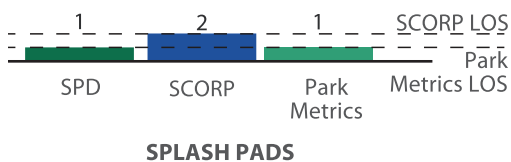
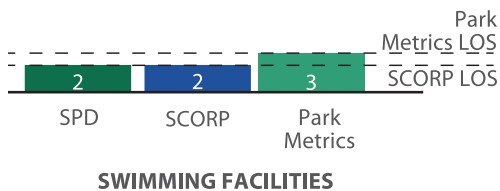
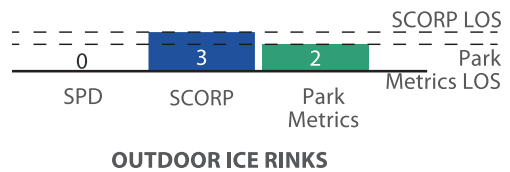
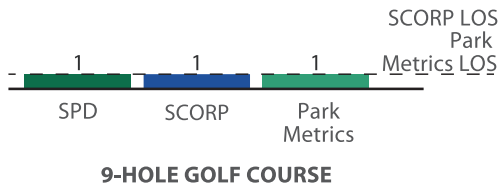
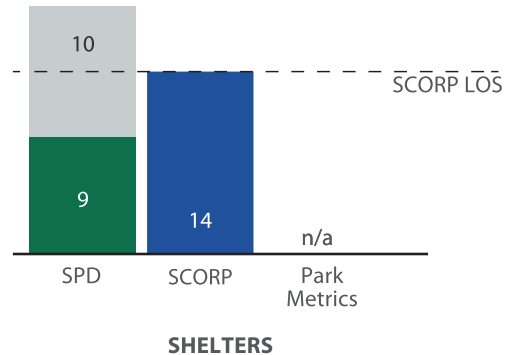
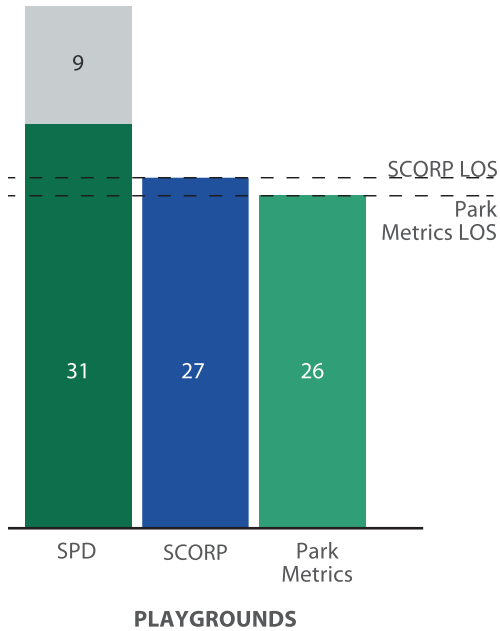
VOLLEYBALL COURTS



TENNIS COURTS



DIAMOND FIELDS



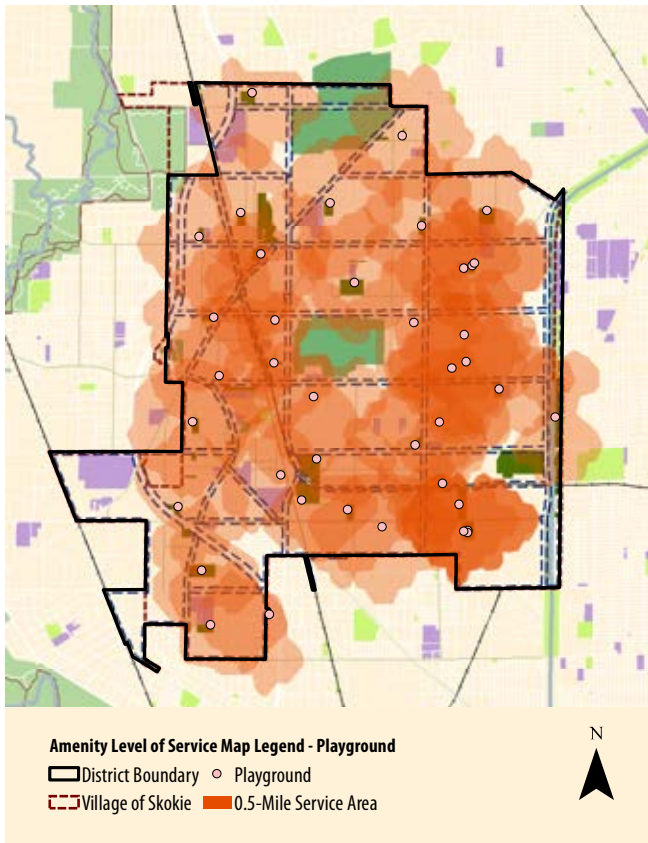
Amenity Distribution Analysis

The location and distribution of amenities is an important factor in an agency’s level of service. Just as parks themselves should be equally distributed, so should the recreational amenities available to residents.

The NRPA established service areas for each park classification and individual recreation amenity in its 1990 and 1996 publications of the Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines. These service area standards were referenced in conjunction with the 2025 Distinguished Agencies Standards Manual (DASM), which provides additional guidance related to amenity distribution and population-based levels of service to support consistent, industry-recognized evaluation of park and recreation systems.

The amenity service area table below describes the recommended service areas for each amenity based on NRPA guidance and, where applicable, DASM recommendations, and lists the number of each amenity owned and operated by the Skokie Park District. The graphics on the following pages illustrate the service area coverage for individual amenities. Each dot represents an amenity location, and the surrounding orange halo illustrates the applicable service area. The darkest shades of orange indicate the overlap of multiple amenity service areas, while the lightest shade represents coverage by a single amenity. In addition to service area coverage, each amenity is evaluated based on its level of service per population, using DASM benchmarks where available to compare existing quantities to recommended standards.

Amenity	Service Area	SPD Amenities
Playground	0.5-mile	40
Basketball Court	0.5-mile	38
Tennis Court	0.5-mile	38
Pickleball	0.5-mile	26
Ballfield - Softball / Youth Baseball	0.5-mile	15
Ballfield - Official Baseball	1 per 10,000 population	7
Sports Field	30 minute drive	14
Aquatic Facility	30 minute drive	2
Bike / Pedestrian Trails	1 system per District	1
Golf Course	60 minute drive	1

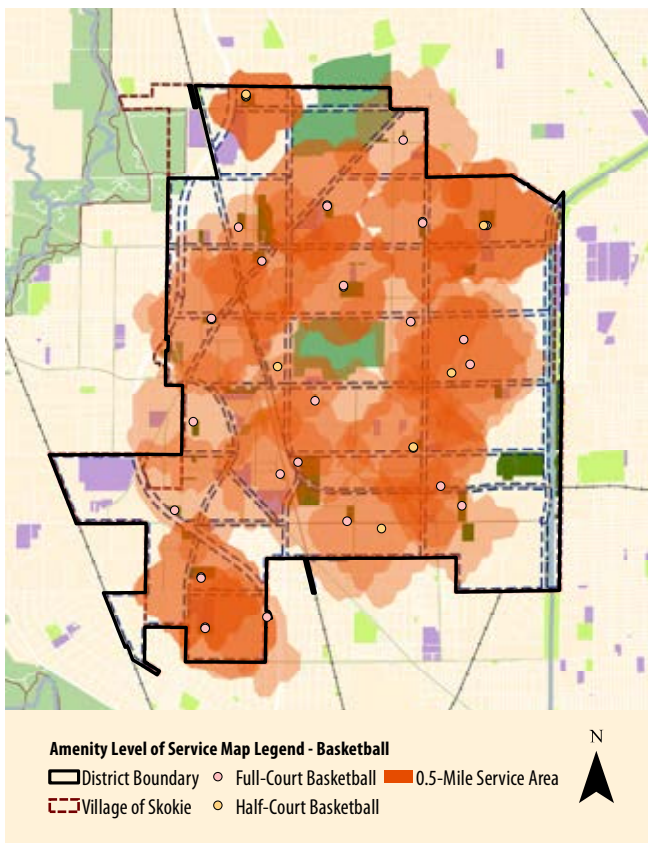


Playground

0.5-Mile Service Area

NRPA recommends utilizing a 0.5-mile service area for playgrounds while DASM does not currently provide a recommendation on the service area for playgrounds. The District has adopted a 0.5-mile service area for playgrounds.

The Skokie Park District has 40 playgrounds, or 1 playground per 1,615 population (including amenities within and beyond their useful life). DASM does not currently provide a recommendation on the number of playgrounds.



Basketball

0.5-Mile Service Area

NRPA and DASM recommend utilizing a 0.25-mile to 0.5-mile service area for basketball courts. The District has adopted the 0.5-mile service area.

Based off the DASM recommended level of service of 1 court per 5,000 population, DASM recommends 13 basketball courts for the Skokie Park District. The District exceeds this recommendation with 38 basketball courts (or 1 court per 1,700 population).

**The map and level of service calculations consider both full-courts and half-courts as one basketball court. This analysis also includes amenities within and beyond their useful life.*

Tennis

0.5-Mile Service Area

NRPA and DASM recommend utilizing a 0.25-mile to 0.5-mile service area for tennis courts. The District has adopted the 0.5-mile service area.

Based off the DASM recommended level of service of 1 unit per 2,000 population, DASM recommends 32.3 tennis courts for the Skokie Park District. The District is above this recommendation with 38 tennis courts (or 1 court per 1,700 population).

**The map and level of service calculations also include tennis courts with pickleball overlay. This analysis also includes amenities within and beyond their useful life.*

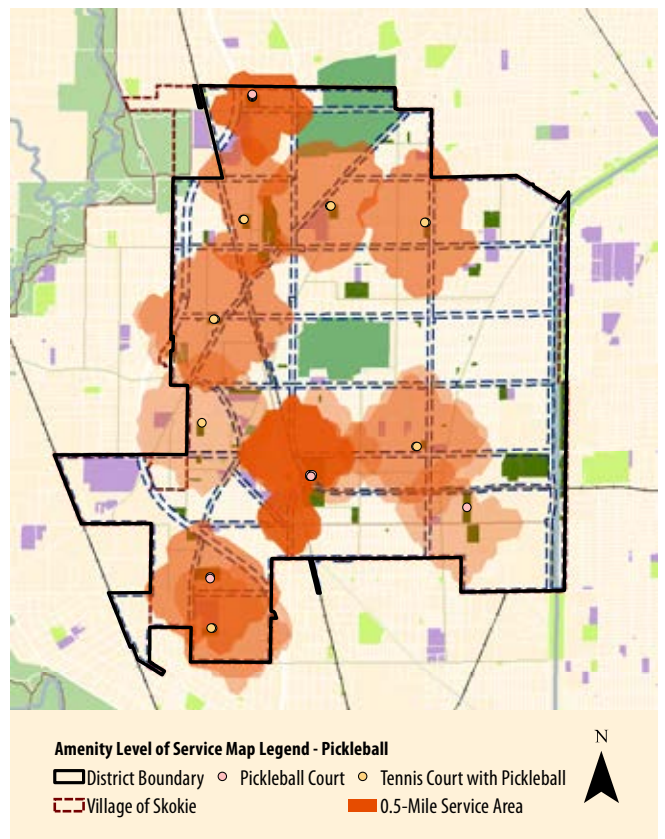
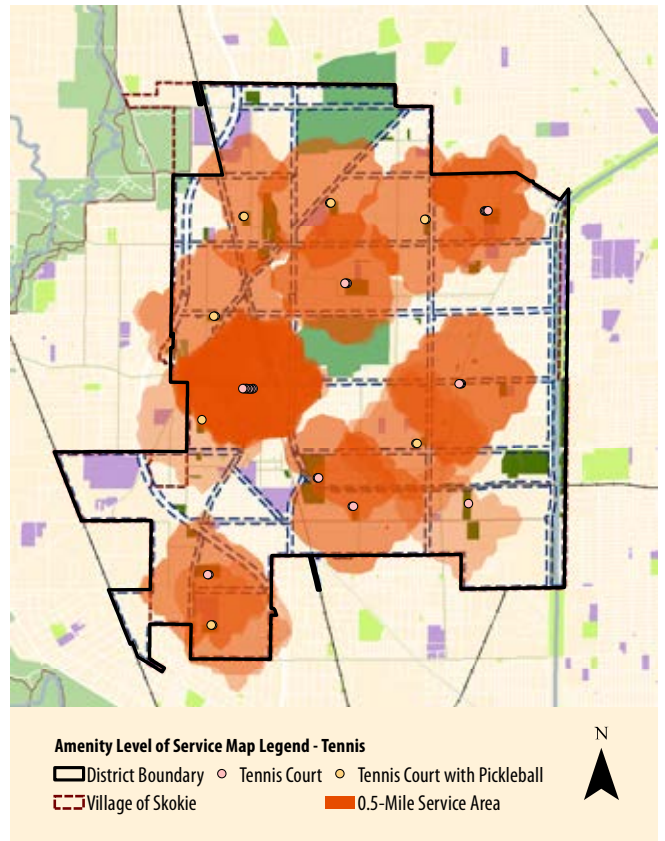
Pickleball

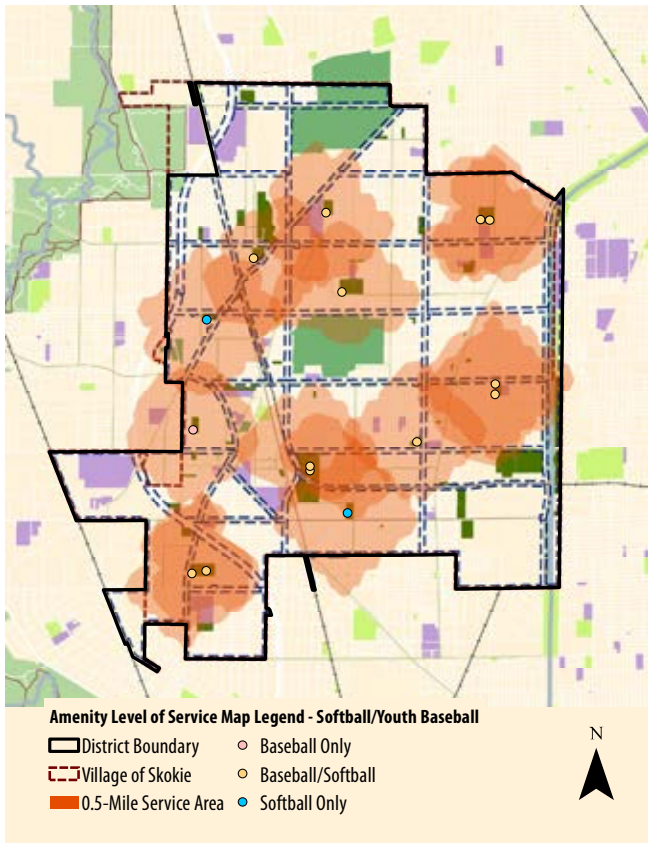
0.5-Mile Service Area

Neither NRPA nor DASM currently provide a recommendation on the service area for pickleball. The District has adopted a 0.5-mile service area for pickleball.

The Skokie Park District has 26 pickleball courts, or 1 pickleball court per 2,485 population (including amenities within and beyond their useful life). DASM does not currently provide a recommendation on the number of pickleball courts.

**The map and level of service calculations also include tennis courts with pickleball overlay.*



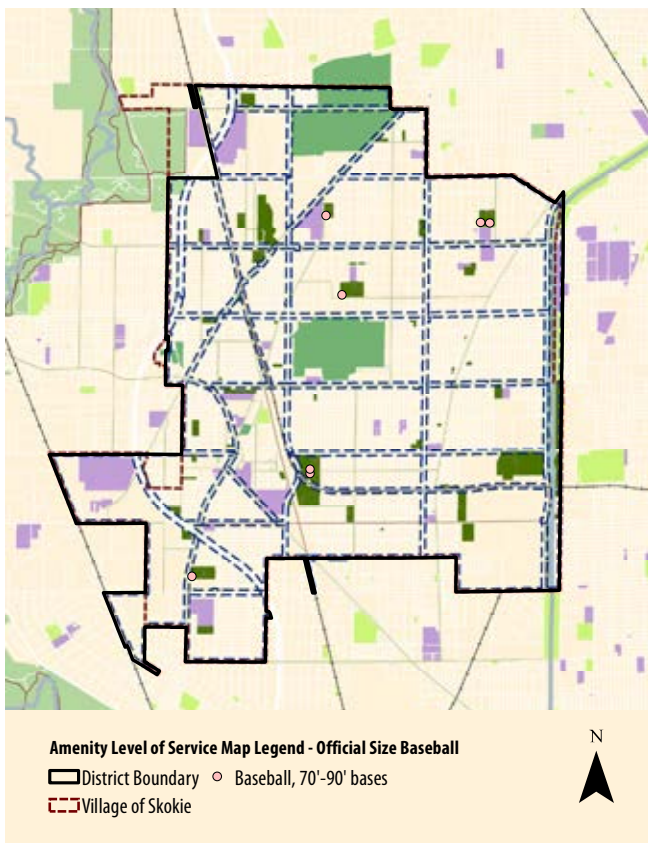


Ballfield - Softball / Youth Baseball

0.5-Mile Service Area

NRPA recommends utilizing a 1.0-mile service area for baseball fields and a 0.25-mile to 0.5-mile service area for softball/youth ballfields. DASM recommends utilizing a 0.25-mile to 0.5-mile service area for softball/youth ballfields. The District has adopted a 0.5-mile service area for ballfields as they inventory all baseball fields and softball/youth ballfields under the singular category of ballfields.

Based off the DASM recommended level of service of 1 unit per 3,000 population, DASM recommends 21.5 ballfields (softball/youth ballfields) for the Skokie Park District. The District is below this recommendation with 15 ballfields (or 1 field per 4,307 population).



Ballfield - Official Size Baseball

1 Field per 10,000 Population

NRPA recommends utilizing a 1.0-mile service area for baseball fields. DASM does not have a distance service recommendation, but rather 1 field per 10,000 population for official size baseball fields. These fields use 70'-90' base distances.

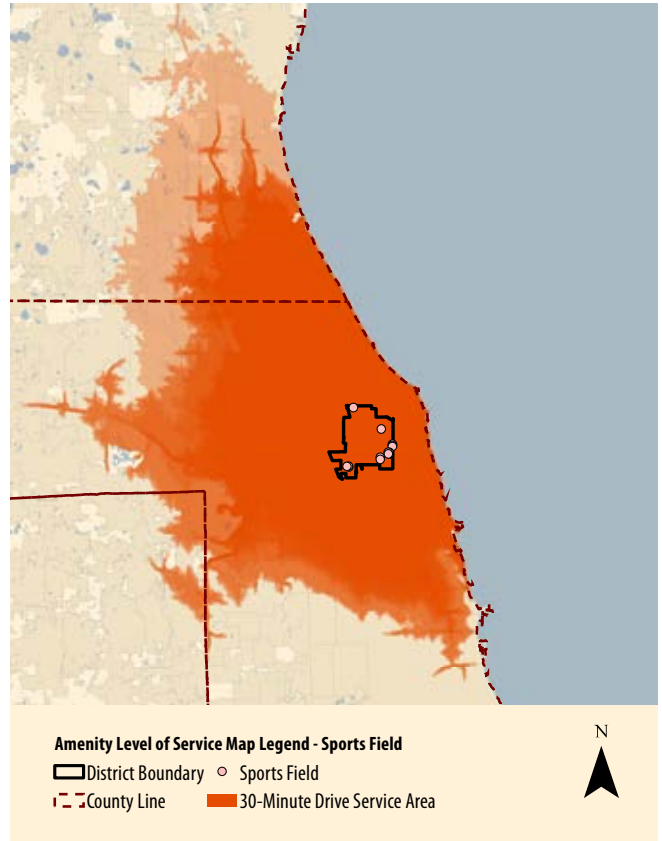
Based off the DASM recommended level of service of 1 unit per 10,000 population, DASM recommends 6.46 ballfields (official size baseball fields) for the Skokie Park District. The District meets this recommendation with 7 ballfields (or 1 field per 9,228 population).

Sports Field

30-Minute Drive Service Area

NRPA and DASM recommend utilizing a 15-minute - 30-minute drive time service area for multi-use sports fields. The District has adopted the 30-minute service area.

Based off the DASM recommended level of service of 1 sports field per 20,000 population, DASM recommends 3.2 sports fields for the Skokie Park District. The District exceeds this recommendation with 14 sports fields (or 1 sports field per 4,614 population). All of Skokie Park District's fields that qualify as sports fields are maintained as soccer fields.

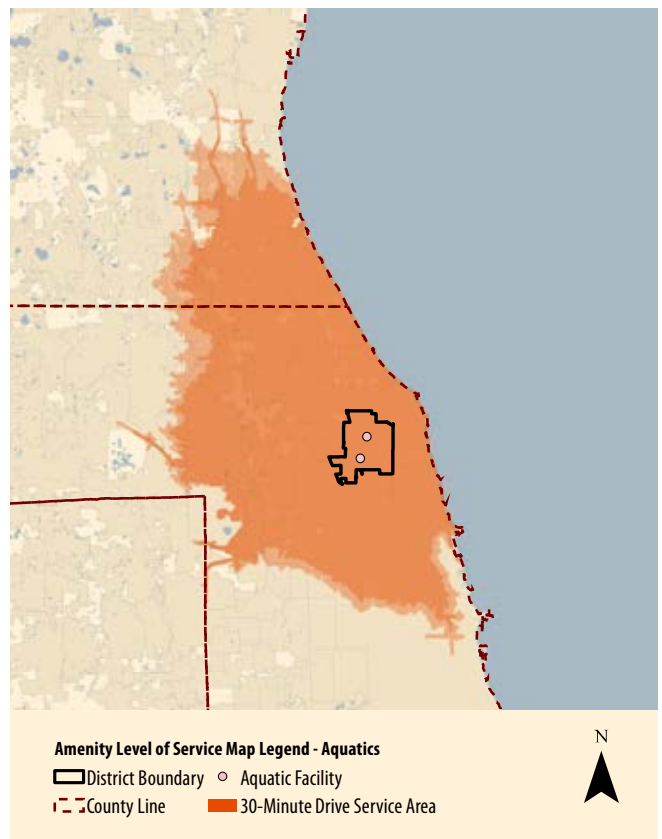


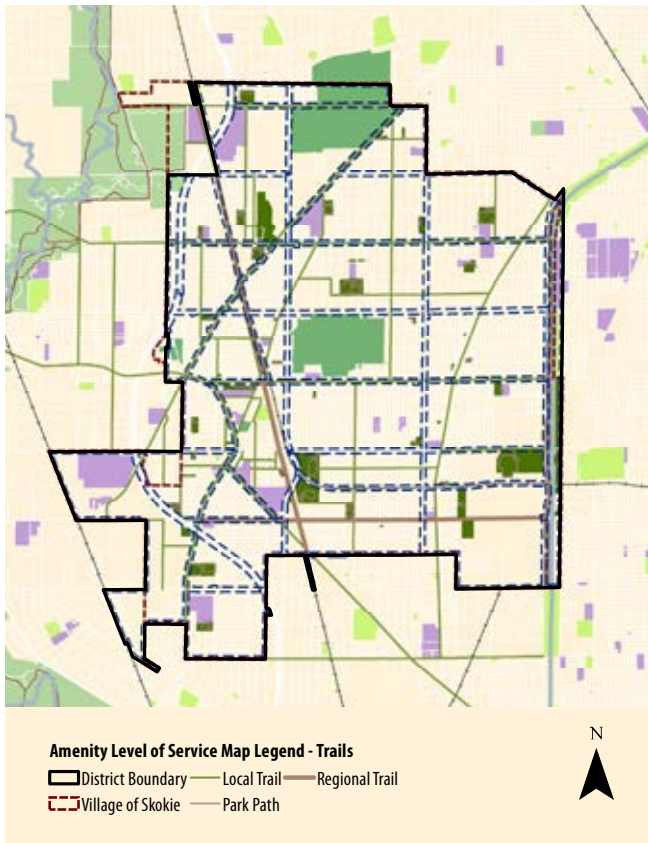
Aquatic Facility

30-Minute Drive Service Area

NRPA and DASM recommend utilizing a 15-minute - 30-minute drive time service area for aquatic facilities. The District has adopted the 30-minute service area.

