



OUR 2023 YEAR IN REVIEW



PARK DISTRICT
of OAK PARK

Emerging from the pandemic, 2023 was marked by a return to normalcy. The Park District focused on providing inclusive and welcoming places and spaces for residents from all walks of life which resonated with staff and community members alike. In our year-end review, we see this theme emerge throughout our work.

The Community Recreation Center (CRC) was a focal point of the year. We completed construction and welcomed over 2,000 guests to the grand opening event. We surpassed membership goals within the first three months of opening and, by year end, served over 9,000 individuals with memberships, including 4,000+ monthly memberships, 4,000+ Walking Track memberships, and 1,000 Youth Afterschool Memberships. Moreover, the Community Recreation Center has allowed the Park District to significantly expand services to more Oak Park residents, especially seniors and teens. The Park District is thrilled to bring this much-needed resource to residents and will continue to explore opportunities to serve the community through the CRC.

The renovation of Barrie Park brought new playgrounds, outdoor fitness equipment, nature and creative play areas, and a new bioswale to residents. While renovation wrapped up at the end of 2023, we look forward to 2024 when residents throughout Oak Park can enjoy the unique amenities of this park.

Pickleball interest continues to gain popularity nationwide and here in Oak Park. To that end, the Park District supported pickleball enthusiasts with greater access to this ever-growing sport both in and outdoors.

The Park District continued to focus on energy reduction across the agency with projects big and small. Some of our larger projects include: constructing the CRC as a Net Zero facility; replacing traditional bulbs with LED lights inside Ridgeland Common Recreation Complex and Taylor and Maple park tennis courts; adding battery-powered equipment and electric vehicles to our fleet; and, installing 665 solar panels on our 10th facility.

Recognitions for Excellence

Recognition in key areas, including service, operations, budgeting, aquatics, sustainability, and DEI from national agencies, supports the District's vision to strive for excellence in serving the well-being and recreational needs of our community.

- Earned **Gold Medal Finalist Award** for excellence in Parks & Recreation 3 years in a row
- Received a **Platinum ranking** by Ellis and Associates for aquatics safety operations and sit with the top 10% of Ellis clients worldwide
- Aquatics staff earned **Golden Guard and Outstanding Responder Awards** for lifeguarding skills
- Cheney Mansion staff honored with the **Dr. William Fitzsimmons Public Health Award** for assisting the Village Health Department with Covid vaccine administration
- Received **Best Green Practices Award** from IAPD for work in sustainability and constructing the CRC as a New Zero facility
- Received the **Champions of Change Award** from the IPRA for unique and exemplary practices of increasing access and fostering diversity and inclusion
- Received the **GFOA's Distinguished Budget Presentation Award** for the 13th year in a row



Our Mission How We Meet It

The mission of the Park District of Oak Park is to enrich lives by providing meaningful experiences through programs, parks, and play. From new facilities and park renovations to engaging with teens to collaborating with community partners, the Park District of Oak Park proudly serves the Oak Park community.

Serving the Community

Through thoughtful, innovative, and inclusive programs and facilities, the Park District enjoyed serving residents of all ages and backgrounds.

- Served over **9,000 individuals** through CRC memberships
- **Expanded adult sport offerings** and participation through new pickleball, women's basketball, and volleyball programs at the CRC
- Increased youth engagement with **over 1,000** participating in the FREE Youth Afterschool Program at the CRC
- Increased access to outdoor pickleball through the **Taylor Park court renovation** and indoors through **Open Gym times** and **leagues** at the CRC
- Hosted over **1,900 runners/walkers** in the 47th annual Frank Lloyd Wright Races
- Collaborated with community members hosting **three Master Planning meetings** for Rehm Pool, Longfellow, and Fox parks
- Hosted the first Ice Show since 2019 with **234 skaters and 1,636 spectators**
- Welcomed Conservatory volunteers who gave over **3,600 hours of their time** assisting with its care, upkeep, and programming
- Hosted **23 free community events** with over **10,000** community members attending

Through our Parks

We value the many benefits parks provide from connecting to nature to opportunities for physical activity and social interaction.

