

GARDENS AND NATIVE PLANTINGS

All 18 parks and 15 facilities have native plantings as part of their landscape. An emphasis was placed on landscaping with native plantings in 2015 to reduce labor costs as well as to improve food sources for insects and birds. The community has seen an increase in monarch butterflies based on a community-wide effort to increase milk weed and other pollinator plantings.

The All-Abilities Garden at Cheney Mansion grows copious amounts of vegetables every summer. The Park District **donated over 525 pounds of fresh produce** from the garden to the Oak Park River Forest Food Pantry in 2020.



SUSTAINABLE FACILITIES

Austin Gardens Environmental Education Center

Platinum LEED Certification, Geothermal system, solar panel system, rain water harvesting cistern, rain gardens, green roof, high efficiency building envelope

Carroll Center

Passive House Design/Certification, Source Zero Energy Certification, Geothermal system, super insulation, solar panel system, electrical load monitoring, rain garden

Ridgeland Common Recreation Complex

Gold LEED Certification, Solar panel system, high efficiency HVAC system, native landscaping, reuse of existing, original roof structure

COMPOSTING

Members of the Park District's Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee volunteer at our popular summer concert series to oversee recycling and composting stations. In the summer, nearly **2,000 gallons of recyclable and compostable waste are diverted** from landfill with their efforts.



\$ Annual Savings through Sustainability Efforts

Interior LED Lighting Replacement	+	\$12,250
Exterior LED Lighting Replacement	+	\$31,200
Solar Panel Systems	+	\$81,000
Cistern Water-Repurposing Systems	+	\$84,000

Total Annual Savings = \$208,450

CARRY IN/CARRY OUT

We all understand the importance of caring for our environment so that we leave our planet better than we found it for future generations. Each one of us can make a difference. The same is true for our parks. We ask for the community's help and cooperation in being a good park steward and keeping our parks clean through our **Carry In/Carry Out** program. Park patrons are asked to carry out all waste and recyclables they bring into the park. Basically, leave the park the way you found it!



SUSTAINABILITY IN OUR PARKS



PARK DISTRICT
of OAK PARK



For more information, visit pdop.org/environment



THE PARK DISTRICT OF OAK PARK (PDOP)

has identified sustainability as one of our Comprehensive Master Plan Goals, Core Values and Strategic Initiatives. Sustainability is engraved throughout our agency and our Sustainability Plan lays out a roadmap for the future. We have successfully made many strides over the last few short years in an effort to lessen our impact on the environment. As the world continues to use more resources than the planet can replenish per year, our agency will continue to find ways to use less. Our holistic approach to sustainability involves recycling and waste reduction, energy efficiency, green energy production, employee and community education, water conservation and re-use, storm water management, native plantings, prohibited use of herbicides and pesticides, green product procurement policy, community and employee health and wellness, fleet management and habitat preservation.



SOLAR PANELS

Nine Park District facilities currently utilize energy generated by their own solar panels totaling over 370 kW. **This energy generation is equal to 55 homes or planting over 22,615 trees every year for an annual cost savings of approximately \$81,000.** Solar panels are located at the Austin Gardens Environmental Education Center, Fox Center, John Hedges Administrative Center, Longfellow Center, Ridgeland Common Recreation Complex, and Oak Park Conservatory, Barrie Center, Carroll Center and Stevenson Center.



WATER

Five cisterns have been installed in Park District locations to repurpose water. The water collected in three of the cisterns is used for irrigation and the other is used for toilet flushing. These water-repurposing systems **save approximately 1,250,000 gallons of water and \$84,000 per year!** Cisterns are located at Field Park, Long-fellow Park, Oak Park Conservatory and the Austin Gardens Environmental Education Center.



LED LIGHTING

The PDOP continues to pursue its goal of energy reduction with the **installation of LED lighting** in all outdoor park lights in 2017 and the replacement of indoor lights in all eight community centers, four park restroom comfort stations, pool facility, one sports field and three historic properties in 2018. The interior lighting **transition to LED** was funded through a ComEd grant that covered nearly half of the cost for the bulbs. The remaining costs were realized in savings within the first year.



Interior Lights:

Converted 38,754 watts to 16,780 watts, which is a **43% reduction** in energy usage and an annual **savings of \$12,250** in energy costs.



Exterior Lights:

Converted 180 park walk lights, reducing energy consumption from 190 kW to 35 kW per year and **saving \$10,000 annually**. Replaced 42 light fixtures on Stevenson field from 1000 watt to 300 watt LED fixtures, **saving \$11,000 annually**.