Based off the DASM recommended level of service of 1 aquatic facility per 20,000 population, DASM recommends 3.2 aquatic facilities for the Skokie Park District. The District is below this recommendation with 2 aquatic facilities (or 1 aquatic facility per 32,299 population).



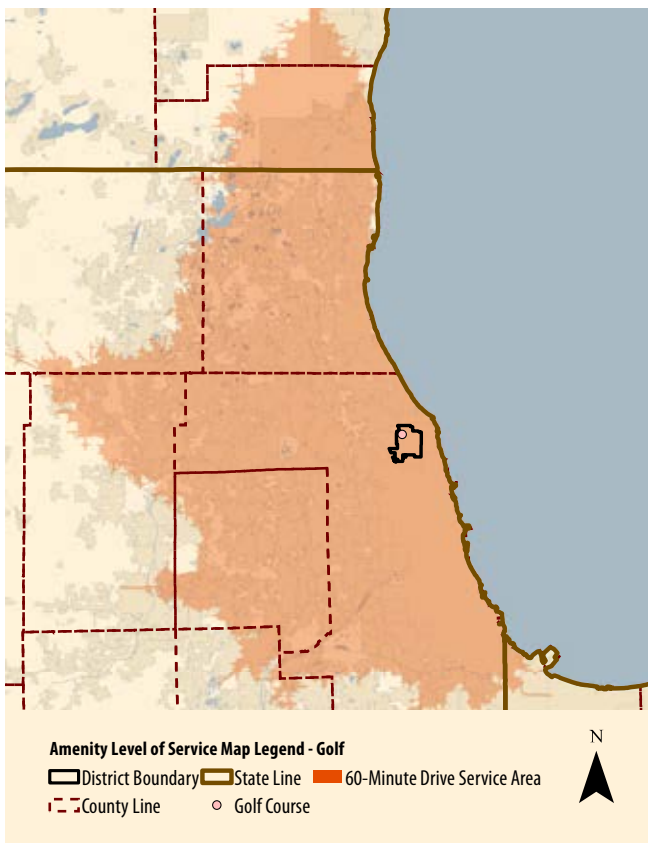


Bike / Pedestrian Trails

1 System per District

DASM recommends one District-wide trail system per Park District.

Pedestrian, nature, and multi-use trails located within individual parks are owned and maintained by the Skokie Park District. Local trails / bike paths and regional trails located in the Park District are owned and managed by the Village of Skokie. The Park District and Village work together to maintain a connected system of trails that provide access to parks throughout the District.

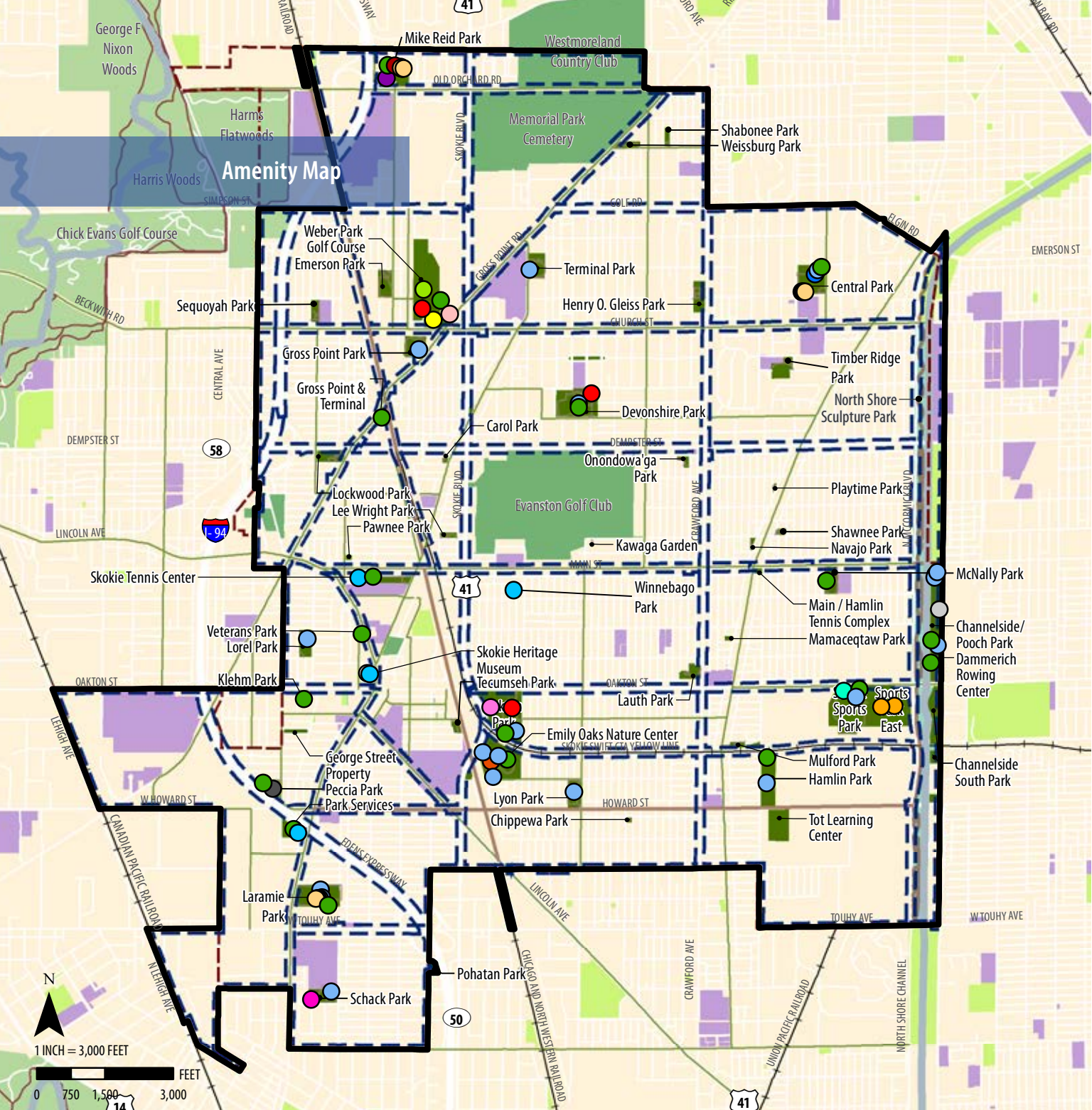


Golf Course

60-Minute Drive Service Area

NRPA and DASM recommend utilizing a 30-minute - 60-minute drive time service area for golf courses. The District has adopted the 60-minute service area.

Based off the DASM recommended level of service of 1 golf course per 50,000 population, DASM recommends 1.3 golf courses for the Skokie Park District. The District is below this recommendation with 1 golf course (or 1 golf course per 64,598 population).



- Other Facilities**
- | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| District Boundary | Cricket Pitch | Foot Golf | Museum | Picnic Shelter | Teqball Court | Park Path |
| Village of Skokie | Dog Park | Futsal Court | Natural Area | Skate Park | Volleyball Court | Regional Trail |
| Community Center | Fitness Center | Indoor Ice Rink | Nature Center | Sled Hill | Local Trail | |
| Community Garden | Fitness Station | Mini Golf | Petanque | Splash Pad | | |

Other Facilities

No Service Area

DASM also recognizes additional recreation facilities and amenities that are beneficial to communities without applying a recommended service area to these facilities.



Facility Square Footage

Square footage level of service benchmarks are calculations of the minimum amount of indoor space recommended to provide all of the indoor recreation activities. It also includes considerations for specific facilities recommended to support programs and activities.

Level of service (LOS) guidelines for indoor space are less established than the guidelines for parks and open spaces, but the planning team utilizes a Chicagoland benchmark of two square feet per person with 1.50 square feet consisting of indoor classroom-based or active recreation space and 0.50 square feet consisting of indoor aquatics.

The District has a total of 242,279 square feet of indoor recreational programming space. According to the indoor square footage level of service analysis, the District has an indoor level of service of 3.75 square feet per person. This is 113,083 square feet above the Chicagoland benchmark. It is also a 1.75 square feet above the recommended 2 square feet per person.

While the Skokie Park District is above the benchmark in total indoor recreational space, it is below the benchmark in indoor aquatics. According to this level of service gauge, the Skokie Park District needs 14,094 square feet of indoor aquatic space to meet the benchmark and is 0.22 square feet per person below the recommended level of service.

NRPA does not collect square footage data for indoor facilities, so the planning team relies solely on the Chicagoland benchmarking for indoor recreation facility comparisons.

Level of Service Analysis: Chicagoland Benchmark

INDOOR RECREATION SPACE

Classification	SPD Square Feet (Total)	SPD Existing Level of Service (SF / population)	Recommended Square Footage	Recommended Level of Service (SF / population)	Above / Below Square Footage Benchmark (SF)
Indoor Recreational Space	224074.00	3.47	96897.00	1.50	127177.00
Indoor Aquatics	18205.00	0.28	32299.00	0.50	-14094.00
Total Square Feet	242279.00	3.75	129196.00	2.00	113083.00

Recommended acreage is based off the existing population of 64598





Program Assessment

Recreation Results LLC collaborated with staff from the Skokie Park District's Recreation Department to analyze District offered programs.

Introduction

To better understand and assess Skokie Park District's recreation program offerings, Recreation Results LLC collaborated with staff from the District's Recreation Department to conduct a series of analyses in early 2025. The assessment was intended to inventory and better understand the scope of programs offered by the District, uncover who is participating in the programs, and evaluate the overall performance and health of the program portfolio. Information from this report, combined with other community stakeholder feedback and other insights uncovered regarding parks, facilities, and operations, will help shape recommendations for future recreation program offerings and operations.

This program assessment incorporated information from a variety of sources, including:

- Recreation Program Offering, Registration, and Participant Data from the District's program, membership, and facility reservation software
- Recreation Program Evaluations of a representative sample of all programs offered in the past year that were completed by recreation programming staff
- Internal workshop and meetings with District recreation programming staff

- Review of District program guides, website, and social media
- Demographic and trends information from Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (Esri)
- Community stakeholder feedback, including an online survey

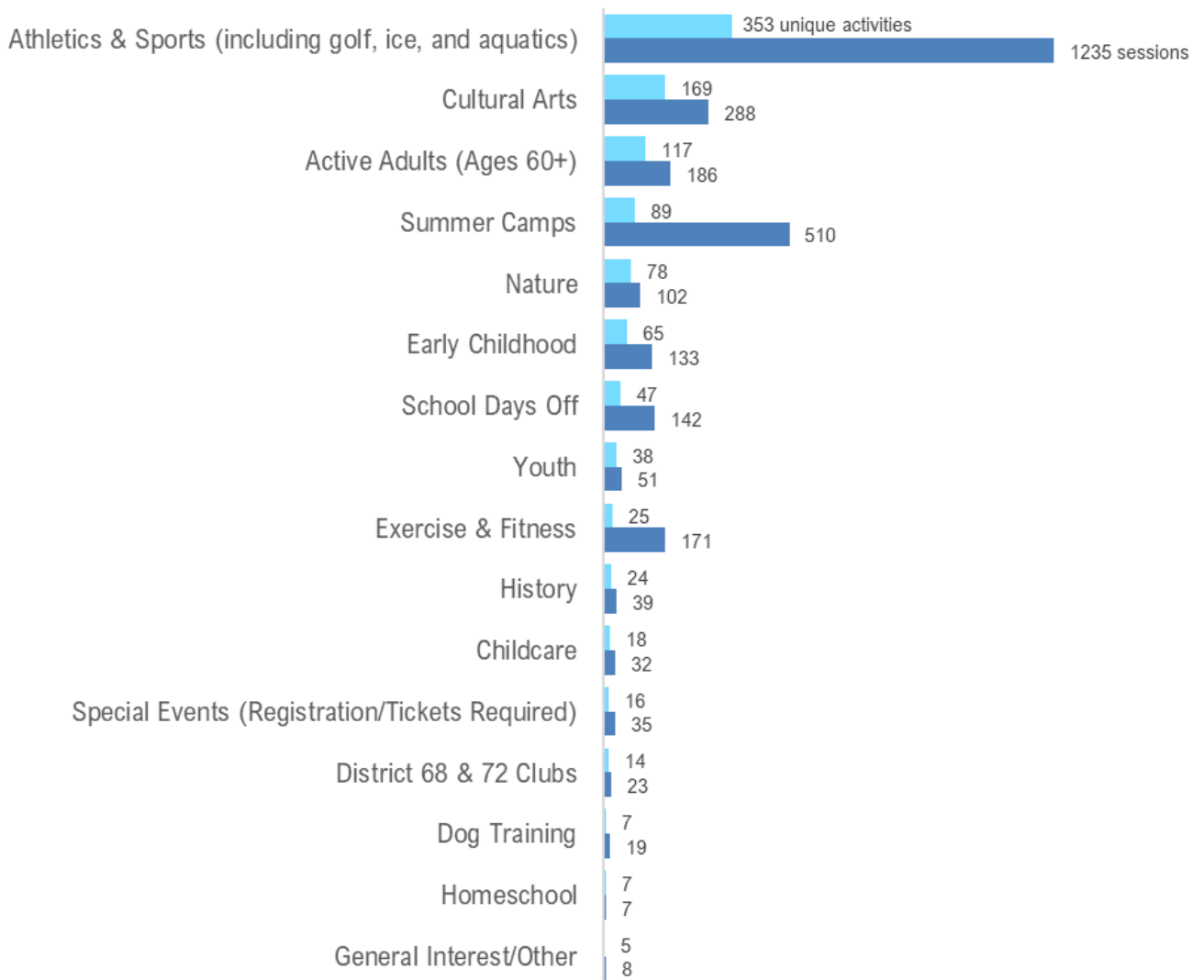
Key insights from this recreation assessment are included on the following pages.

Program Offerings

Types of Programs Offered

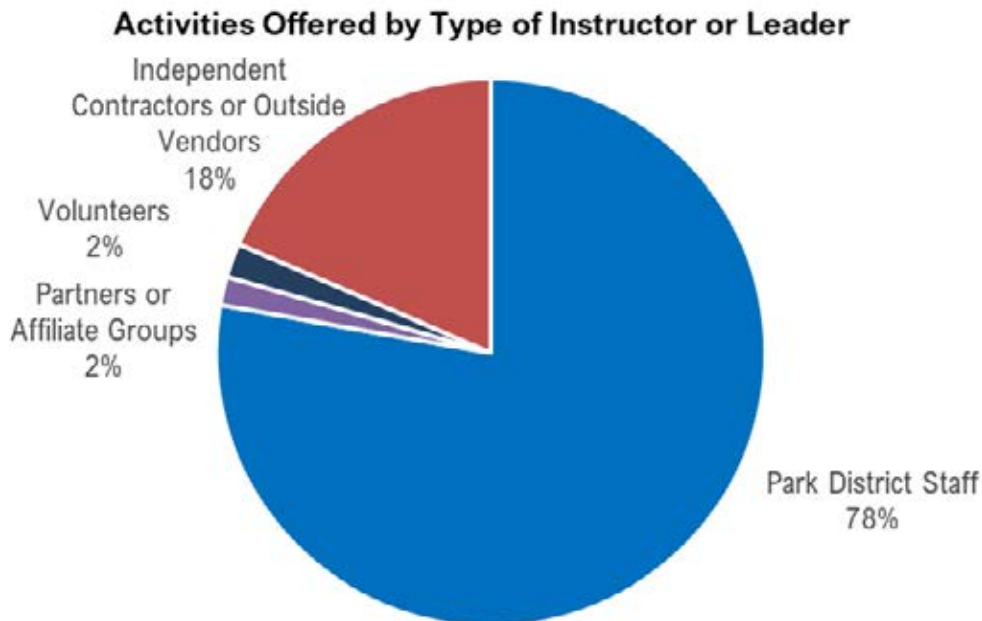
As part of the program analysis, an inventory of programs by category was created. In 2024, Skokie Park District offered programs across a wide range of categories, with many offered multiple times at different locations throughout the year, resulting in 1,073 unique activities and over 2,986 sessions available for registration. The most frequently offered types of programs were Athletics & Sports, Cultural Arts, Active Adults, and Summer Camps. The chart below shows the breakdown of these unique activities offered in 2024, distributed across the District’s core program areas, as recorded in the District’s recreation software.

Distribution of Recreation Programs Offered by Skokie Park District in 2024



Program Instruction & Partnerships

Although Skokie Park District staff oversee each program mentioned in this report, park and recreation organizations can use a variety of approaches to secure instructors and facilitators to deliver the program experience for participants. At the Skokie Park District, the majority (78%) of recreation programs are led by District employees, with another 19% utilizing independent contractors or outside companies, and a few others are offered with the support of partners and volunteers. The use of external providers has likely increased the variety of programs the District offers.



In addition to the programs offered directly by Skokie Park District, it also partners with various other organizations to support and facilitate recreation programs in the community, including for therapeutic recreation.

Skokie Park District is a member of Maine-Niles Association of Special Recreation (M-NASR) along with six other area park and recreation organizations. Working with M-NASR, the District can provide inclusion support to individuals with special needs who participate in District programs. M-NASR’s team of trained therapeutic recreation professionals also offers additional year-round programming for individuals of all ages with disabilities, as well as one-on-one sessions in M-NASR’s sensory room.

While this analysis focuses on recreation programs and events, the District also offers additional recreation activities to the community in other formats, including memberships and passes, drop-in activities, facility rentals, birthday parties, and volunteer opportunities.

Program Offerings by Age Group

Although it has already been established that the Skokie Park District offers a wide range of programs, either directly through the organization or in partnership with other organizations or entities, it is also important to examine who those programs are intended for and to ensure that all audiences are served. One way to look at this is to examine program offerings by age group.

Heatmap of Number of Activities by Age Group in 2024
(Highest Activity Offerings Highlighted In Blue)

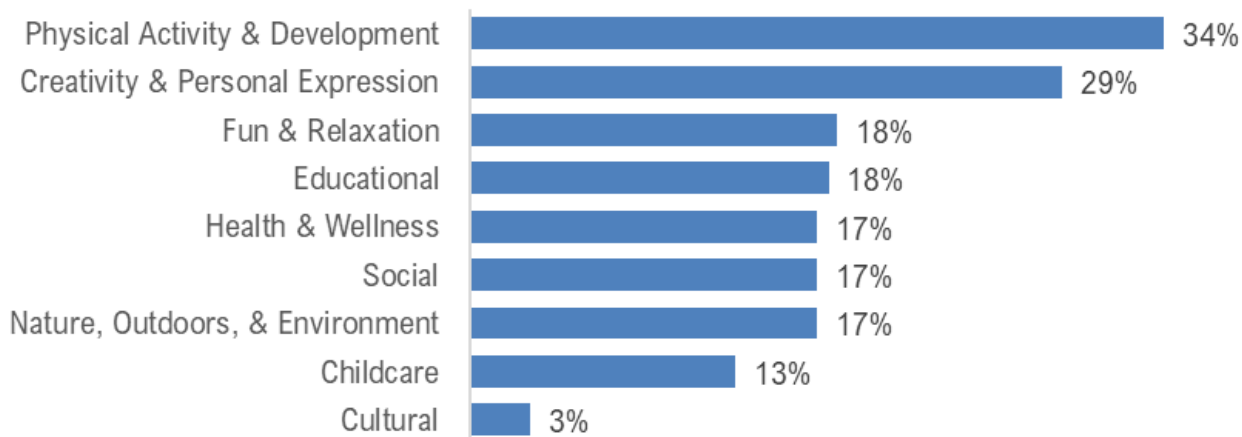
	Early Childhood (0-4)	Youth (5-12)	Teen (13-17)	Adult (18-59)	Senior (60+)	Families/ All Ages
Early Childhood	Light Green	Light Green				Yellow
Childcare	Yellow	Light Green				
School Days Off	Yellow	Light Green	Yellow			
Summer Camps	Light Green	Blue	Light Green			
Homeschool		Yellow	Yellow			
School District Clubs		Yellow				
Youth	Yellow	Light Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	
Athletics, Sports, & Aquatics	Light Green	Blue	Blue	Blue	Light Green	
Exercise & Fitness	Yellow	Yellow	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	
Cultural Arts	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	
Nature	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	
History	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	
Dog Training				Yellow	Yellow	
Active Adults (60+)	Yellow			Yellow	Light Green	
General Interest/Other	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	
Special Events (Registration Required)	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	

While the “Youth” age group (5-12 years old) has the most programming options, the Skokie Park District offers programs for all age groups, with each age group served by multiple program categories. In fact, based on the heatmap data alone, there are very few age-based programming gaps that are initially apparent.

Recreation Activity Benefits

As part of the input collected from staff about the activities offered, they were asked to share the primary and secondary benefits of each program. Given that Athletics & Sports is the largest program category, it's unsurprising that "Physical Activity and Development" was the top benefit noted by staff. But subsequent benefits, including creativity and personal expression, fun and relaxation, educational, health and wellness, social, and nature and the outdoors, all of which are rated highly, reflect the diverse and well-balanced benefits of the programming opportunities offered by Skokie Park District.

Benefits Offered Through Programs



Note: Because staff could rate each activity as having two benefits each, the percentages in the chart above will not add up to 100%.

Program Scheduling

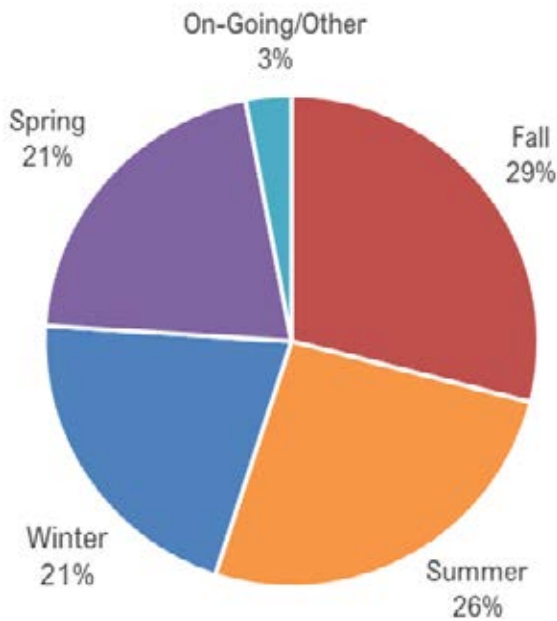
Recreation Class Locations

Skokie Park District programs were offered throughout the community, primarily at District-owned recreation facilities and parks, as well as at local schools. In 2024, the most popular location for classes was the Weber Leisure Center where 855 classes (program sections) were scheduled, followed by The Skatium, Devonshire Cultural Center, Oakton Community Center, and Emily Oaks Nature Center. All other locations, such as the Skokie Park Tennis Center, Skokie Heritage Museum, Weber Golf Course, Tot Learning Center, Dammrich Rowing Center, and various parks and schools hosted 95 or fewer unique classes each throughout the year.

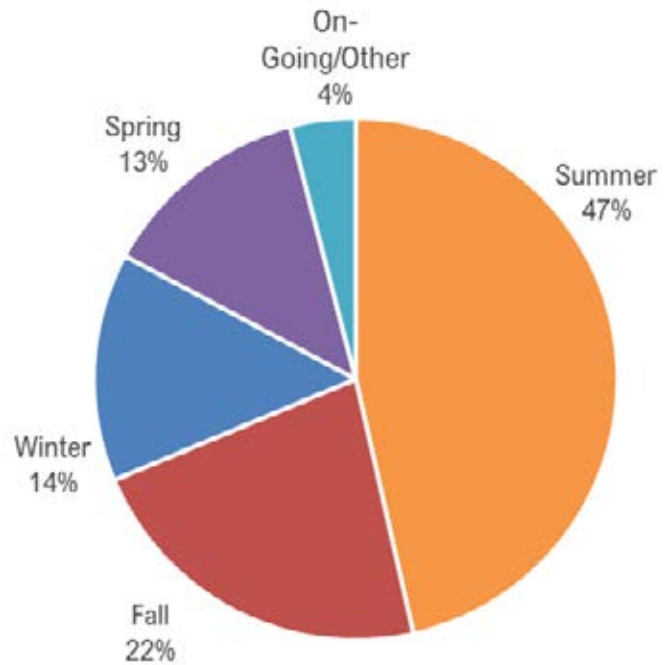
Recreation Class Offerings Throughout the Year

Skokie Park District plans its programming schedule around four seasons – Winter, Spring, Summer, and Fall – in addition to offering several school-year, year-round, and/or off-season programs. In 2024, the District offered a relatively balanced number of unique activities across seasons. However, actual registration totals for those activities were heavily concentrated in the summer months, with that season accounting for nearly half of Skokie Park District's total registrations throughout the year.

Unique Activities Offered by Season



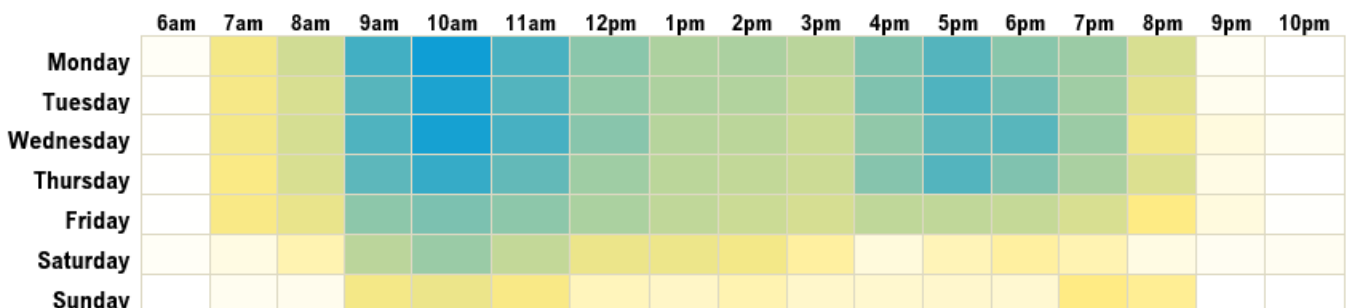
Registrations by Season



Recreation Class Days and Start Times

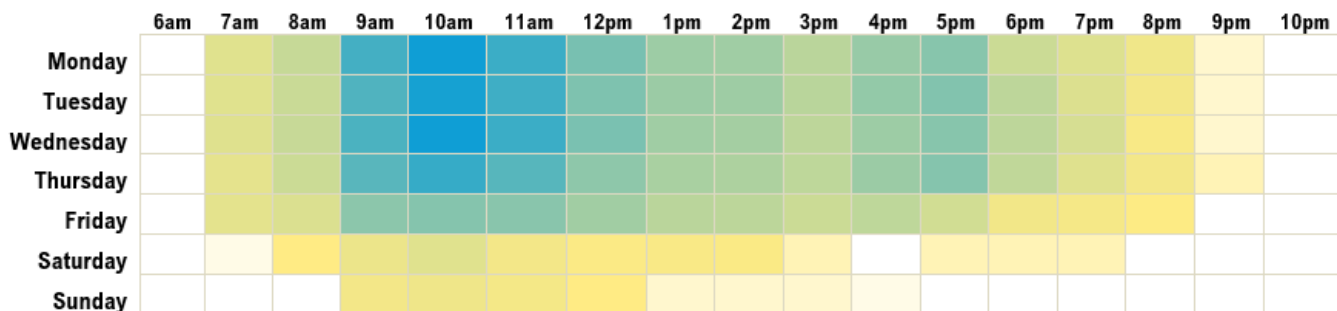
By analyzing program dates and times for the entire year, heatmaps of program offerings were created and reviewed to further understand the timing of recreation program offerings. Programs offered by the Skokie Park District were scheduled throughout the day, generally beginning as early as 6am and ending by 10pm. Weekday programming peaked during those hours around 9am until noon and again from 4-6pm, with Fridays being lighter than other weekdays. Weekend programming options were also offered, with the bulk taking place on Saturdays from 9am until noon and more limited offerings on Sundays. Overall, the District appears to offer programs at various times to accommodate diverse schedules, though there may be opportunities for additional weekend programming if demand exists.

Programs Offered in 2024 by Day of Week and Time of Day – Overall (Peak Times Highlighted In Blue)

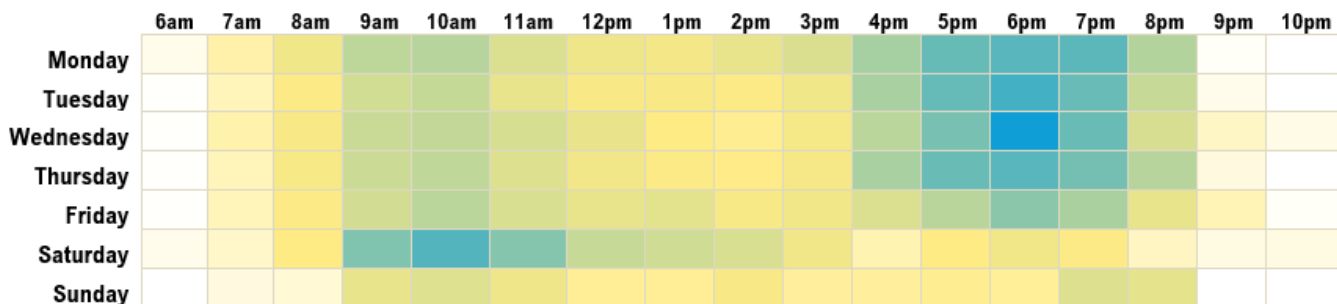


Program dates and times were also reviewed seasonally. Like many park and recreation organizations, programs (and the demand for facility and park space to house them) were noticeably different between summer and non-summer months. In winter, spring, and fall, programming was generally more spread out throughout the day and week, with peak programming times between 4-9pm on weekdays and 9am until noon on Saturdays. In the summer, which featured many more childcare-centered programs such as summer camps, peak programming hours were from 9am-6pm, and weekend programming was much lighter than during the rest of the year.

Programs Offered in 2024 by Day of Week and Time of Day – Summer Only
(Peak Times Highlighted In Blue)



Programs Offered in 2024 by Day of Week and Time of Day – Winter/Spring/Fall/On-Going
(Peak Times Highlighted In Blue)



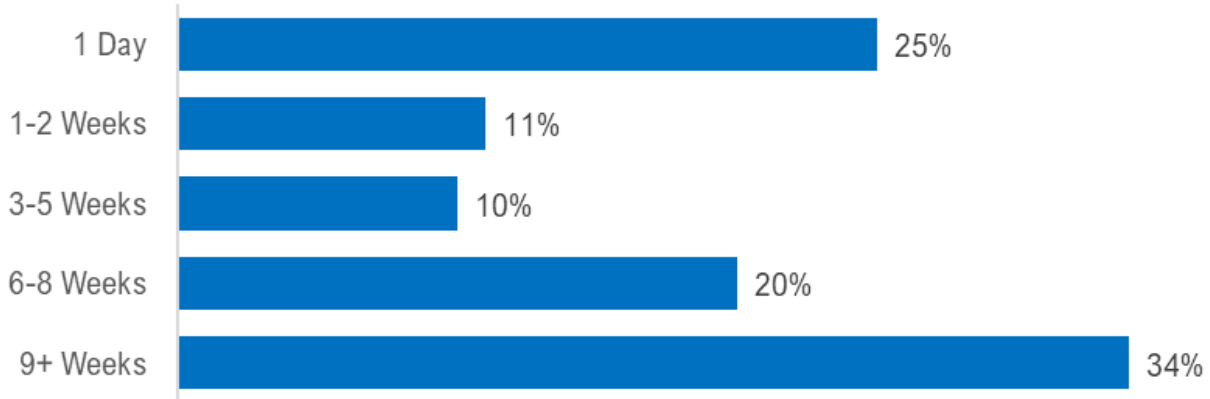
Consequently, there may be opportunities to add summer weekend programming, as well as additional programming before 4pm during the winter, spring, and fall, if demand exists. Or, as the District examines future recreation facility needs, it should prioritize options that alleviate pressure on available facility space on the peak days and times mentioned above.

Length of Recreation Classes

Recreation classes often vary in length for several reasons, including the time required to teach or facilitate the specific activity, participants’ scheduling needs, the program’s appeal to potential customers in terms of commitment level and pricing, and the park and recreation organization’s facility and staff availability.

When evaluating Skokie Park District’s programs, more than half fall at one end of the scale or the other: a quarter are single-day programs, and over a third last nine weeks or longer. While this does lead to a good balance overall, it should be noted that over half of the unique programs Skokie Park District offers last six weeks or longer. Given the District’s extensive offerings in athletics and cultural arts, the emphasis on skill development likely requires these extended class times.

Unique Activities Offered by Session Length

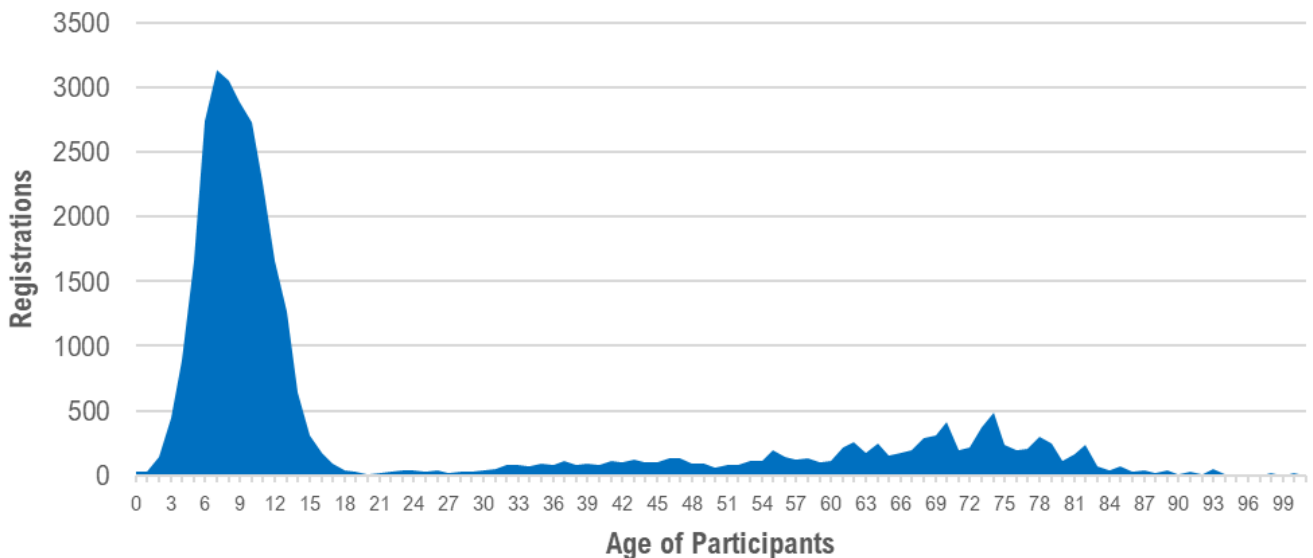


Program Audience

Participation by Age

Participation in programs offered by park and recreation organizations is often dominated by youth, who, along with their parents and caregivers, seek structured recreation opportunities with supervised activities. This also holds for the Skokie Park District, where participation by those 17 and younger accounted for 72% of total registrations in 2024 (although it is not atypical to see this number as high as 85% at other park and recreation organizations).

Total Program Registrations by Age of Participant in 2024

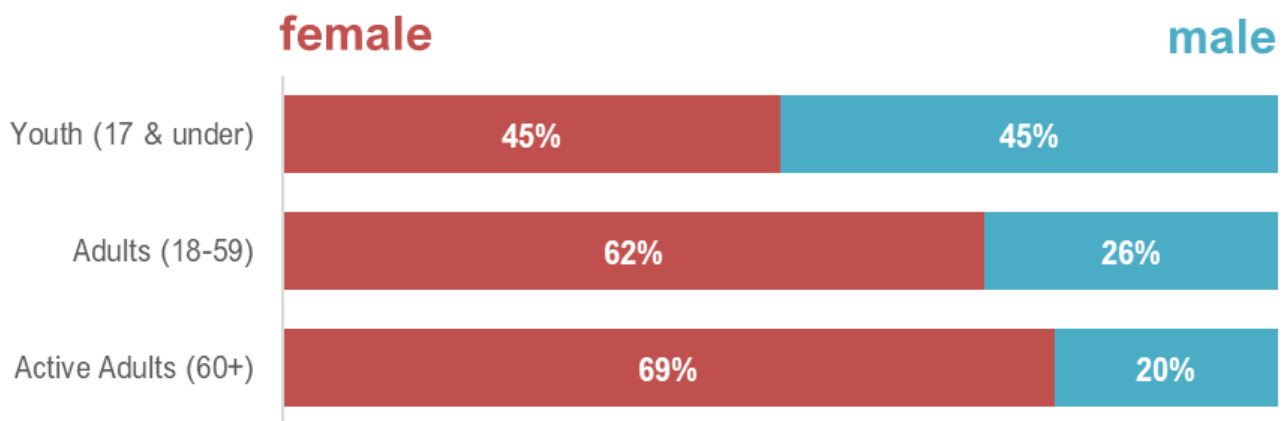


Because youth participation is vital to the Skokie Park District’s overall programming efforts, it may be worth noting that in 2024, the largest increase in youth registrations occurred between ages 5 and 6, and the largest decline occurred between ages 13 and 14. Given the current “sweet spot” for youth participation ages 6-11, it may be worthwhile to target the 4-5 and 11-13 age groups to most easily expand participation in District programs.

Participation by Gender

While most park and recreation organizations make an effort to provide opportunities for the majority of their community, not all individuals are equally interested in specific programs. This can lead to disparities in participation, including gender-based ones. For example, while group exercise classes are offered as co-ed classes, they tend to have higher participation rates among females. Overall, Skokie Park District is doing a good job of offering program options that attract a reasonably balanced number of participants of each gender across all age levels. However, adult participation, especially among older adults over 60, is more heavily weighted toward females.

Overall Registrations by Age and Gender in 2024*



*The percentages for each age group do not equal 100% because some registrants left the gender field blank or selected “other” when registering for a program.

Looking deeper into specific program areas, however, reveals additional imbalances that the District may want to address. As noted above, some of these reflect an imbalance of participation in these types of activities nationwide. Still, there may be opportunities to improve the balance through new programming or marketing efforts. Where gender is listed for a participant:

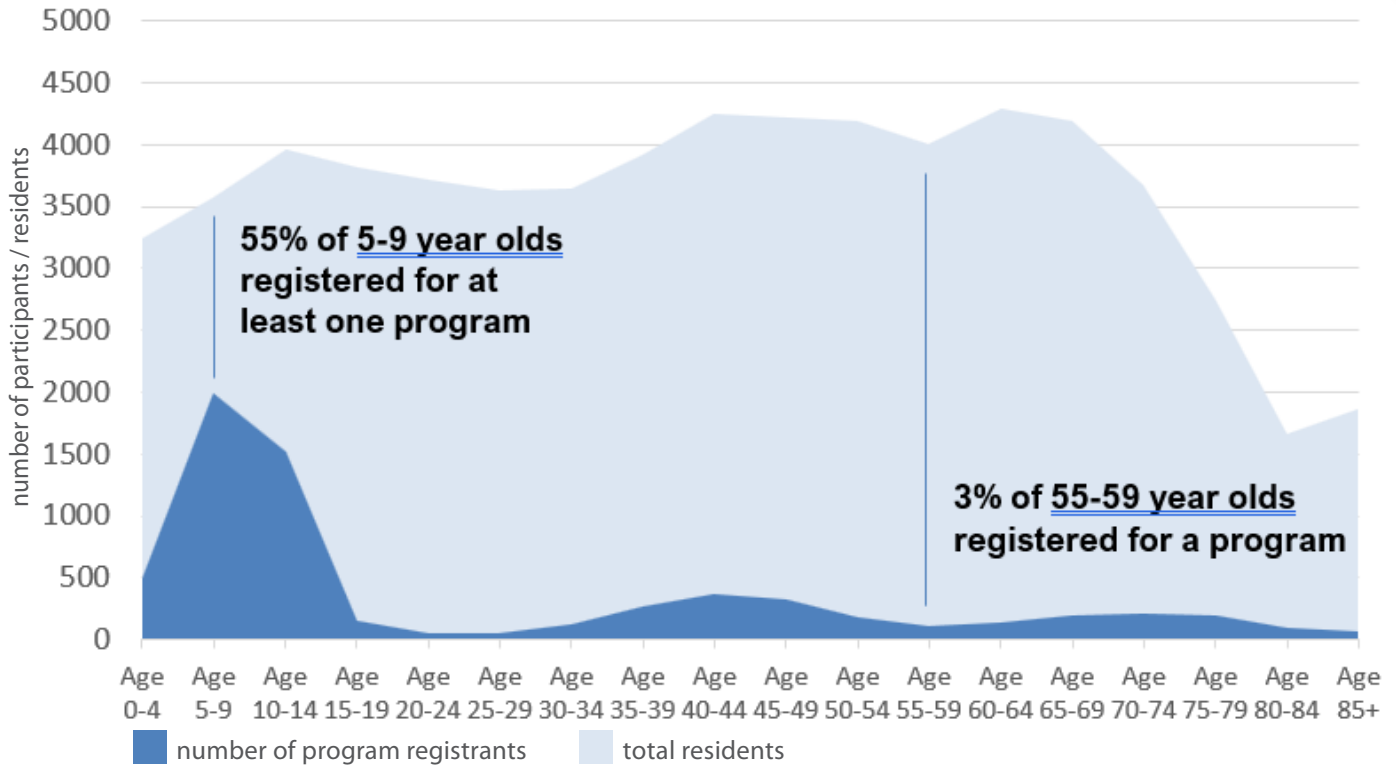
- Registration for Dance is 84% female (even heavier for youth 17 & under)
- Registration for Active Adults is 73% female
- Registration for Cultural Arts is 72% female
- Registration for Exercise & Fitness is 70% female
- Registration for Dog Training is 70% female

Resident Use of Recreation Programs

Most participants in Skokie Park District recreation programs are District residents. In 2024, 75% of registrations came from District residents. The other 25% of participants primarily came from neighboring communities, including those outside District boundaries in Chicago, Evanston, Morton Grove, and Lincolnwood.

To better understand the extent to which residents of the Skokie Park District are utilizing recreation programs, the following chart has been created. The darker blue area highlights the total number of unique District residents who registered for a program in 2024, set against the total number of Skokie Park District residents in lighter blue to show where gaps in participation exist.

Program Participation of Skokie Park District Residents Compared to Overall District Population



Based on this analysis, we know that Skokie Park District is effectively attracting resident youth ages 5-9 to participate in its programs. However, there is still room for growth in this demographic. As is common for park and recreation organizations, the percentage of adults participating in District programs is much lower. While adults may have less need or desire to sign up for structured recreation programs with the District (or may be using other services), the District should consider any unmet adult programming needs identified in the community survey.

As noted earlier in this report, this chart does not capture engagement with recreation programs that did not require registration (e.g., attending a special event or a drop-in program), nor does it capture other recreation purchases, such as memberships, passes, and rentals. While approximately 15% of Skokie Park District resident households purchased at least one program in 2024, when we expand that analysis to include any type of transaction taking place through its recreation software (memberships, passes, rentals, parties, donations, etc.), the District reached 39% of its resident households through these recreation services.

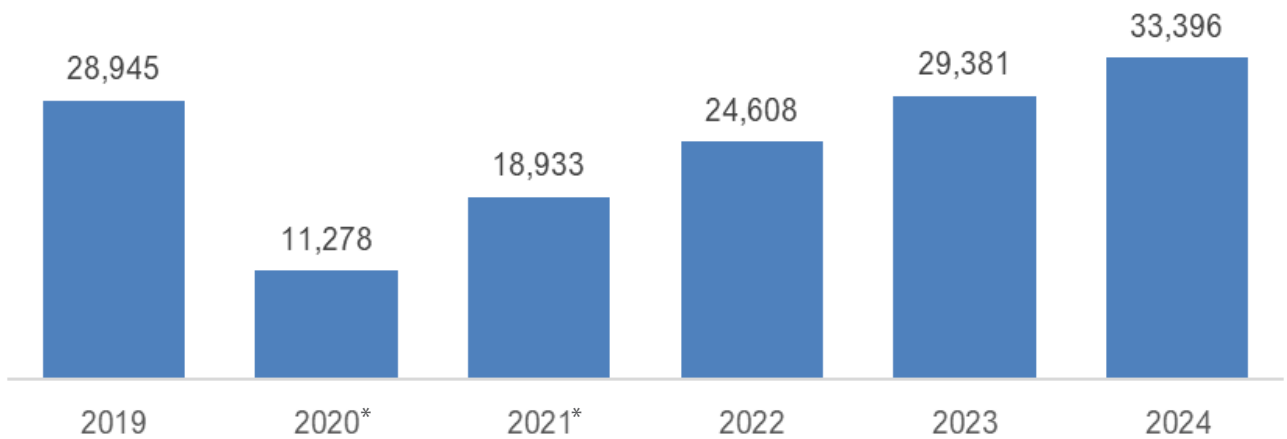
Program Portfolio Performance and Health

Program Registration Trends

Examining program and registration trends provides essential data to better understand how well Skokie Park District is performing as it works to meet its mission of providing recreation opportunities to the community. One of the first key metrics to review is the total number of program registrations.

Skokie Park District Program Enrollments have been steadily increasing by over 13% each year since 2020 and have surpassed pre-pandemic levels.

Total Activity Enrollments by Year

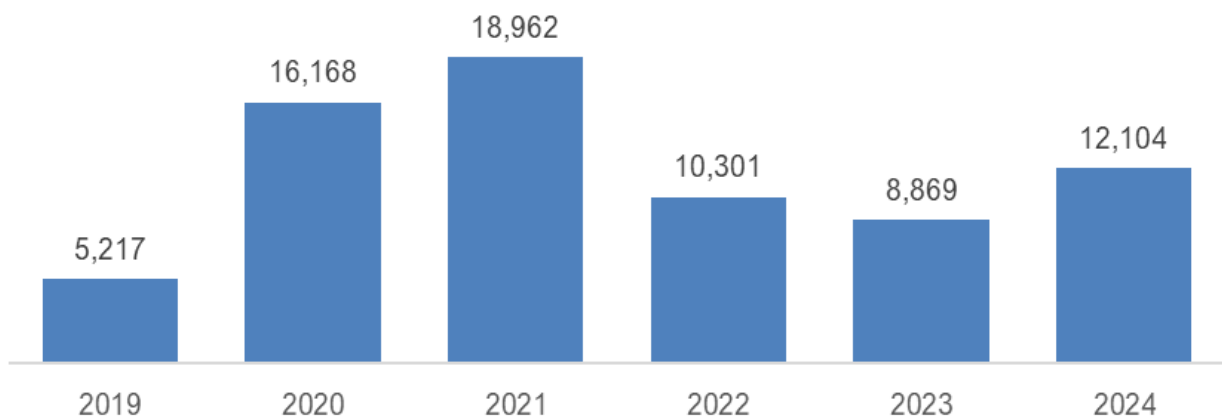


*Total low due to COVID

The District is trending in the right direction, and it is encouraging to see continued year-over-year growth and recovery in registrations since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Even looking at the past three years, significant growth has occurred in several areas.

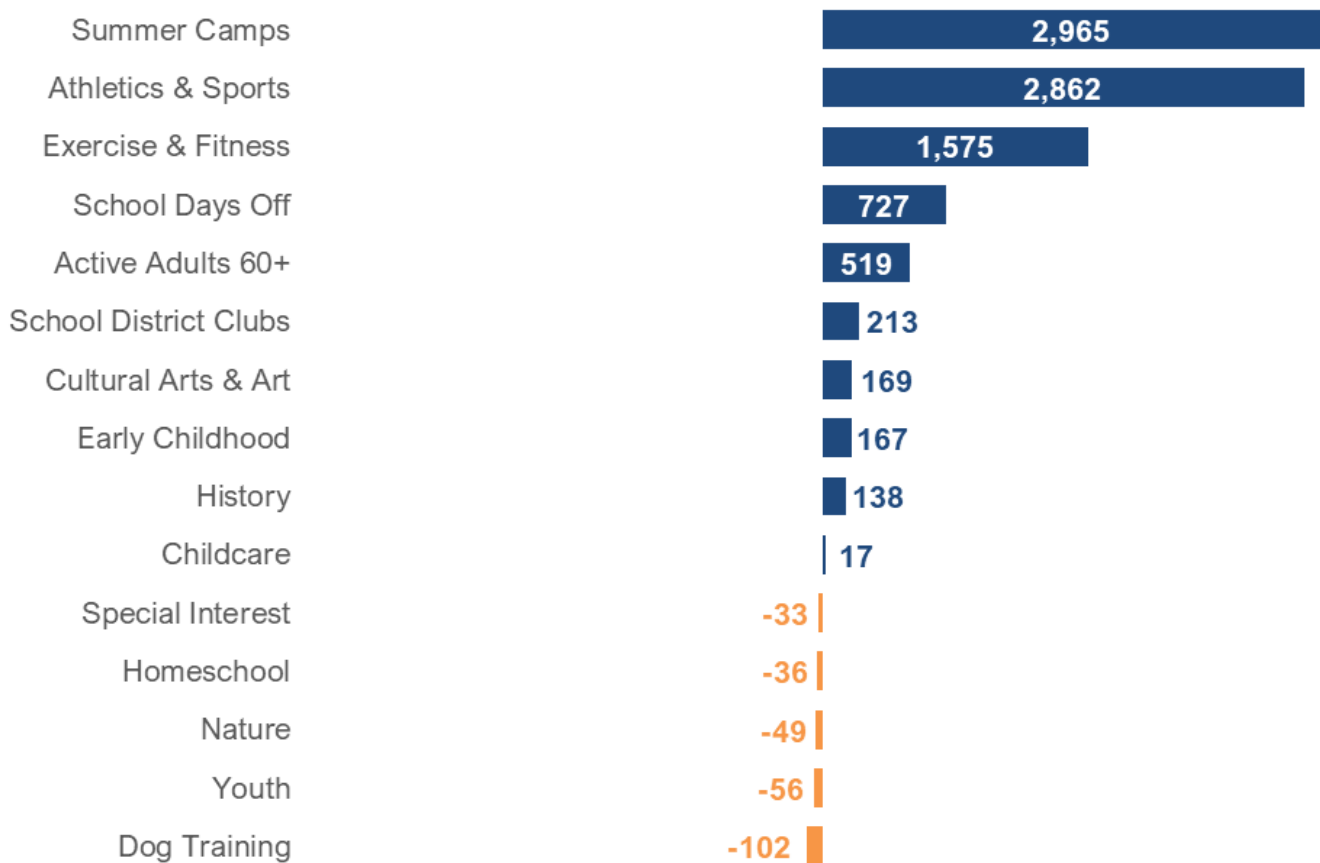
In addition to traditional program registrations, Skokie Park District also sells a high number of tickets to performances and events, such as theatre/musicals, concerts and choir performances, ice shows, movies, Winter Chilly Fest, etc. These ticket sales have fluctuated in the past several years, ranging from approximately 8,880 to just over 12,000 in 2024.

Total Ticket Sales by Year



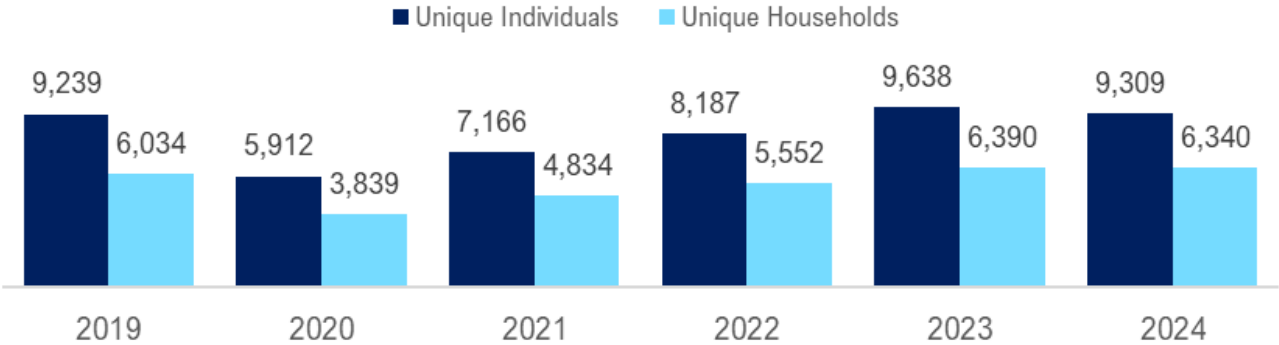
In the past three years, significant growth in program registrations has occurred in several areas, including Summer Camps, Athletics & Sports, and Exercise & Fitness. Many other categories, including School Days Off, Active Adults, School District Clubs, Cultural Arts and Arts, Early Childhood, and History & Museum, also experience growth. Some of that growth was partially offset by declines in select program areas. While overall participation trends remain positive, categories such as Dog Training, Youth, Nature, Homeschool, and Special Interest experienced slight decreases during this period.

Program Enrollment Growth and Declines from 2022 to 2024



While overall registrations are increasing, it is also helpful to understand whether the increase in registrations is due to serving more customers or due to customers purchasing more. In this instance, Skokie Park District is generally experiencing growth in both.

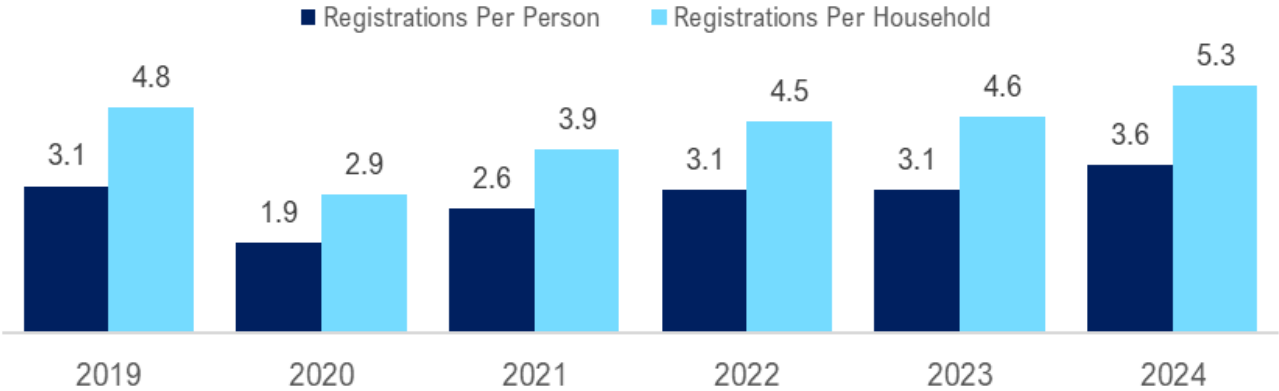
Total Unique Households & Individuals Registering for a Program



In 2024, the Skokie Park District had 1,551 new households create accounts with the District’s recreation management software. Unique one-time events are often a strong draw for new customers, and this was the case for the Skokie Park District as well. The programs bringing in the most new households included:

- North Pole Express
- Breakfast with Bunny
- Princess Ball
- Breakfast with Santa
- Groundhog Day Fireside
- Solar Eclipse Watch Party
- CBL Boys (K-2nd)
- Glow Gnomes Campfire
- Basic Skating 1
- AARP Smart Driver Course

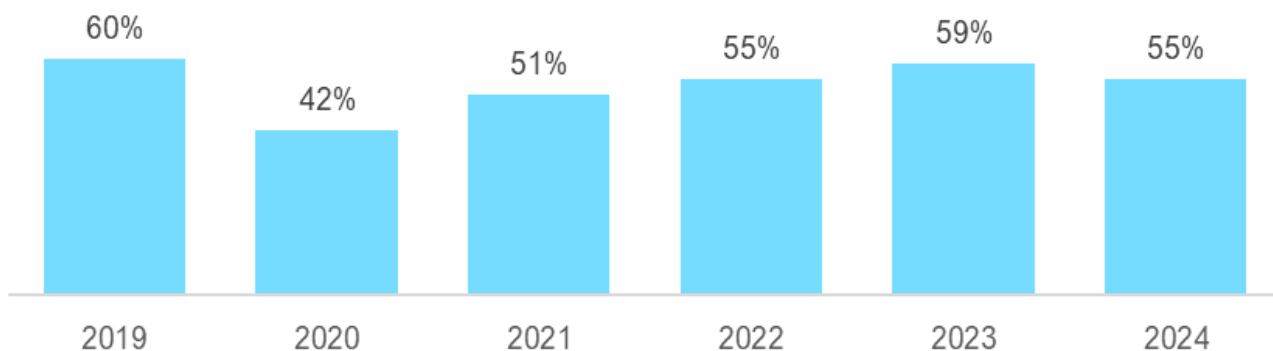
Average Registrations Per Year



A final important metric to review is customer retention, which often reflects the quality of the programs a park and recreation organization offers and alignment with community needs. In this case, a review of overall household retention rates was examined, which measures the percentage of households that participated in at least one program in the previous year and returned in the following year to register for at least one program.

In this area, Skokie Park District has some room to grow, with household retention rates hovering between 51-59% over the past four years and not yet returning to its 2019 peak of 60%. Besides serving as a good indicator of program quality and customer loyalty, monitoring and increasing this number will likely also lead to higher performance in other areas, as registration data indicates that the District’s returning customers complete over twice as many registrations on average as new customers.

Household Year-to-Year Retention Rates



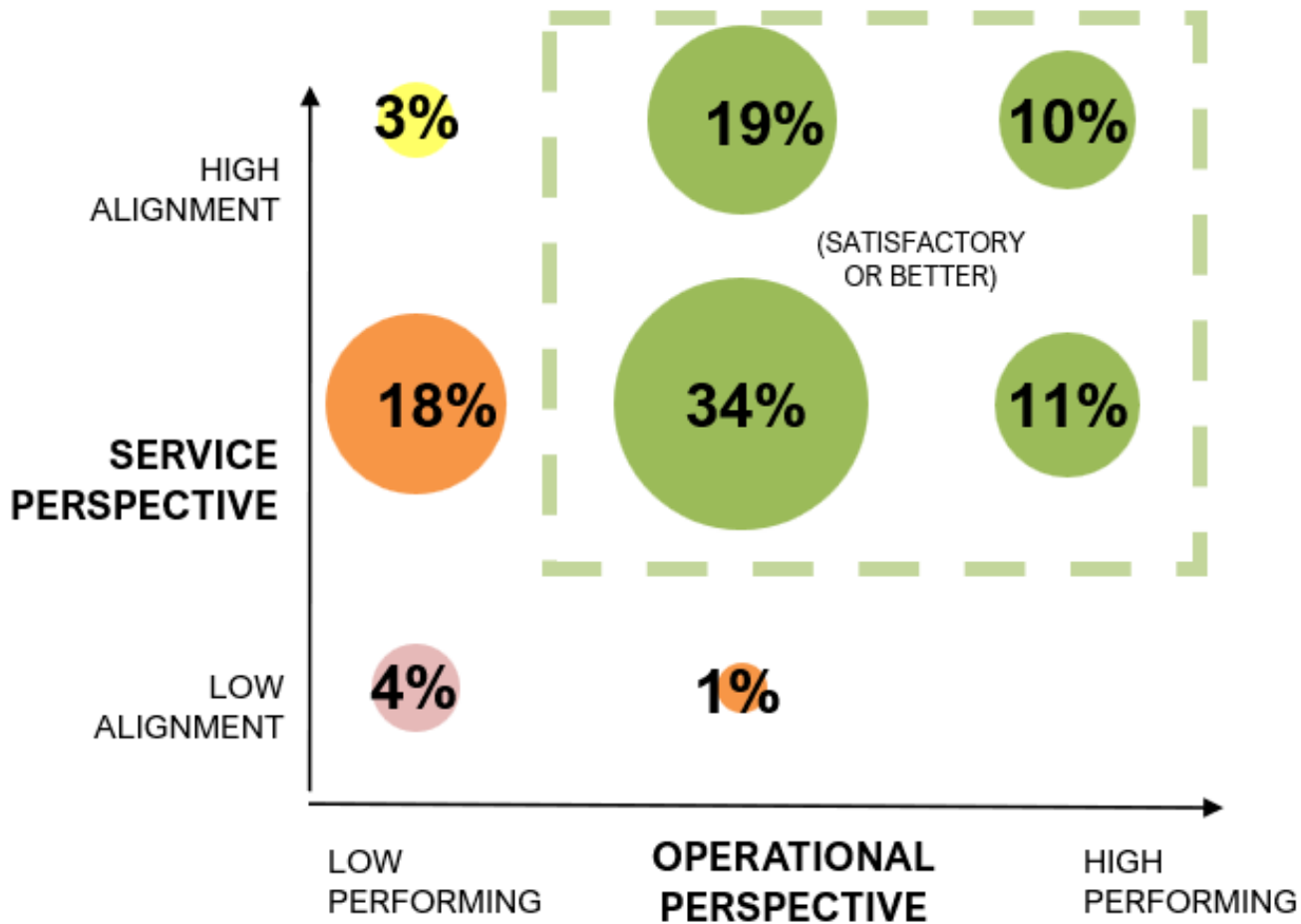
Although program registration trends provide important insight into the current state of recreation programs offered by Skokie Park District, they alone do not tell the whole story. To capture a fuller picture, additional analysis of the program portfolio’s health was conducted.

To complete this analysis, District programming staff answered a series of questions about a random sample of 297 recreation programs offered in the past year. These questions covered current program performance, operations, audience, and benefits, as well as staff’s perspectives on each program’s future direction. Responses were compiled and analyzed to provide insights into the health of the District’s recreation program portfolio.

Program Operational and Service Alignment

Measuring the health of a recreation program portfolio can be challenging because park and recreation organizations are often tasked with achieving operational or business outcomes while serving the community and fulfilling their mission. Sometimes these two interests can even compete against each other. Using staff program assessment responses, programs were rated from service, mission, operational, and business perspectives.

Recreation Program Portfolio Service Alignment and Operational Performance



As illustrated in the chart above, District programs appear to be a good fit overall, with 74% rated satisfactorily or better in both service alignment and operational performance. However, there is room for improvement from an operational perspective, according to staff input. The 10% of programs in the upper right-hand corner were from a varied range of programs including Hip Hop Dance Class, Volleyball Skills Clinics, Youth Karate, Day Camps, and Active Adult Day Trips are likely worth expanding or serving as inspiration for the District to create spin-offs.

Program Life Cycle Analysis

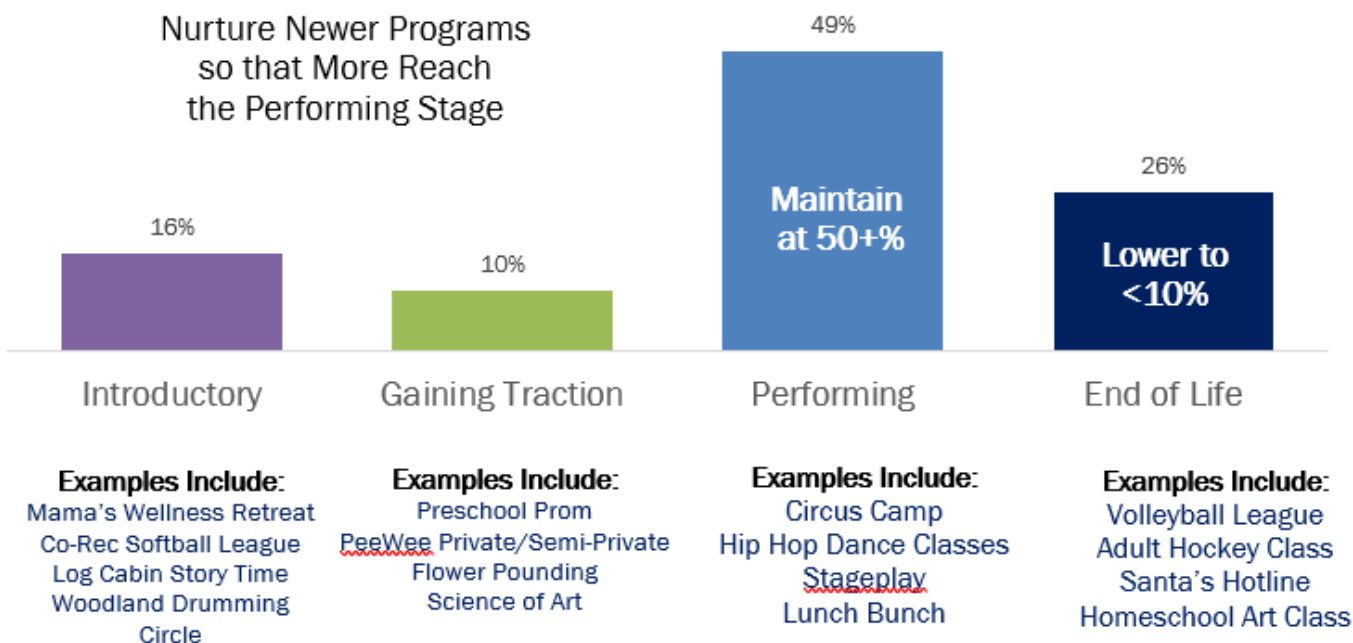
Another approach to evaluating the overall health of the District’s program offerings is to assess where programs sit in the program life cycle, which begins when a program is first introduced and continues until it reaches the end of its life. Viewing programs from this angle can help shape recommendations on current program offerings and future program development strategies.

A summary of the life cycle stages used in this analysis is shared below:

- **Introduction:** Recreation programs falling into this stage are new or somewhat new recreation opportunities that are still working to gain a foothold. They require additional effort and attention to get off the ground and are not yet meeting participation or financial goals, but they still have potential for success in this early stage.
- **Gaining Traction:** Recreation programs falling into this stage are ones that have really picked up steam. They are immediate successes or newer programs that are showing growth and may soon become consistently high-performing.
- **Performing:** Recreation programs that have run long enough and successfully enough to be considered consistent performers fall into this stage. They no longer require the same level of attention and effort to meet participation and financial goals as they did when they were initially offered.
- **End of Life:** Recreation programs falling into this stage are ones with declining participation, or ones that now need extra attention to get back to the participation and financial performance that they once had. They need to be renewed to get back on track (otherwise, they are likely to die out) or may be eliminated to free up resources for new programs.

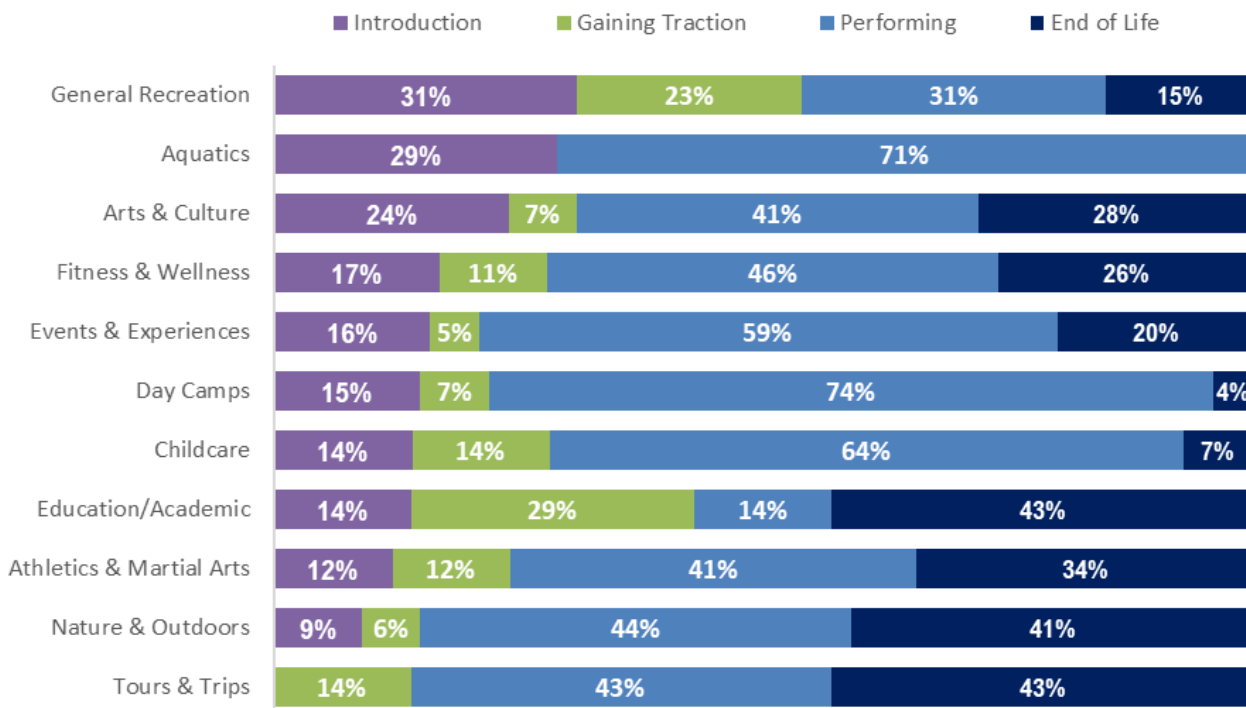
The chart below shows the overall results of this analysis. It’s encouraging to see that nearly half of the programs are in the Performing stage, which provides a strong foundation for short-term program success and sustainability. While some programs will always be at or near the End of Life phase, it would benefit Skokie Park District to work to lower this number closer to 10% to not only ensure that it is no longer offering programs that no longer seem to be performing as well but also make space for newer programs.

Recreation Program Portfolio Service Alignment and Operational Performance



The following chart shows the life cycle distribution for each program area. By diving deeper into the results, many of the same themes emerge across individual program categories. For example, most program areas have at least 40-50% of their programs falling in the Performing stage, which is a great basis to operate under. However, many have a much higher than desired number of programs falling in the End of Life stage, including Education/Academic, Athletics & Martial Arts, Nature & Outdoors, and Tours & Trips. Extra attention should be paid to these areas to either refresh or sunset programs that are no longer performing as well, as to make room for other offerings.

Recreation Program Portfolio Service Alignment and Operational Performance







CHAPTER FOUR

Connect

Community Engagement





Overview

This chapter documents the Connect: Community Engagement Phase focusing on the needs assessment and community engagement portion of the Comprehensive Master Planning process, documenting trends in the recreation industry and specific input received from the Skokie community.

Purpose

The purpose of understanding park and recreation trends is to determine probable demands for certain services and amenities. Recreation trend reports were compiled from nationally-recognized sources to explore spending, participation, and inactivity.

In order to increase participation, knowing the trends and interests of various user groups is crucial. Significant changes in specific activities (both increases and decreases) over the past two to five years are summarized. The national, state, and local trend reports are followed by summaries of all engagement sessions completed during the planning process. This systematic approach to community engagement provided a multitude of avenues for residents to provide input on aspirations and needs while defining concerns and opportunities for the next five years.

During the Connect: Community Engagement Phase, the planning team reviewed trends, facilitated interviews with the key stakeholders, conducted a staff workshop and hosted a pop-up community input event at the 2025 Skokie Festival of Cultures. A statistically valid community survey was distributed to a random sampling of households. This comprehensive engagement

approach ensured input from a broad cross section of residents with diverse interests and goals.

Chapter Outline

- National Trends
- State Trends
- Local Trends
- Community Interest & Opinion Survey
- Staff Workshop
- Community Pop-Up Event
- Stakeholder Interviews

METHODOLOGY

Review of Trends

National, State, and Local Trends

National trends were derived from the 2025 Sports, Fitness, and Recreational Activities Topline Participation Report, facilitated by the Sports & Fitness Industry Association, a top national researcher in the sports and fitness industry, as well as the 2025 Outdoor Foundation's Outdoor Recreation Participation Topline Report. State trends were derived from the 2020 Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). The Environmental Systems Research Institute's (Esri) Business Analyst provided local recreation participation trends.

Community Interest & Opinion Survey

Statistically Valid, District-wide Survey

Conducted by aQity Research & Insights Inc. between June 3rd and August 7th of 2025, the statistically valid community survey was distributed to a random sample of households in the Skokie Park District. The goal for completion was 400 surveys, and a total of 404 Skokie households completed the survey. The results for this sample have a 95 percent level of confidence with a precision rate of at least ± 4.9 percent.

Staff Workshop

Workshop with various full-time and part-time staff members

Staff provided input about their goals, objectives, desires, and hopes for the next five years as well as their opinions on the current state of the District in a workshop. Representatives from all District departments participated.

Community Pop-Up Event

Public pop-up event to gather input from community members

A community Pop-Up Event was held at the 2025 Skokie Festival of Cultures at Oakton Park to gather input from the public at-large. Residents participated in a variety of activities to provide input on needs, desires, and priorities for the next five years.

Stakeholder Interviews

Virtual conversations with key stakeholder groups to provide input on parks, programs, and facilities

Specific interest groups, or stakeholders, relevant to the District's programs, operations, parks, and facilities were invited to participate in small group discussions regarding their organizations' needs and priorities for the next five years. Each group was formatted as a facilitated discussion between participants.



National Trends

Derived from the statistically valid surveys facilitated by the Sports and Fitness Industry Association with the Physical Activity Council and the Outdoor Foundation, the following data will help inform the planning team's recommendations.

The Physical Activity Council (PAC) is a partnership of seven major trade organizations in U.S. sports, fitness, and leisure activities. These organizations are the Sports & Fitness Industry Association (SFIA), the National Golf Foundation (NGF), Outdoor Industry Association (OIA), the International Health, Racquet, and Sports Club Association (IHRSA), the Tennis Industry Association (TIA), the United States Tennis Association (USTA), and Snowsports Industries America (SIA).

The PAC produces an annual Sport, Fitness, & Recreational Activities Topline Participation Report providing information on participation, inactivity, spending, aspirational participation and projections. The 2025 report compiled and analyzed 18,000 online interviews collected in 2024. These surveys were then weighted against a total population of 308,888,845 ages 6 and older. The following variables were used: gender, age, income, household size, region, and population density.

Other research incorporated in this chapter references the Outdoor Recreation Participation Topline Report, created by the Outdoor Industry Association and Outdoor Foundation. These partner organizations research and publish the annual topline report which tracks American outdoor recreation trends with a focus

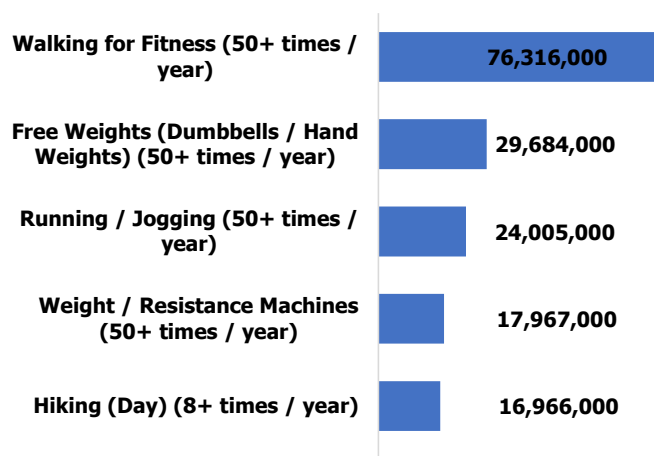
on youth, diversity, and the future of the outdoors. In addition to these studies, this chapter references Active Network, a national software company that utilizes recreation data to study market trends.

Sports and Fitness Participation

For the eleventh consecutive year, physical activity in the U.S. has increased, and for the first time since SFIA began tracking participation, the rate has reached 80%. This means about 247.1 million Americans participated in at least one activity during 2024. This is a 6.8% increase from 2019. Comparing participation rates from 2015 to 2024 shows the greatest percent of growth by participation in outdoor sports (10.2%). Fitness sports (6.9%), racquet sports (6.6%), team sports (5.2%), winter sports (2.1%), and water sports (2.1%) all also increased in participation over the last ten years. While categories have generally grown or maintained participation from year to year, individual sports and team sports had participation decreases in the 2019-2022 year ranges. Participation in both has been increasing since 2021-2022 and team sports has exceeded the 2015 trend, experiencing a lower overall decline compared to individual sports. Individual sports saw a greater decrease in participation that started prior to 2019 and 2024 levels are still below 2015 and 2019 numbers despite the last two years of growth. The trend of all

seven categories' participation increases since 2022 indicates a growing prioritization of physical activity and healthy lifestyles amongst Americans.

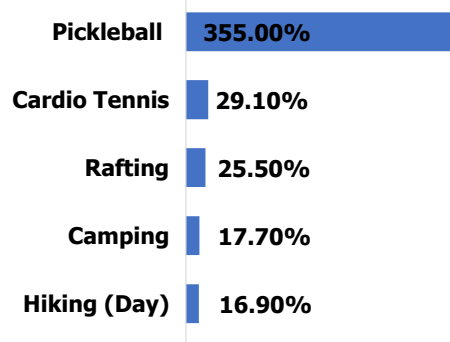
The data collected suggests that Americans are continuing to add high-calorie burning exercise and outdoor activities to their existing routines. The most popular activity category continues to be fitness sports followed by outdoor sports, individual sports, team sports, racquet sports, water sports, and winter sports. Core participation is active or organized participation in a sport or activity on a regular basis which indicates commitment and dedication to an activity compared to casual or intermittent participation. Core participation in 2024 was the highest it has been in the last five years, indicating a healthy and growing sports and recreation industry. The number of core participants increased to over 170 million Americans in 2024. Based on core participation, the top five activities in 2024 defined by core participation, were:



In addition to referencing the current most popular activities by measuring core participation, the Overview Report also lists the growth of activities over one-, three- and five-year periods. These predictions can be used to recognize ongoing recreation trends and predict future areas of growth.

Racquet sports had the largest growth from 2023 to 2024 at 9.4%, followed by team sports at 8.1%. Racquet sport growth can largely be attributed to unusually high growth in pickleball (45.8%) and tennis (8.0%). Pickleball continues to be the fastest growing sport for the fourth consecutive year with an estimated 19.8 million total participants. Growth trends in the team sports category included growth in 20 of the 24 included sports with a high growth rate in wrestling (8.6%).

The top five core growth activities over the past three years are:



As evidenced by the above lists, 2024 participation was concentrated in the fitness activity category which included seven of the top ten activities, and outdoor sports category (two of ten activities). The remaining one activity is classified into both the fitness activity and outdoor sports categories. Growth trend activities represented a more diverse group of categories. Activities from outdoor activities (4), racquet sports (2), fitness activities (2), water activities (1), and team sports (1) are all represented in the top ten core growth activities.

These trends reveal that active people are increasingly looking for nontraditional health and recreation options that offer a fun physical, emotional, and mental experience. While the largest amount of growth is being seen in less traditional sectors, many class-based group fitness and exercise programs, as well as health club-based activities and team sports have increased in popularity over the last three years, as almost all included activities have increased participation. Of the twenty-four Team Sports activities, twenty increased in total participation from 2023 to 2024, with wrestling increasing the most at 8.6%. Basketball, Football (flag), Football (tackle), Football (7-on-7), Gymnastics, Softball (slow-pitch), and Track and Field all also saw significant growth, over 7% in each activity in the last year.

Fifteen of the seventeen Individual Activities saw increased participation in 2023. Trail Running experienced the greatest total participation growth, 8.5%, followed by Roller Skating (2x2 wheels) (7.4%) and Roller Skating (inline wheels) (7.3%).

2023 - 2024 total participation increased in 14 of the 23 Outdoor Activities. The greatest increases were for Bicycling (BMX) (5.8%) and Climbing (Sport/Boulder) (5.1%).

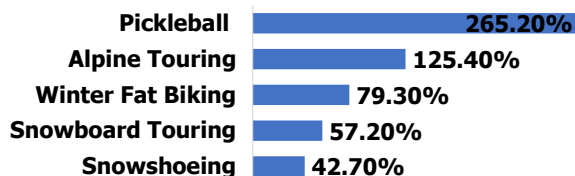
Over the last year total participation in racquet sports increased dramatically with five of the seven included activities seeing growth. The majority of category growth can be attributed to pickleball which experiences a 45.8% increase in participation. In addition to the abnormally high pickleball growth, other racquet sports activities had growth rates consistent with other category high growers with the two highest being Tennis (8.0%) and Squash (6.4%).

Thirteen of the fourteen water activities saw an increase in total participation over the last year. The largest increases were in Stand Up Paddling (6.6%) followed by Surfing (5.9%).

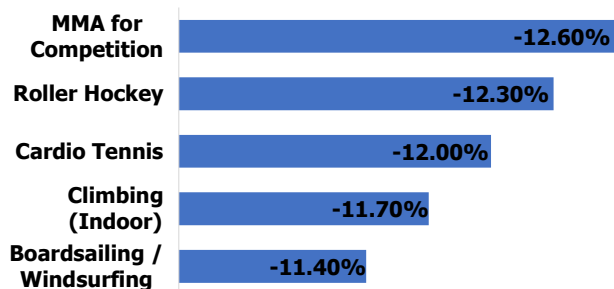
Six of the nine winter sports increased in total participation from 2022 to 2023. The greatest growth was seen for snowboarding (9.3%), then Sledding/Saucer Riding/Snow Tubing (6.6%), and Snowmobiling (5.9%).

The Fitness Activities category is further divided into three subcategories: aerobic activities, conditioning activities, and strength activities. Aerobics is the largest subcategory with 14 activities, 12 of which increased participation from 2023-2024. The greatest increase was in Stationary Cycling (Group) (6.0%), followed by Running/Jogging (5.7%). Boot Camp Style Training, Swimming for Fitness, and Aquatic Exercise also all increased by over 4%. Four of the five Conditioning Activities have grown in the last year with the greatest increase in Yoga (9.9%), then Pilates Training (8.7%). The Strength Activities subcategory includes 4 activities which all increased in total participation. These are Kettlebells (7.7%) followed by Weight/Resistance Machines (4.8%), Free Weights (Dumbbells/Hand Weights) (4.4%), and Free Weights (Barbell) (4.1%).

Three-year growth trends indicated that the following activities saw steady or increasing participation from 2021 to 2023 among participating ages 6+ and are likely to continue to provide opportunities to engage more people in the future:

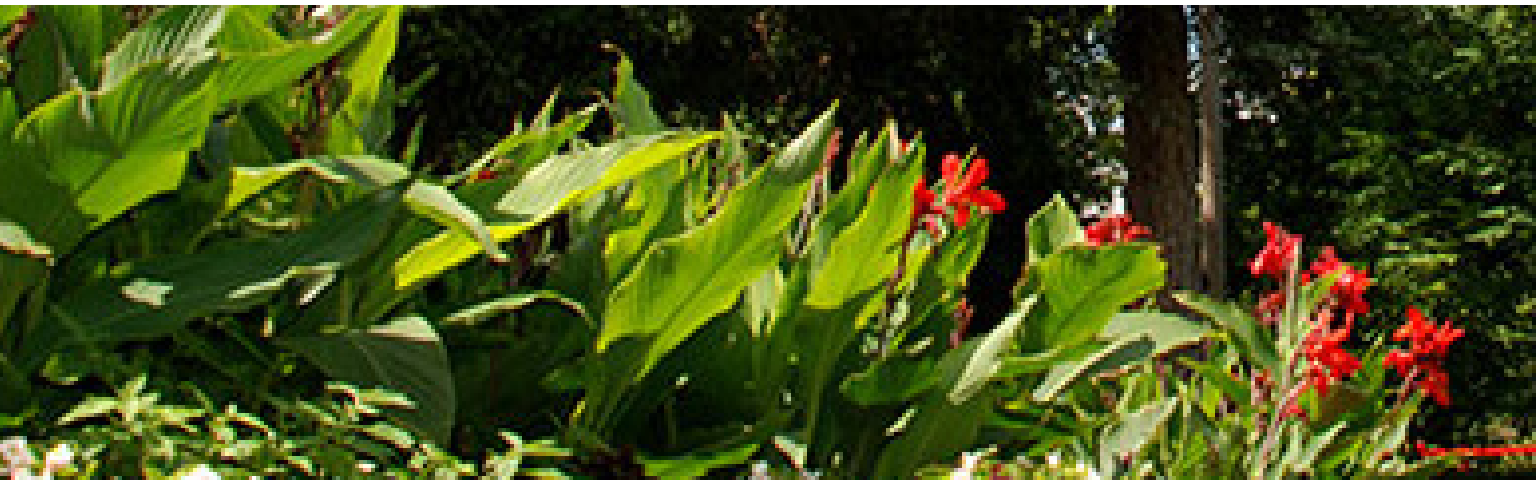


These same growth trends also indicate which activities have been trending down in participation. The following are the top five activities with the largest drop in participation:



Outdoor Sports & Participation

The Outdoor Industry Association is a collective of outdoor industry leaders which publishes an annual trends report. According to the most recent Outdoor Foundation Topline Report, published in 2025, over half the U.S. population (58.6%) participated in one or more outdoor sport or activity in 2024. A record number of people, 181.1 million, went on at least outdoor recreation outing over the course of the year. This represents an increase in participant base of about 32 million people, but frequency of individual participation is generally declining across the last thirteen years. 2025 recorded an



average number of 65 outings per participant which is slightly higher than 2023, but still about 22 fewer outings than recorded in 2012. This overall trend of increasing overall participation but decreasing quantities of outings suggests a shift towards more casual participation.

Growth was most concentrated amongst the youth (6-12) and senior (65+) age groups (+5.6% and 7.4%) and participants identifying as black and Hispanic (12.8% and 11.8%). Households with high incomes over \$100,000 also increased participation (10.7%), as did non-college educated high school graduates (11.2%).

The Outdoor Foundation Topline Report identified the most popular activities as walking for Fitness, 115M participants, and Hiking, 63M participants. The activities most likely to attract new participants included Hiking, Camping, Fishing, Bicycling, and Running, and it was determined that people who are participating in longer duration activities such as camping and backpacking are most likely to engage in multiple outdoor activities.

Engaging Inactives

An “inactive” person is defined by the Physical Activity Council as one who does not participate in any of the sports/activities covered in the PAC Overview Report. In 2024, 61.8 million (20%) Americans were inactive. This is the lowest inactivity has been since tracking began and the seventh consecutive year of inactivity decline. Inactivity went down for all eight age groups from 2024 to 2025 and inactivity at every age group was significantly lower in 2024 than it was in 2019, pre-pandemic. By age, the youngest groups , 6-12 and 13-17, recorded the greatest declines of over 10% each. While their overall activeness is increasing, Americans over 65 have the largest rate of inactivity, reflecting the trend that people generally become less active as they age.

In order to understand how to engage inactives in sports and activities, the PAC survey lists “aspirational” activities that inactives are interested in participating in. Aspirational activities are becoming more varied between age groups but swimming for fitness and camping made the top ten list for all age groups in 2024. Running / jogging made the list for all age groups except 55-64 and 65+. Working out with weights, working out using machines, or working out using weight resistance machines made the list for all age groups except 6-12. All age groups show interest in some outdoor activities such as hiking, or fishing, in addition to camping.

Active adults, as well as inactives, also tend to be interested in social programs and sports leagues as well as active recreation. Active Network recommends the following activities for adult recreation programs:

- Sports – Broomball, Inner Tube Water Polo, Pickleball, Wallyball
- Exercise – Beyond Zumba, Dance Buffet (multiple styles of dance in a single program), Kettlebells, Outdoor Yoga, CrossFit
- Technology – Beginner’s Guide to iPad, Social Media, Digital Photography
- Entertainment – Karaoke, Improv, Murder Mystery Dinners, Speed Dating, Wii for Seniors
- Art – Cooking, Drawing/Painting, Jewelry Making, Mixed Media Arts, Pottery, Quilting
- Professional/Other – Languages, Estate Planning, Self-Publishing, finances
- Other - Life skills, Brain fitness, Writing, Backyard agriculture

Many agencies are “branding” their active adult programs for younger populations instead of the traditional seniors to encourage long-term participation.





State Trends

Data from the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) is used to compare Skokie Park District amenities to other Park Departments and Districts in the state of Illinois.

The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) is prepared as a five-year document by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) to maintain Illinois' eligibility to participate in the Land Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) program. Its purpose is to "evaluate the outdoor recreation needs of Illinois citizens and determine how best to meet these needs, considering the state's natural resources, recreational lands and facilities, and socioeconomic factors."

The 2021-2025 SCORP identified Illinois' continued low ranking of per capita supply of outdoor recreation land and facilities compared to the rest of the nation. As a result, park and recreation agencies throughout Illinois consistently plan for and achieve a high level of excellence with the recreation opportunities they provide to their communities and land acquisition remains a high priority where possible.

Recreation Facilities and Park Lands Inventory

There are about 1.5 million acres of outdoor recreation land in Illinois ranging from federal and state lands to schools and private commercial lands. Municipal agencies, which include park and recreation departments, park districts, forest preserve districts, conservation districts, and county-level park departments, provide an estimated total of 350,900 acres of parks. They also own 195,800 acres of natural areas

and lease/manage another 15,600 acres of open space. The state itself offers over 470,000 acres of open space throughout the state, through the IDNR. State lands include parks, fish and wildlife areas, conservation areas, and recreation areas to name a few. Federal lands include the 280,000-acre Shawnee National Forest and ten National Wildlife Refuges sites throughout the state. Other recreation providers include schools, non profits, and private entities that provide unique outdoor recreation opportunities for the people of Illinois. The lands managed by these providers were not included in the SCORP.

Top Activities

Based on the 2020 Illinois Community Recreation Facilities and Park Lands Inventory, the top five trends across the state by importance for activities to be made available to Illinois residents are pleasure walking, scenic drives, swimming in an outdoor pool, picnicking, and bicycling (road) as determined by the Illinois resident responses. These results align with the reported preference for investment in trail development and maintenance and the high participation in trail activities such as pleasure walking and running/jogging which had the highest frequency for median participation/year among resident responses. The continued and increasing popularity in pickleball and wildlife/bird watching as well as the decreasing participation in many categories from

the 2014 results is likely due to the aging populations in communities across the state.

According to the survey, municipal parks or county preserves are used as critical, close-to-home outdoor recreation opportunities and provide a variety of activities for programming/events, sports, trail systems, and play. State parks are typically tourism destinations and are significant conservation sites mostly used for wildlife and water activities such as tent camping, vehicle camping, hiking, motor boating, and water skiing. Federal locations in Illinois consist mostly of water bodies and are primarily used for sailing, water skiing, and motor boating. Private recreation locations may offer a variety of activities such as athletic fields, walking tracks, playgrounds, campgrounds, and hunting areas.

The importance of providing outdoor recreation opportunities close to residents' homes or neighborhoods has continued to increase with most of the surveyed activities reported to be taking a more localized form. While this may be partially attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic, previous surveys have also shown greater participation at localized locations for most activities.

Funding Priorities

Public recreation providers identified their top funding priorities for two categories: Outdoor Recreation and conservation efforts and Facilities. For outdoor recreation and conservation, the top three priorities were "maintain existing parks/recreation areas," "provide environmental/conservation programs," and "develop/improve existing land/water open spaces." The top facility priorities were "inclusive/ADA programs/facilities," "community/regional parks," and neighborhood parks."

Attitudes about Outdoor Recreation

Respondents were asked to rate the various factors they considered to be important when making decisions about engaging in outdoor recreation opportunities. Top contributing factors to respondents' decisions to participate in outdoor recreation activities include "to have fun," "exercise/keep healthy," "spend time with family and friends," and "experience nature and/or the outdoors."

Survey respondents indicated that "health and fitness," "area inclusion"/service for all people, and "quality of life and economic development" are important aspects of parks and recreation. Additionally, over 70% of residents agreed with the importance of all of the other resources listed in the survey including "maintenance," "health and fitness," "area inclusion" (access for all people,) "quality

of life and economic development," "trails and greenway development," "wildlife habitat protected and restored," "conservation education," "public access to lakes, rivers, and streams," and "land acquisition - outdoor rec." The top reported concerns regarding parks and recreation were "facilities are clean," "parking available," "increased accessibility," and "educational activities needed."

Outdoor Recreation Priorities

Priorities identified by the IDNR are listed in the 2021-2025 State of Illinois SCORP as:

- Improving Health and Wellness
- Access to Parks and Recreation
- Natural Resources and Conservation Management
- Funding and Economic Development



Local Trends

Local recreation trends were derived from the Sports and Market Leisure Potential and Recreation Expenditures Report from the Environmental Systems Research Institute (Esri).

The data is based on national inclination to use various products and services that has been applied to the local demographic composition of the Skokie Park District. Data was collected by Growth for Knowledge Mediamark Research and Intelligence, LLC (GfK MRI) in a national survey that was representative of U.S. households. Market Potential Index (MPI) measures the relative likelihood of the adults in specific areas to exhibit certain consumer behaviors or purchasing patterns compared to the U.S. population as a whole. An MPI of 100 represents the U.S. average. Numbers under 100 indicate a lower than average representation compared to the U.S. average, and numbers over 100 signal a higher than average representation.

Based on projected population, the top ten recreational activities Skokie Park District residents will participate in are:



The number of MPIs over 100 for Skokie Park District is higher than what the planning team typically finds, which speaks to an active community. Most communities in the Chicagoland area have scores over 100 for approximately 12-15 activities, but SPD has 19 activities that score over 100. This number bodes well for program expansion in the future, particularly in fitness and outdoor-oriented activities. There may be opportunities to grow program areas in both parks and indoor facilities. This growing interest in participation is a trend occurring in park and recreation systems nationwide.

When reviewing recreation trends in Skokie over the past decade, the planning team discovered that the community has increased their participation in types of recreation activities. The last two comprehensive plans, adopted in 2014 and 2020, each revealed 16 activities with an MPI over 100. Although the primary core of activities has remained constant over the last 10 years, more wellness-related activities have migrated to the top of the list, with sports like tennis, golf, swimming, and soccer not cracking the top 10 activities in Skokie.

While Zumba and baseball have dropped below an MPI of 100 since 2020, mountain biking, backpacking, golf, pickleball, and salt water fishing have all reached an MPI over 100. Although some of these activities (salt water fishing and backpacking) are not feasible to incorporate into the Park District's program offerings, the others present opportunity for growth.

Product/Consumer Behavior	Expected # of Adults/HHs	Percent	MPI
Participated in Pilates in last 12 months	1,650	3.2%	117
Participated in jogging or running in last 12 months	6,138	11.9%	116
Participated in hiking in last 12 months	11,323	22.0%	114
Participated in yoga in last 12 months	5,898	11.5%	114
Participated in bicycling (mountain) in last 12 months	1,935	3.8%	114
Participated in weight lifting in last 12 months	8,718	16.9%	113
Participated in bicycling (road) in last 12 months	6,423	12.5%	113
Participated in backpacking in last 12 months	1,990	3.9%	113
Participated in skiing (downhill) in last 12 months	1,513	2.9%	111
Participated in walking for exercise in last 12 months	18,548	36.1%	110
Participated in tennis in last 12 months	2,131	4.1%	109
Participated in golf in last 12 months	4,448	8.6%	108
Participated in pickleball in last 12 months	1,372	2.7%	107
Participated in aerobics in last 12 months	4,143	8.1%	105
Participated in swimming in last 12 months	8,297	16.1%	103
Participated in fishing (salt water) in last 12 months	1,788	3.5%	103
Participated in ping pong in last 12 months	1,984	3.9%	102
Participated in soccer in last 12 months	1,657	3.2%	102
Participated in ice skating in last 12 months	1,299	2.5%	102





Community Interest & Opinion Survey

aQity Research & Insights Inc. administered a community survey for the Skokie Park District during June, July, and August of 2025. The survey was administered as part of the Park District’s Comprehensive Master Plan process.

Methodology

An eleven-page survey was distributed through USPS and emailed at random to a sample of households throughout the Skokie Park District. The mailed survey included a cover letter explaining the purpose of the survey, encouragement for recipients to respond, as well as three options for submission of the completed survey; By Mail within the enclosed pre-paid envelope, Online with a QR code directed to the online survey format, or By Phone with aQity’s phone number listed as well as working hours.

The goal was to receive at least 400 completed surveys for a reasonable margin of error of +/- 4.9 percent at the 95 percent confidence level. This goal was achieved, with a total of 404 households completing the survey. The results for the random sample of 404 households have a 95 percent level of confidence with a precision of at least +/- 4.9 percent.

Report Outline

- Key Insights and Recommendations Executive Summary
- Detailed Analysis of Questions
- Identifying Resident Priorities and Expectations
- Open-Ended Questions Sample Responses
- Survey Methods Summary
- Comparison of “Statistically Valid” Survey Findings

Major Findings By Category

1. Overall Opinions of SPD: Overall perceptions of the Skokie Park District are very positive. On a 0-10 scale, 92 percent of respondents report a favorable opinion, compared to just 2 percent unfavorable. Nearly half (46 percent) assign ratings of 9 or 10, resulting in a strong average score of 8.3, which is higher than other nearby agencies included in the comparison set.

Residents also assign high marks for overall value. With approximately 3.8 percent of property taxes supporting the District, respondents provide an average value rating of 7.9, and 50 percent consider it an excellent value. Nine in ten residents feel their household’s interests are sufficiently represented in District offerings, with a small share expressing interest in expanded cultural or religious representation.

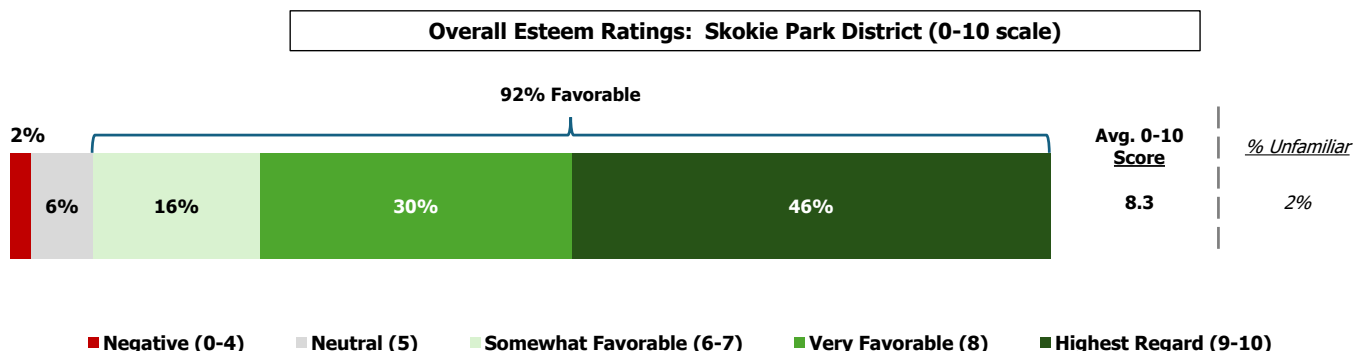
Satisfaction among recent users is high. Visitors to parks and facilities report average ratings of 8.4 or higher, including particularly strong scores for safety (8.9). Program participants (61 percent of respondents) rate their experiences positively (8.6 average), though a few cite concerns about online registration and programs filling quickly.

Recreational priorities center on maintaining and enhancing existing assets. Walking and biking paths (78 percent) and open space with amenities (59 percent) generate the greatest demand, followed by gym space (40 percent) and outdoor pickleball, splash pads, dog parks, and basketball courts (21–24 percent each). Most of these amenities are viewed as already available. A dog park emerges as the only moderate gap.

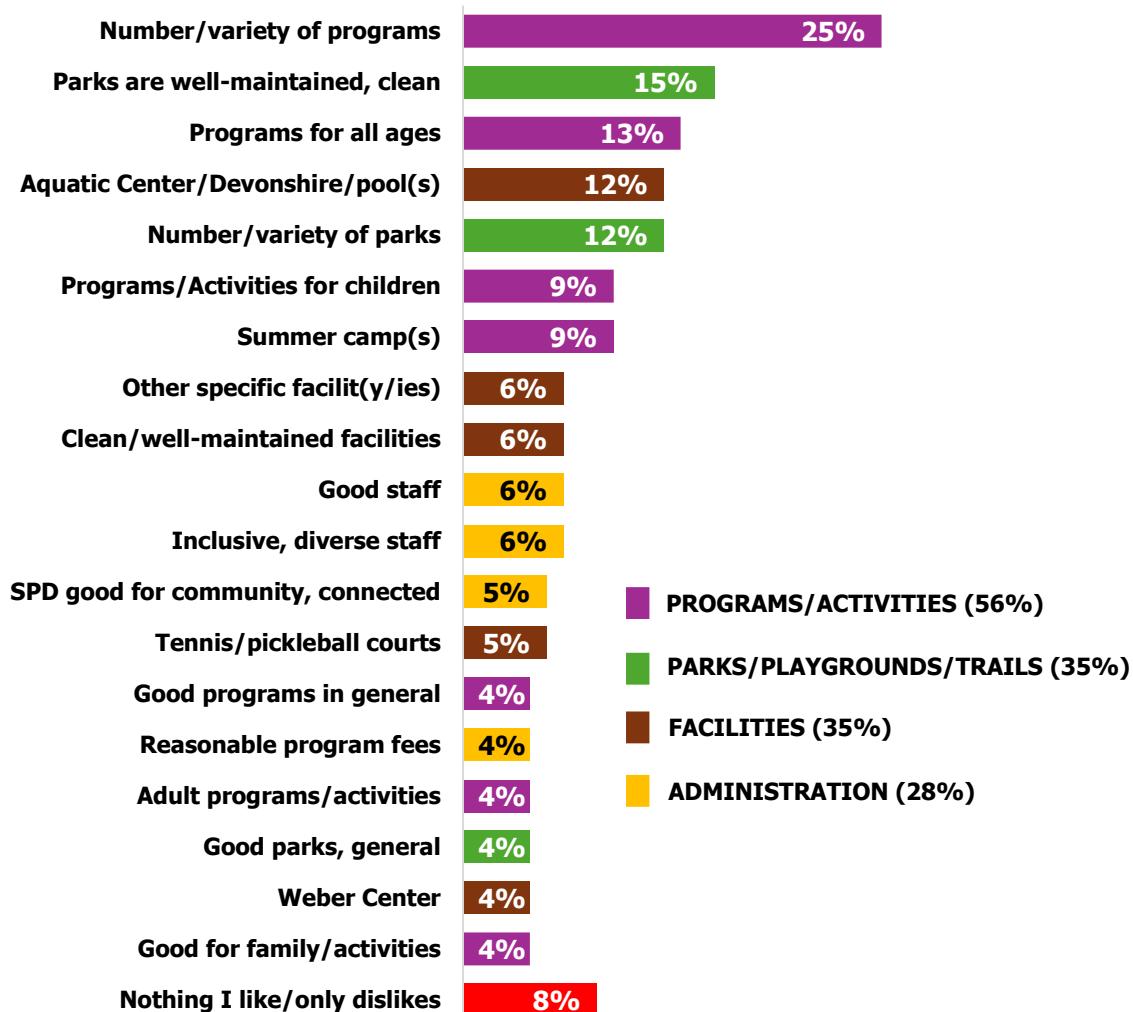
Programs and events are the District’s most frequently cited strengths, with 56 percent mentioning them as what they like most. Community events (50 percent interest) and adult programming (40 percent or more) generate the highest demand, while youth programs attract interest from roughly one in five households. When asked about dislikes, 23 percent report none. Concerns that are mentioned most often relate to program variety (particularly adult offerings), facility hours and renovations, interest in an indoor pool, fees, and communication.

At Skokie Sports Park East and Channelside Park South, the addition of perimeter or canal-side walking and biking paths ranks as the top improvement priority, with playground features and preservation of open space also receiving support.

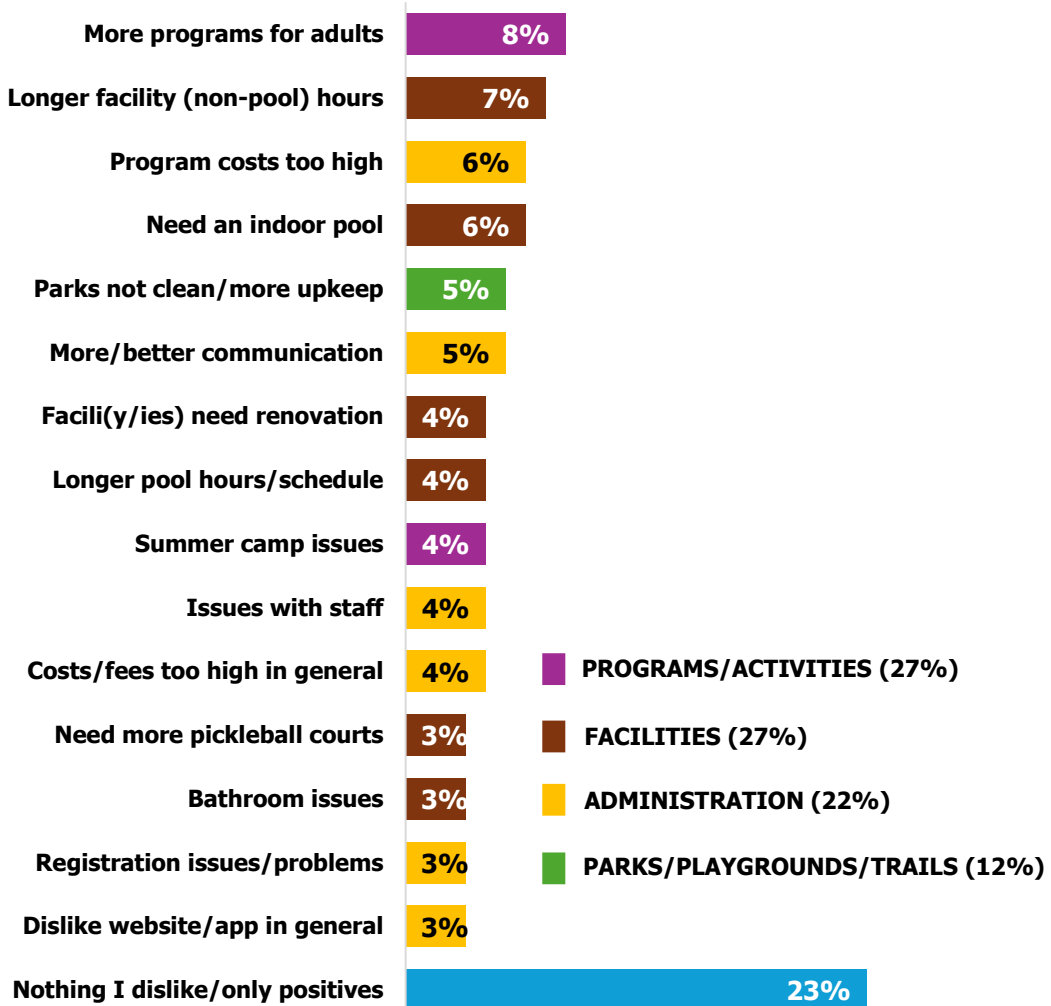
Overall, results indicate strong community support for the Skokie Park District, high satisfaction among users, and targeted opportunities focused primarily on facility enhancements, adult programming, and continued maintenance.



Positives for SPD (top multiple open-ended responses)



Dislikes/Negatives for SPD (top multiple open-ended responses)



2. **Park and Facility Usage/Satisfaction:** Household usage of Skokie Park District parks, trails, and nature areas is very high, with nearly all respondents reporting at least one visit in the past year. Devonshire Park and Oakton Park are the most frequented, including 27 percent at the Devonshire Aquatic Center and 32 percent at the Skokie Water Playground. Other regularly used locations include Skokie Valley Trail, Laramie Park, Lorel Park, and Central Park. Usage is strong across all regions, with minor variation at select sites.

Recreational facility participation is similarly broad, with 89 percent of households visiting at least one facility. Weber Leisure Center, Emily Oaks Nature Center, and Oakton Community Center were the most visited, while the Skatium Ice Arena drew twenty-eight percent of respondents. Facility usage generally spans the District, with some regional variation at Weber, Oakton, and the Devonshire Cultural Center.

Satisfaction among recent users is consistently high. At least eighty-six percent provide positive ratings (6+), with more than 60 percent completely satisfied (9–10). Average scores exceed 8.4 across attributes, with overall safety rated highest (8.9). Satisfaction is generally higher among older residents and those without children, while residents aged thirty-five to fifty-four and households with children report slightly lower, but still positive, scores.

Lower satisfaction responses most often cite cleanliness, upkeep, and litter, particularly at the Skokie Water Playground, Fitness First, and Emily Oaks Nature Center. General comments also include interest in additional amenities and occasional administrative or staffing concerns. Very few respondents are non-users, with barriers including cost, limited time, age, or facility proximity.

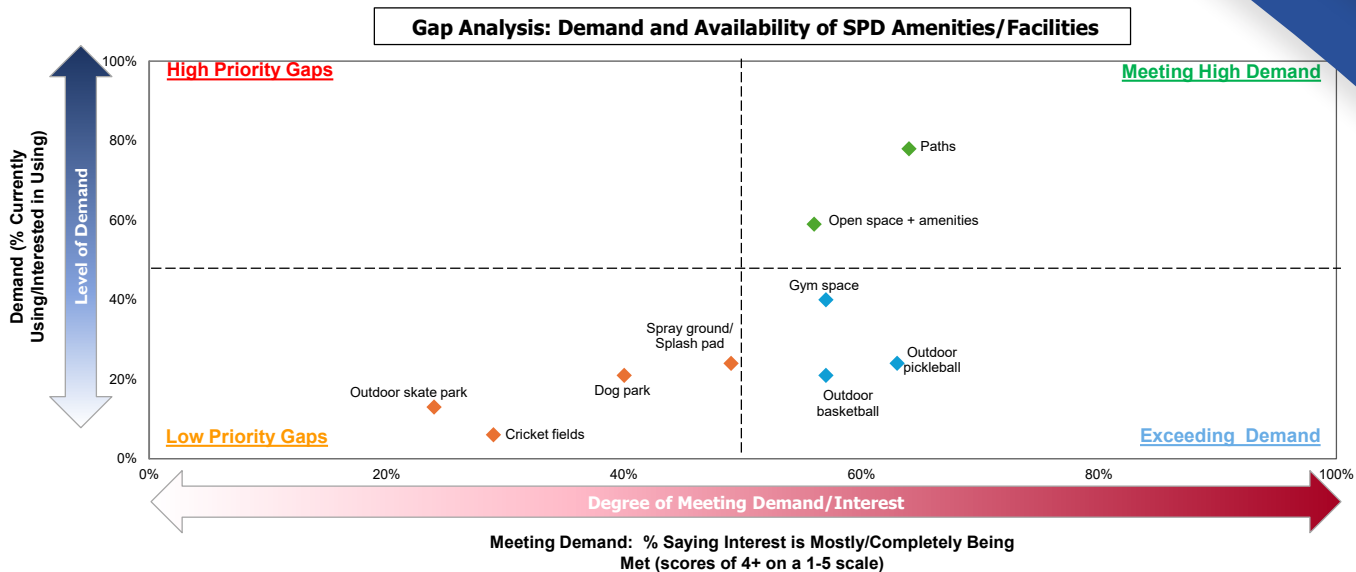
Overall, SPD parks and facilities are widely used and highly rated, with targeted opportunities to enhance maintenance, amenities, and select program offerings to better meet community needs.

3. **Need for Indoor Facilities/Amenities:** Survey results indicate strong community interest in a range of recreational amenities, with walking and biking paths emerging as the highest priority. Nearly four out of five households express a need for paths, followed by open space with features such as benches, trash receptacles, and exercise stations (59 percent). Gym space ranks third in demand, particularly among men, Asian adults, and SW or newer residents. Interest in outdoor pickleball and basketball courts, spray grounds/splash pads, and a dog park is more moderate, while skate parks and cricket fields show lower overall demand.

A gap analysis shows that most high-demand features are already meeting household needs, including paths and trails, open space with amenities, gym space, and outdoor pickleball and basketball courts, with over 50 percent of interested residents reporting these needs as mostly or completely met. Lower-priority gaps exist for features such as spray grounds and splash pads, dog parks, and other volunteered options, most commonly an indoor pool.

When asked to identify top priorities for the District, residents overwhelmingly select paths and trails, followed by open space with amenities. Other options including a dog park, gym space, or “other” amenities receive smaller shares of priority responses. Nearly all respondents indicated that at least one of these options is important for SPD to address, with only 4 percent feeling none are a priority.

The accompanying figure on the following page presents a scatterplot comparing overall demand for each amenity with the degree to which respondents report their needs are currently being met. Amenities in the upper-left quadrant represent high-demand options not fully available, while those in the upper-right quadrant show high-demand amenities that are largely meeting household needs. Lower positions indicate lower-demand features.



4. Programs Participation and Satisfaction: Approximately 61 percent of households report that a member participated in a Skokie Park District program or event in the past year. Participation is highest among households with children and residents aged thirty-five to forty-four, while most residents aged fifty-five to sixty-four and households without children under eighteen report no participation.

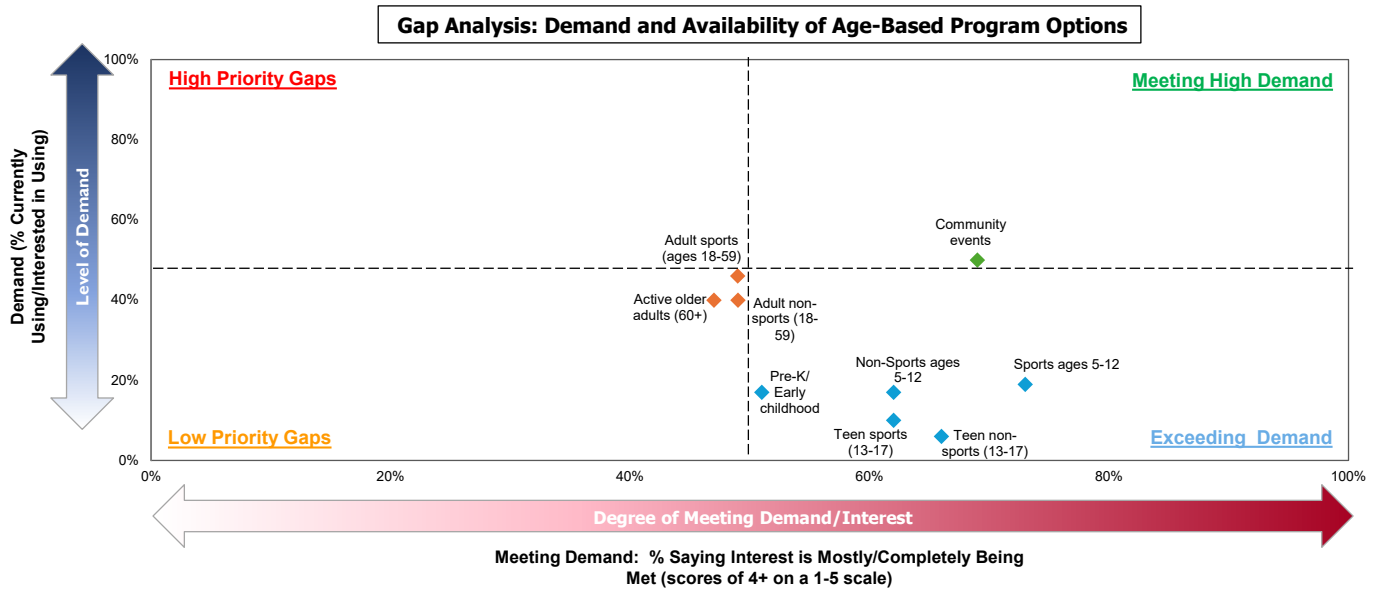
Satisfaction among participants is very strong, with 60 percent completely satisfied and only 1 percent reporting dissatisfaction. The overall average satisfaction rating is 8.6, and ease of registration is similarly high at 8.4. Satisfaction scores are consistently positive across all subgroups, including participants aged fifty-five to sixty-four, who report an average of 9.3.

Open-ended feedback indicates that the primary source of dissatisfaction relates to online registration, particularly for summer camps and high-demand programs. Common issues include a complex website, separate waivers for multiple programs, limited capacity, and difficulties managing household registrations. Other concerns include facility constraints (e.g., crowded open gyms, limited indoor basketball or pickleball space), event logistics (parking, sound quality at concerts), and occasional staff interactions. Despite these operational challenges, respondents consistently praise the quality and variety of SPD programs and events.

Overall, SPD programs and events are widely used and highly valued, with targeted opportunities to improve online registration, optimize facility scheduling, and address select program logistics to enhance participant experience.

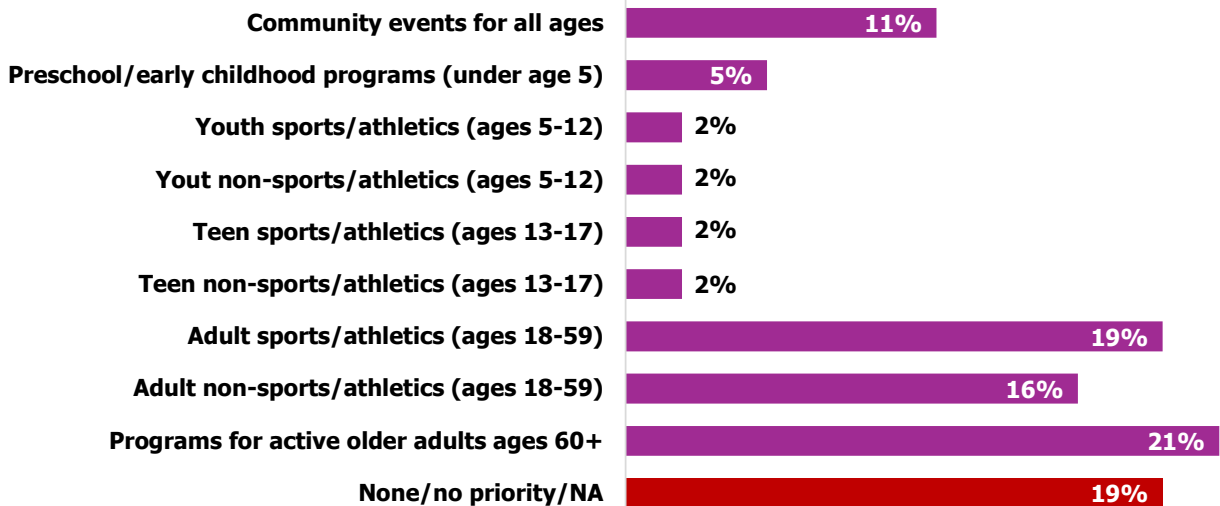
5. Age-Based Program Options: Survey results indicate broad interest in age-specific programs and events across the community. Roughly half of households express interest in community events, while at least forty percent are interested in adult programs, particularly sports for residents aged 18–59. Youth program demand is focused on pre-K/early childhood and pre-teen ages, with younger adults and households with children showing the highest engagement. Community events are most popular among residents aged 35–44, and nearly three-quarters of adults 65 and older express interest in programs for active older adults. Newer SPD residents report above-average interest in adult sports and non-sport programs.

Most program options are considered readily available to those interested, reflecting the high overall satisfaction with SPD offerings and the recognition of programming as a key District strength. Modest gaps appear primarily in adult programs, though over fifty percent of interested residents indicate these needs are mostly or fully met. Adult program options also emerge as the top priority for the District, cited by sixteen to twenty-one percent of respondents, with the youngest adults and Asian residents showing particular interest in sports leagues, and less-engaged adults favoring non-sport options.



Youth programming is generally viewed as adequately served, with no age-based youth programs identified as a top priority for expansion. Community events are a secondary priority, with eleven percent of respondents indicating these should receive additional focus. Overall, the findings suggest that SPD is successfully meeting demand across most age-based programs, while targeted attention to adult offerings could further enhance community engagement.

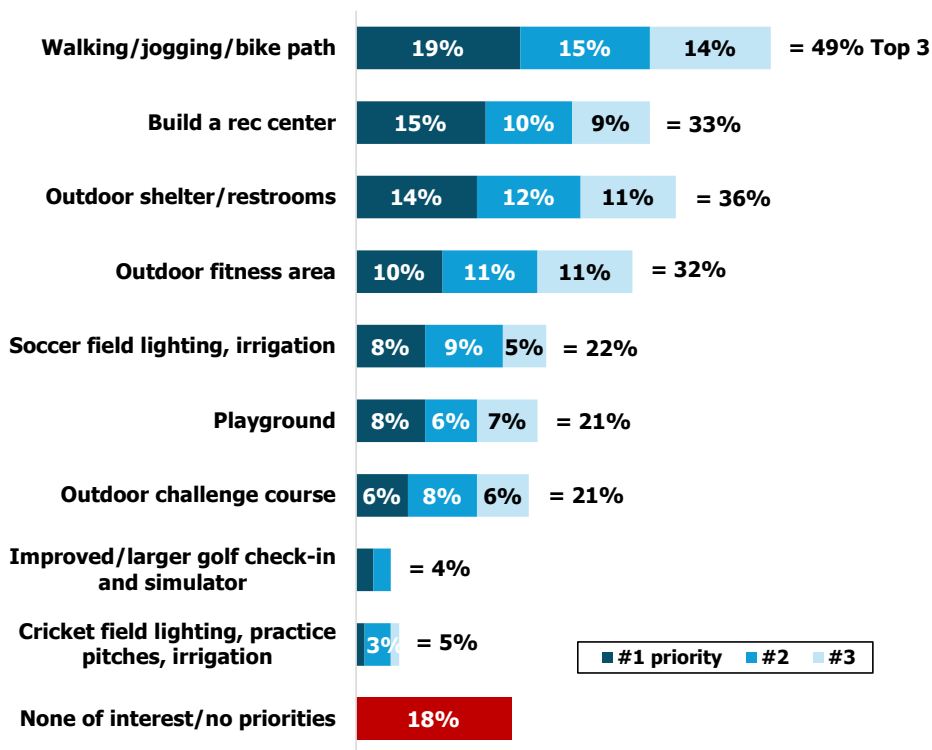
Top Priority: Age-Based Program Options



6. Improvement Options/Priorities Sports Park East and Channelside Park South: Survey findings highlight community preferences for enhancements at the two new park locations, with distinct priorities emerging for each.

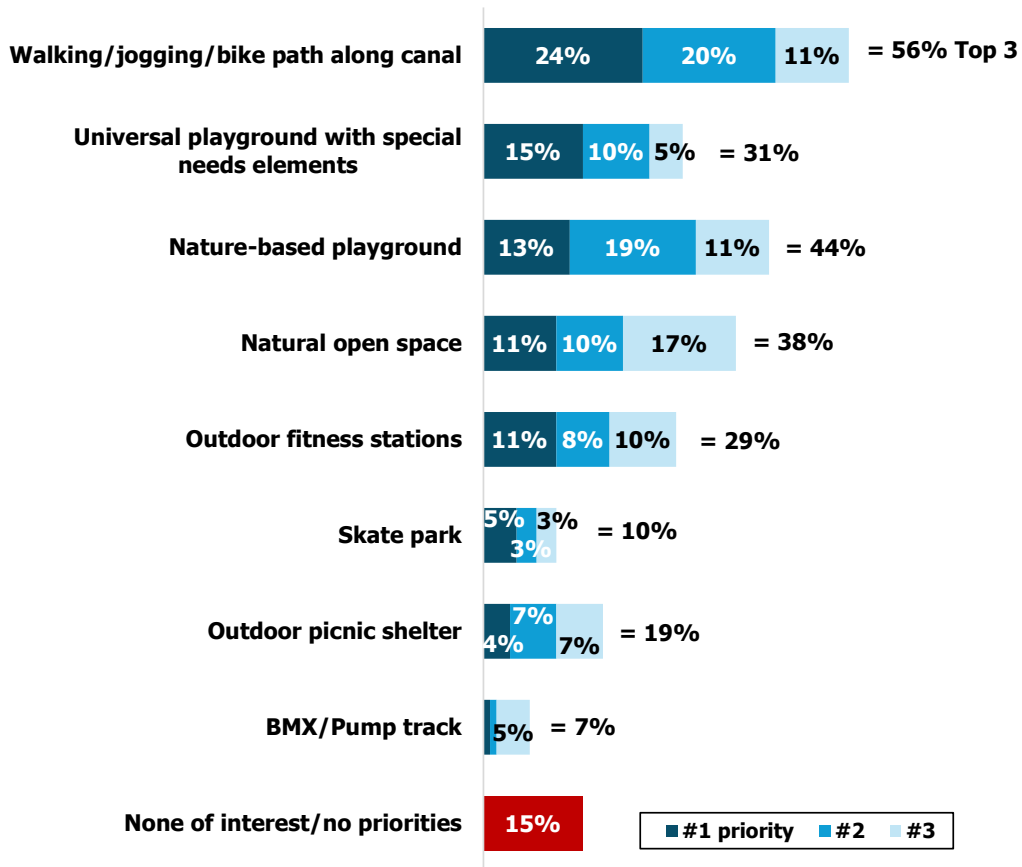
At Skokie Sports Park East, the top-ranked improvement is a walking/jogging/bike path around the park perimeter, particularly popular among SW region residents. Additional priorities include building a recreation center (especially among residents aged 55–64), adding an outdoor shelter with bathrooms (Top-3 for 71 percent of recent site users), and installing an outdoor fitness area. Other suggestions, such as a skate park or basketball courts, were cited by roughly one in five respondents, while eighteen percent supported leaving the site unchanged.

Top Priorities: Potential Sports Park East Improvements



At Channelside Park South, a walking/bike path along the channel received the strongest support, with 56 percent ranking it in their Top-3 and 24 percent as #1. Universal and nature-based playgrounds are the next-highest priorities, particularly among households with children. A portion of respondents favor leaving parts of the site open and natural, and fitness stations appeal to men, non-program participants, and Asian residents. Approximately 15 percent of respondents felt none of the proposed improvements were a priority.

Top Priorities: Potential New Channelside Park Improvements



Additional suggestions across both sites include an indoor pool at Skokie Sports Park East, bathroom amenities at Channelside Park South, more natural/open space and shaded areas at both locations, and selective recreational features such as a skate park, basketball courts, passive art, sensory elements, or a boat/kayak launch. A few residents expressed concerns regarding potential property tax increases or site-specific safety and odor issues at Channelside Park South.

Overall, results indicate strong community support for paths and active amenities, targeted improvements for adult and youth recreation, and preservation of open space, with relatively few residents opposed to new enhancements.





Staff Workshop

The following summary is an overview of the workshop completed by the Skokie Park District staff members as part of the Comprehensive Master Planning Process.

Format

Members of the Skokie Park District staff were invited to attend an in-person meeting held at Skokie's Weber Leisure Center on May 13th, 2025.

Skokie Park District staff members were asked a series of questions. Each participant had the opportunity to write down their thoughts and responses on a comment card. From this card, they were encouraged to choose up to three of what they felt should be the highest priority for the Park District to focus on over the next five years. The group worked together to categorize the ideas and find common themes. Each participant was then given two stickers to vote on their highest priority items. They were allowed to vote on an entire category or individual items.

The results are summarized and listed on the following pages. All comments are documented "as written" by staff during the meeting. For items or comments that were written by multiple staff members, a number is included in parentheses after the comment to indicate how many times it was written. If an item received one or more votes, that number is also indicated.

With approximately 60 staff members participating, over 100 individual ideas were generated and grouped into 11 unique categories.

Accessibility (8 votes)

- Accessibility at outdoor events (2 votes)
- Accessible walking paths
- Improved Accessibility for Physically impaired
- Facilities that are efficient and accessible
- More benches and disability assistance
- Accessible playgrounds
- More programs for limited accessibilities
- Annual safety plans
- ADA marketing targeted at specific age groups
- Accessible playgrounds

Outdoor Improvements (13 votes)

- Develop DRC South
- Develop Sports Park East (x5) (2 votes)
- Develop/Plan Channelside South (x3)
- 18 hole high end golf course (5 votes)
- Turf baseball/soccer fields
- Night park for moon viewing (1 vote)
- Clubhouses at SSP/Weber Golf
- Walking paths
- Updating Parks/Playgrounds
- Rock Wall Park
- SWP Replacement (1 vote)
- Short golf SSP
- Larger rental space

Facility Improvements (11 votes)

- Put full kitchen at Oakton (1 vote)
- Update aging facilities
- Devonshire remodel
- Add a fieldhouse
- More shelters in parks for camps
- Additional bathrooms at parks (x2)
- Play space for kids at Weber
- More program rooms
- Better floors in MPR at OCC for exercise classes (1 vote)
- Sustainable development and redevelopment

Park Amenity Improvements (4 votes)

- More trees and shrubs
- Adding more playgrounds
- Remodel Skokie Water Playground (1 vote)
- Expansion of Nature Center and Native plantings
- More native plantings at parks (x2)
- Community gardens
- Commit to green amenities
- Community art in parks
- Outdoor turf fields (soccer/baseball)
- More dog focused things

- Upgrades to aquatic facilities
- Litter clean up

Programming (2 votes)

- Night art classes
- Group fitness for young adults
- Indoor activities
- Establish unique programs
- Indoor courts/programming
- More fitness classes
- Better registration interface (2 votes)
- More activities for low income families
- Continue programming and events (x2)
- More children sport leagues (1 vote)
- More programs for young adults
- Sport programs for adults
- More after hours classes and programs

Staff (4 votes)

- More events for staff
- Higher salaries (2 votes)
- Job shadow opportunities
- Benefits/FTE positions at DCC preschool
- Staff benefits for programs for grandparents (1 vote)
- PT staff benefits (1 vote)
- More PTO
- Engagements and opportunities for growth (1 vote)
- Work from park instead of WFH
- Small staff events (2 votes)
- Hire fund development professional (1 vote)
- Proper documentation for smooth workflow (1 vote)
- Additional meeting spaces (1 vote)
- Boost PT staff morale
- Improved staff resilience

Community Events (1 vote)

- More community park days for family
- More events at smaller parks
- More community events
- Less special events (1 vote)
- New special events ideas throughout the year
- Apple fest in September

Additional Indoor (10 votes)

- More indoor recreation facilities
- More open skate hours
- New machinery and equipment

Additional Indoor (continued)

- Build indoor turf fields (x2) (1 vote)
- Dry land training spa at Skatium
- Improved security at Weber Center (1 vote)
- Expand nature center
- Add indoor recreation facilities (x3)
- Banquet facility
- Expand Weber center
- Bigger multi-purpose room for family events
- Music practice rooms at DCC (x3) (4 votes)
- Indoor courts (x2)
- Proper art gallery
- Better office spaces
- Indoor camp location

Storage

- Storage for events/admin
- Organized storage at Skatium
- Add space to Weber/Skatium
- Storage space WGC
- More storage in facilities (x2)
- Additional storage for theater
- Better camp supplies storage
- Bigger shop yard

Community Engagement (4 votes)

- Retain customers (1 vote)
- Increase community outreach
- Increase communication about accessibility feature in parks
- Tighter relationships with high schools
- Increase program awareness for Skokie families new to SPD
- Equal advertising of diverse celebrations
- Establish SPD as one of the premiere park districts in the area
- Strengthen/maintain what we have before building new

Indoor Pool (15 votes)

- Indoor Pool (x14)
- Indoor swim offerings
- Indoor pool at OCC (1 vote)







Community Pop-Up Event

The following summary is an overview of the Pop-Up event coordinated by the planning team at the 2025 Skokie Festival of Cultures hosted by the Skokie Park District in tandem with the Village of Skokie and the Skokie Public Library.

Format

As part of the Skokie Park District’s ongoing public engagement efforts, the planning team attended a community Pop-Up event at the 2025 Skokie Festival of Cultures held at Oakton Park on Sunday, May 18th. The event provided an opportunity for booth visitors to share feedback and ideas to help guide the District’s planning priorities. Representatives from the planning team staffed an informational and interactive booth where participants could engage in various input-driven activities and open-ended conversations to share their thoughts. Community input was gathered through four options for visitors to provide feedback on the Park District. Visitors were asked the overarching question of what they would like to see either stay the same or change in the Skokie Park District over the next five years. Participants could answer the question by either writing down their thoughts on a comment card or verbally discuss with the planning team, who recorded all thoughts. More specific questions were provided on a series of voting and open-ended response white boards for booth participants to write their thoughts. Coloring pages were also available for younger participants.

Results

Overall, participants expressed a desire for greater inclusivity, improved facilities, and a continued variety of programs and events over the next five years. Common themes included enhancing accessibility through language translation and inclusive play equipment at playgrounds, improving cleanliness and safety in parks, and expanding offerings, such as senior programs and indoor pools. Youth feedback identified slides and swings as the preferred playground equipment pieces while adults emphasized the importance of affordability, diverse programming, and community engagement through well-promoted events.

The following is a summary of the feedback received from each input method.

White Boards

Participants were given three open-ended questions to answer on white boards, all relating to what Skokie Park District should focus on over the next five years. The boards were divided into three topics: programs and special events, parks, and facilities.

1. Programs and Special Events

- Language translators to aid with language barriers
- Keep providing a variety of programs
- Events with interpreter

- Polish fest
- Great arrangements for all, need to have more community inclusion
- More parking
- More staff/volunteers
- Pick up trash
- Should arrange more programs outdoors
- More kids’ activities like sports

2. Parks

- Picking up trash
- Safety for kids and pets
- Better soccer fields
- Ziplines and more ninja courses
- More swings
- More baseball fields/basketball courts
- Inclusive of ALL abilities at playgrounds - wheelchair play, not just ramps
- Restrooms at parks

3. Facilities

- Weber facilities should be free
- Swimming pool
- Everything free

- Seneca Park: not safe 2-5 playground, need more 2-5 areas, more fences for playgrounds, big slides
- Park system is clean and well equipped
- At outdoor events, advertise to bring your own chair or add additional seating areas
- Special events do a great job at bringing together the community
- Communications with Park District has room for improvement, phone calls not answered
- AYSO programs are working great
- Better security at golf course
- More art related programs
- Bigger weight room at Weber Center

Comment Cards

Participants were given the opportunity to record their thoughts on comment cards or verbalize their thoughts while the planning team recorded. Common suggestions among the written notes are represented by a number in parentheses following the comment that represents the number of times it was recorded.

- Indoor swimming pool (x3)
- More senior programs (x2)
- Better marketing for special events (x2)
- More fitness equipment for inclusivity of all age groups
- More events
- Keep parks clear, especially tennis courts, and keep dogs off the courts
- Facilities are too crowded
- More color in wildflower beds, more natural interest
- More spread-out programming
- Keep facility costs down
- More inclusion of Indian cultures (staff note: the Indian culture was not represented at the 2025 Festival due to the past rep being unavailable to participate and no volunteers to replace them)
- Special events working well for businesses, like Back Lot Bash, more advertisements for these events would help get the word out
- More indoor walking tracks
- More areas for special needs children

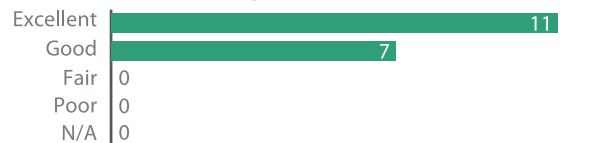
Survey Board

Participants were given the option to vote on a survey board with questions relating to the frequency in which they attend Park District events or facilities and how they would rate them.

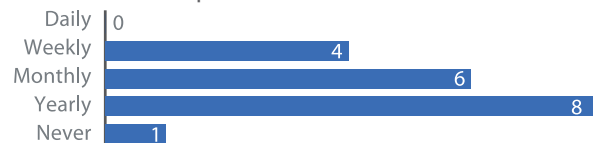
1. How often have you or members of your household visited park District parks and/or recreational facilities in the past 12 months?



2. Overall, how would you rate the physical condition of the Park District parks and/or recreation facilities?



3. How often have you or members of your household participated in Park District programs and/or special events in the past 12 months?



4. Overall, how would you rate the quality of the Park District programs and/or special events?



Coloring Sheets

Younger participants were given the option to record their input via coloring sheets. Each sheet was double-sided, and children could color the play equipment they use most or draw what comes to mind when asked “How do you like to play?”.

Slides were the favorite piece of equipment, with swings coming in a close second.







Stakeholder Interviews

The following summary is an overview of the informal interview calls held between stakeholders within Skokie Park District and the planning team as part of the Comprehensive Planning Process.

Format

The planning team staff conducted virtual interviews with Skokie Park District stakeholders on May 20th, 2025. Five separate calls were held with small groups of 1-3 participants each. The discussions were approximately 30 minutes in length with additional time as needed to allow participants to finish their thoughts. Each call began with an overview of the Comprehensive Master Planning Process and introductions of everyone on the call. A list of focus questions was used to guide the conversations. Not all questions were answered during every call due to time constraints or the natural flow of the conversation. The questions were sent to all participants after the call, including those invitees who were unable to participate in one of the scheduled calls to give another opportunity to provide input.

Overall, the stakeholders expressed strong appreciation for the Park District's commitment to collaboration, well-maintained facilities, and responsive communication. Many praised the shared use of space, successful programming, and community-focused events. A recurring theme across all groups was the desire for improved communication and coordination between agencies, especially regarding programming, safety, and shared resources. Security concerns were noted around specific facilities, and several stakeholders highlighted the need for better or expanded amenities,

such as additional restrooms, an indoor pool, and more recreational field space. Additionally, stakeholders asked for more inclusive access, both in programming and communication, particularly for low-income families and non-English speakers. Stakeholders also expressed a desire to strengthen intergovernmental partnerships, strategize shared goals, and ensure staff and programming remain aligned with core missions, particularly in historical and educational contexts. The overarching priorities include enhancing safety, maintaining, and upgrading facilities, improving interagency collaboration, expanding inclusive access, and continuing to foster a strong sense of community through special events and programming.

The following is a summary of each group's conversation. These are not verbatim comments, but rather paraphrased comments. Due to small group sizes and similar agency type, groups 1-3 have been combined.

Groups 1-3: Education

Fairview School District, School District 68, School District 69, School District 73, Skokie Community Foundation

- Work closely with SPD and host many SPD events at programs at school facilities, some land sharing between schools and Park District exist
- Recently added preschool program at Fairview has resulted in the need for an early childcare playground
- Recreation programming is working well, and SPD has been good at listening and taking action upon requests
- Great benefit in sharing programs during the school year and summer
- Would like to increase partnership with SPD to expand program access for low-income families
- There is interest in partnering with SPD to run an afternoon daycare program, but there is concern over transportation costs
- There is some redundancy between School, Park District, and Village offerings that should be reviewed
- SPD facilities and program offerings are good
- Weber Center is great with an easy, affordable process for joining
- SPD should consider an educator's discount for Weber Center memberships
- Some concern about security at Schack Park's bathroom facility - blind spot for staff, SPD should consider adding cameras to the exterior
- Concern around student safety during elections - can SPD facilities be used as polling locations instead of schools?
- Schools would like to use Weber Center meeting room(s) for larger staff training and security events
- Schools regularly encourage staff and students to attend SPD events and programs
- Partnerships with Fairview are at capacity
- School District 68 has interest in buying Sequoyah Park from SPD in order to help with land lock issues
- There is interest in strengthening communications centered on the goals and intentions of programming and club hosting
- There is interest in holding a community leaders meeting that SPD would be included in that strategizes common interests and goals for the larger Skokie community
- Increased marketing for Park District offerings could be beneficial for new Skokie residents
- Expanded bike sharing program and partnership between SPD and The Recyclery Collective is appreciated

- SPD events are viewed favorably, but more bathrooms are desired
- Community desire for an indoor pool is strong, and inter-agency agreements should be considered to address this (consider agreement with Evanston for beach usage)
- Residents feel parks are safe, welcoming, and well maintained

Priorities:

- Improve restroom security at Schack Park
- Identify and act on common community goals with other community leaders
- Improved community communication and engagement
- Increased funding relief for low-income families
- Continue to be adaptable to changing community needs

Group 4: Special Community Groups

Skokie Historical Society, Skokie Public Library

- Local history is important to many agencies in the area
- Partnership with SPD is positive
- Book Mobile in the parks is viewed favorably in the community
- Increase history-focused tasks of staff at the History Museum with more historical-focused programming and grant writing
- Special events like the Festival of Cultures are important for the community to see and celebrate the diversity that exists in Skokie
- Consistency in special events and community outreach should be continued
- Partnership with local special recreation district is important for inclusivity and recreation access
- Very few recreation gaps exist in the community
- Indoor pool is desired, but intergovernmental agreement does cover this
- There was curiosity surrounding the impact Federal grant cuts will have on other agencies and how SPD can respond to those impacts
- There is a desire for increased native plantings and increased responsiveness to the changing climate

Priorities:

- Manage resources and budget well
- Continue to maintain parks in a way that promotes mental health and fosters sense of belonging

Group 5: Public Agencies, Athletics

Village of Skokie, AYSO Soccer

- Athletics are an important element in youth involvement in the community
- Existing partnerships with SPD are strong and working well
- Camp program consistently receives praise from parents
- Most frequent recreation asks heard from the community are: BMX track, skate park, and indoor pool
- Community could also benefit from indoor synthetic turf facility
- Village has heard requests for schools to open up facilities to public use, which could lead to increased program and event partnerships with SPD
- Parks are well maintained, but a destination park near downtown would be a great asset for the community
- There was a question of whether SPD has considered partnerships to improve commercial spaces and help activate them with recreation opportunities

Priorities:

- Maintain soccer fields and resources
- Find a balance in programming and funding to continue supporting the community







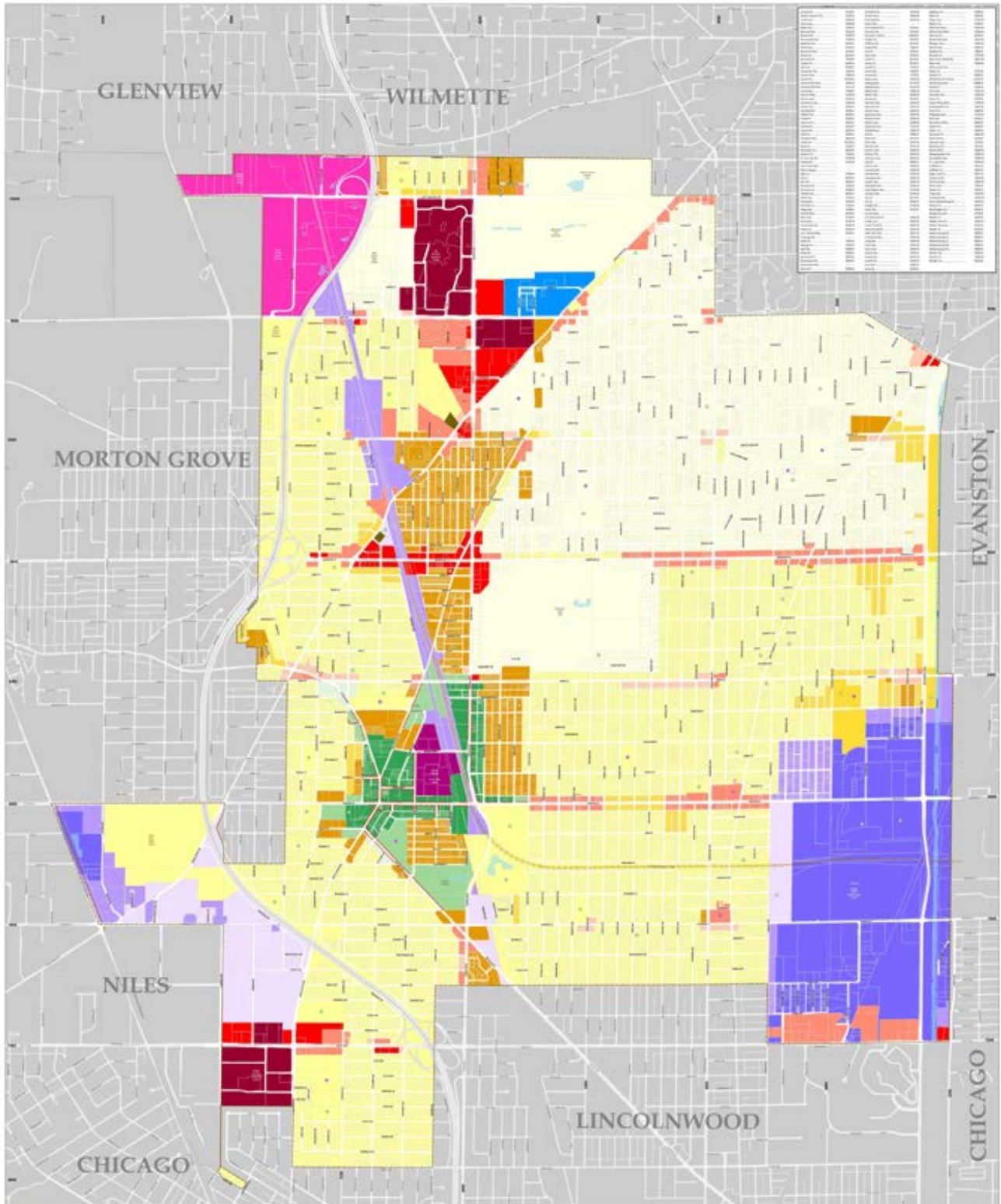
Appendix





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160	Skokie School District Map
161	IDNR Useful Life Criteria



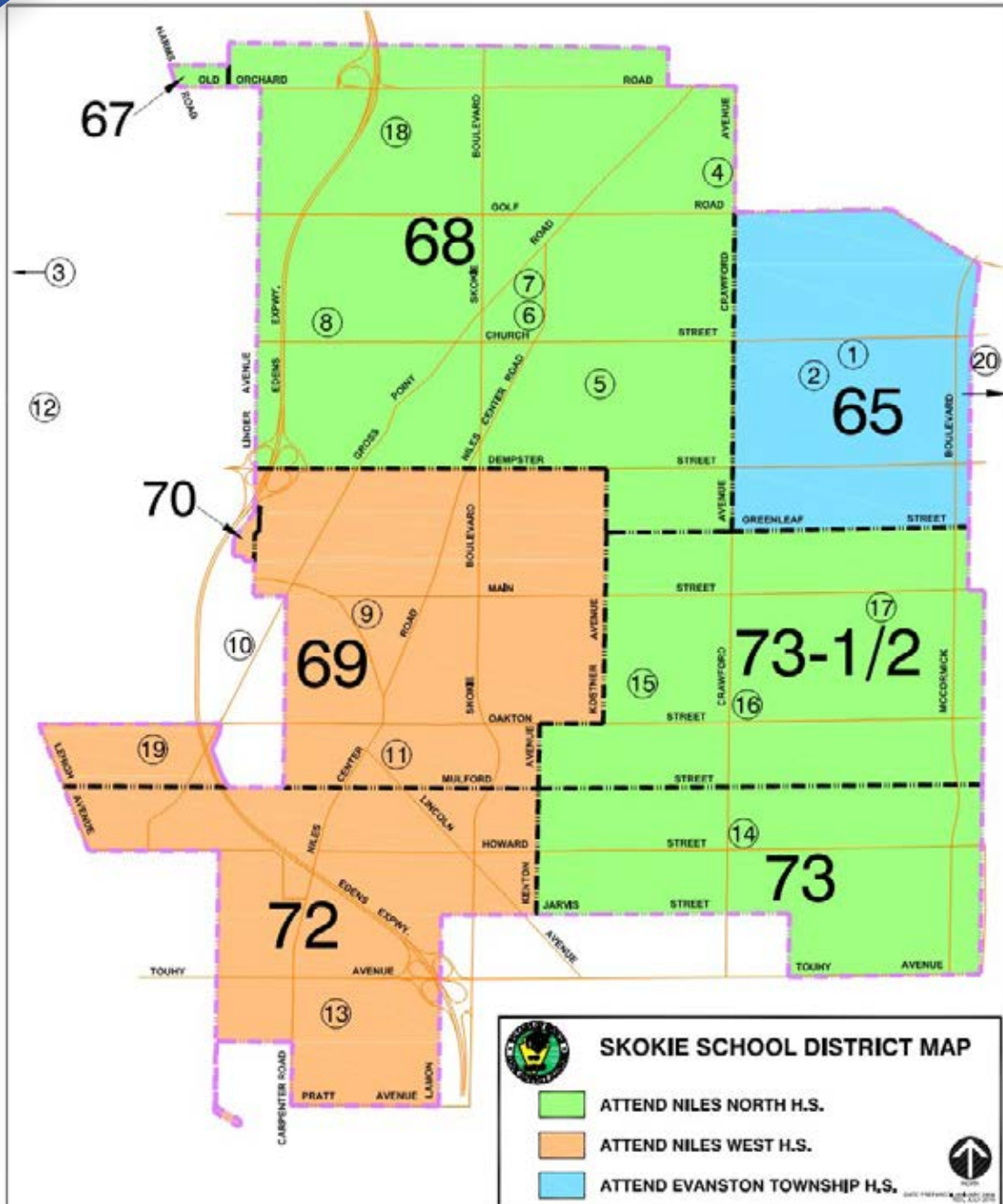
SKOKIE The Village of Skokie Zoning Map
 The zoning map, as amended from time to time, is hereby incorporated by reference as part of the Zoning Ordinance of the Village of Skokie, Illinois, adopted by the Mayor and Board of Trustees of the Village of Skokie on the date of final hearing.

0 1,250 2,500 5,000 Feet

DISCLAIMER: This drawing is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey, and is not intended to be used as such. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data located in various village, county and state offices, and other sources, reflecting the best available information and is to be used for reference purposes only. The Village of Skokie shall not be responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained. If discrepancies are found, please contact Skokie Village Hall.

RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS	MIXED-USE DISTRICTS	BUSINESS DISTRICTS	INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS
R1 - Single-Family	NX - Neighborhood Mixed-Use	E1 - Service Commercial	M1 - Office Assembly Industry
R2 - Single-Family	TX - Transit Mixed-Use	R2 - Commercial	M2 - Light Industry
R3 - Combined Housing	CX - Core Mixed-Use	R3 - Business	M3 - Industry
R4 - Multifamily Housing	Retail Street	R4 - Regional Mixed-Use Shopping	OR - Office Research
R5 - Elderly and Disabled Housing	Public Park	R6 - Downtown Science and Technology	
	Public School	H1 - Hospital	

GIS Consortium



GRADE SCHOOLS

DISTRICT 65 (847-955-8000)

- 1, Walker School
Grades K through 5
3601 Church St, Evanston/Skokie
- 2, Beside Rhodes Magnet School
Grades K through 8
3701 Davis St, Evanston/Skokie

DISTRICT 67 (847-965-3740)

- 3, Golf Middle School
Grades 5 through 8
8400 Waukegan Rd., Morton Grove

DISTRICT 68 (847-676-0000)

- 4, Highland Elementary School
Grades K through 5
9700 Crawford Ave.

5, Devonshire Elementary School

Grades K through 5
9040 Kostner Ave.

6, Early Childhood Center

3 to 4 years old
8300 Kenilworth Ave.

7, Old Orchard Junior High School

Grades 6 through 8
9310 Kempton Ave.

8, Jane Stenson Elementary School

Grades K through 5
9201 Lockwood Ave.

DISTRICT 69 (847-675-7666)

- 9, Madison School
Grades K through 2
5100 Madison St.

10, Thomas A. Edison School

Grades 2 through 5
8200 Gross Point Rd., Morton Grove

11, Lincoln Junior High School

Grades 6 through 8
7839 Lincoln Ave.

DISTRICT 70 (847-965-6200)

- 12, Park View School
Grades K through 8
6200 Lake St., Morton Grove

DISTRICT 72 (847-692-1050)

- 13, Fillmore South School
Grades K through 8
7040 Laramie Ave.

DISTRICT 73 (847-675-1141)

- 14, East Public School
Grades K through 8
3007 Dobson St.

DISTRICT 73 1/2 (847-675-1220)

- 15, Elizabeth Meyer School
Preschool & Kindergarten
8100 Tapp Ave.

16, Oliver McCracken Middle School

Grades 6 through 8
8000 East Poplar Road

17, John Middleton Elementary School

Grades 1 through 5
8000 St. Louis Ave.

HIGH SCHOOLS

DISTRICT 215 (847-626-2000)

- 15, Niles North High School
Grades 9 through 12
9800 Lamber Avenue
- 19, Niles West High School
Grades 9 through 12
5701 Oakton Street

DISTRICT 202 (847-482-5000)

- 20, Evanston Township High School
Grades 9 through 12
1600 Dodge Avenue, Evanston

**IDNR Grant Administration Division
Per IPRA-Park & Natural Resource Management Section's Recommendations**

USEFUL LIFE CRITERIA

<u>FACILITY</u>	<u>Expected useful life</u>	<u>Evaluation Criteria – Factor</u>
<u>BB/Softball fields</u>	8-10 years	# Games/week, # Practices/week Grass infields? Maintenance Procedure/Standards Is site used for multiple uses, soccer, football? Is space used for organized or programmed events? Spectator considerations – bleachers Concession stands
<u>BB/Softball Field Lighting</u>	20 years	Pole Type (wood, steel, concrete) Wiring type (aluminum, copper) HID or incandescent fixtures Existing FC vs. new standards Accepted grounding systems? Panel Capabilities/Technology Electrical Code compliance
<u>Soccer Fields</u>	8-10 years	Usage rating A/B/C/D # games/week, # weeks/year, time of year, age of user
<u>Irrigation system</u>	20 years	Irrigated Y/N Usage # games per week Drainage considerations Maintenance standards/levels Is site used for organized or programmed events? To what extent? Is site used for multiple uses? Softball, BB or football
<u>Tennis Courts</u>		Lighted Y/N (Use BB Criteria)
Resurface	12-15 years	Surface clay, asphalt, other
Total Renovation	20-25 years	Color coat/overlay/rebuild Frequency of color coating Location – high water table Fencing material/posts Preventive maintenance Location: Water table concerns Is site used for organized or programmed events? To what extent? Are courts used for making ice?
<u>Basket Ball Courts</u>		Same as tennis courts
Resurface	12-15 years	
Total Renovation	20-25 years	
<u>Volleyball Courts</u>		Sand / Grass? Lighted Y/N Borders Bleachers/spectator area
<u>Shuffleboard</u>		Same as tennis courts
Resurface	12-15 years	
Total Renovation	20-25 years	

<u>Picnic Shelters</u>	25 years	Support structures: masonry, steel, wood Roof type: metal, asphalt, shingle, slate, cedar shake Construction type: post & beam, frame Historical value and consideration Preventive maintenance record Is site used for organized or programmed events? To what extent?
<u>Playgrounds</u>	15 years metal 10 years plastic 8 – 12 years wood	Meet Standards? ASTM, CPSC, ADA Daily usage by intended user group Location: school, or neighborhood park Surfacing Material Preventive maintenance record Border construction material Location: retention area/water?
<u>Boat Launch Ramps</u>	15-20 years	Construction materials, gravel, concrete Location i.e. Lake Michigan Annual Usage Is facility fee generating? Region
<u>Fishing Piers & Docks</u>	15-20 years	Original construction materials plastic, wood, aluminum Location i.e. Lake Michigan Annual volume/usage Winter removal and storage? Preventive maintenance record
<u>Swimming Pools</u>	25 years	Stand alone site?
Bathhouse	25 years	Heated for winter?
<u>Boathouse</u>	10-15 years	Attached to Community Center Y/N Mechanical room connected? ADA compliance Y/N Local Code compliance? Preventive Maintenance record Location i.e. Lake Michigan
<u>Restrooms</u>	Same as pools	Same as pools
<u>Parking Lots</u>		Gravel, asphalt or concrete
Resurface	10-12 years	Monthly volume and load use
Total Renovation	20-25 years	i.e. delivery trucks or garbage Spring use –heavy, moderate, light Seal coating frequency Preventive maintenance record Original construction design loads Location: flooding/water concerns Snow removal or salt use? Curbed or sheet drainage to edges
<u>Bike Paths</u>	Same as Parking lots	Same as Parking lots
<u>Interpretive Center</u>	Same as Bathhouse	Same as Bathhouse





SKOKIE
PARK DISTRICT