- Planted **40 new trees** and **1,200+ native plants**
- Installed **2 new bioswales** (storm drain management system through plantings)
- Completed safety inspections on all **16 playgrounds**
- Replaced cedar wood components on the Taylor Park bridge
- Worked alongside volunteers who donated **454 hours** of their time caring for our parks and vegetable gardens at Cheney Mansion

Community Partnerships

Partnerships enable the Park District to better meet the diverse needs of our community.

- **Collaborated** with local entities to co-host community events, provide park space, and expand outreach for local not-for-profits
- **Participated** in thought leadership initiatives, including D97's Portrait of a Graduate, the Village of Oak Park's discussion forum to end homelessness, and the Mental Health Response Task Force
- **Donated** 465 pounds of vegetables to Beyond Hunger through Cheney Mansion garden volunteers
- **Engaged** many local business owners to host adult programming

Who We Serve

The Park District of Oak Park serves residents' recreational needs by providing over **8,000** programs and special events annually. Participation in our programming is at an all-time high with even more residents enjoying free programs and community events.

Activity	2023	2022	2021
Adult Athletics*	874	513	389
Frank Lloyd Wright Races	1,971	2,097	483
Community Programs	7,674	7,563	5,083
Active Adults**	11,246	6,358	3,408
Early Childhood	372	322	439
Visual & Performing Arts	4,267	4,229	3,855
Health, Fitness, Martial Arts**	10,931	1,560	1,586
Gymnastics	5,137	5,008	4,648
Ice	13,858	14,085	12,963
Aquatics	1,890	1,833	1,989
Teens	892	869	531
Youth Athletics	6,567	6,777	5,315
Nature & Conservatory	6,431	6,499	5,445

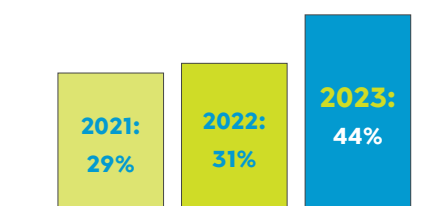
*Adult Athletics numbers record each team in a league as only one participant. As a result, the Adult Athletics participation numbers are far greater as each team has 12-22 players per.

**The significant increase is a result of a change in registration and thus reporting. Programs in these areas were offered as single sessions rather than multi-week programs.



% of Households Served is Growing

With the addition of the Community Recreation Center, the Park District now serves almost half (44%) of Oak Park households compared to 2022 and 2021 (31% and 29% respectively).



How We Serve

Overseen by a Board of five elected officials, the Park District owns and operates a multitude of parks, centers, and special facilities, including:

- **18 parks** totaling 84 acres of parkland
- **7 neighborhood park recreation centers**
- **1 Active Adult Center** at Dole Center
- **3 historic properties:** Cheney Mansion, Pleasant Home, and Oak Park Conservatory
- **2 outdoor swimming pools:** Rehm and Ridgeland Common
- **1 indoor, year-round ice rink:** Paul Hruby Ice Arena
- **1 Gymnastics & Recreation Center**
- **1 Environmental Education Center** at Austin Gardens
- **1 (42,000 sq. ft.) Community Recreation Center**

How are we doing?

Late in 2023, the District conducted its five year Community Survey to measure community sentiment, visitation, usage, and interest. This data is used to enhance offerings, identify opportunities, and plan for the future. Below are a few highlights. For the full report, visit pdop.org/community-survey.

91% HAVE A FAVORABLE OPINION OF THE PARK DISTRICT

98% VISITED A PARK OR FACILITY WITHIN THE PAST YEAR

94% ARE HAPPY WITH THEIR EXPERIENCE

Highly Favorable Ratings ON WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE FOR THE CRC

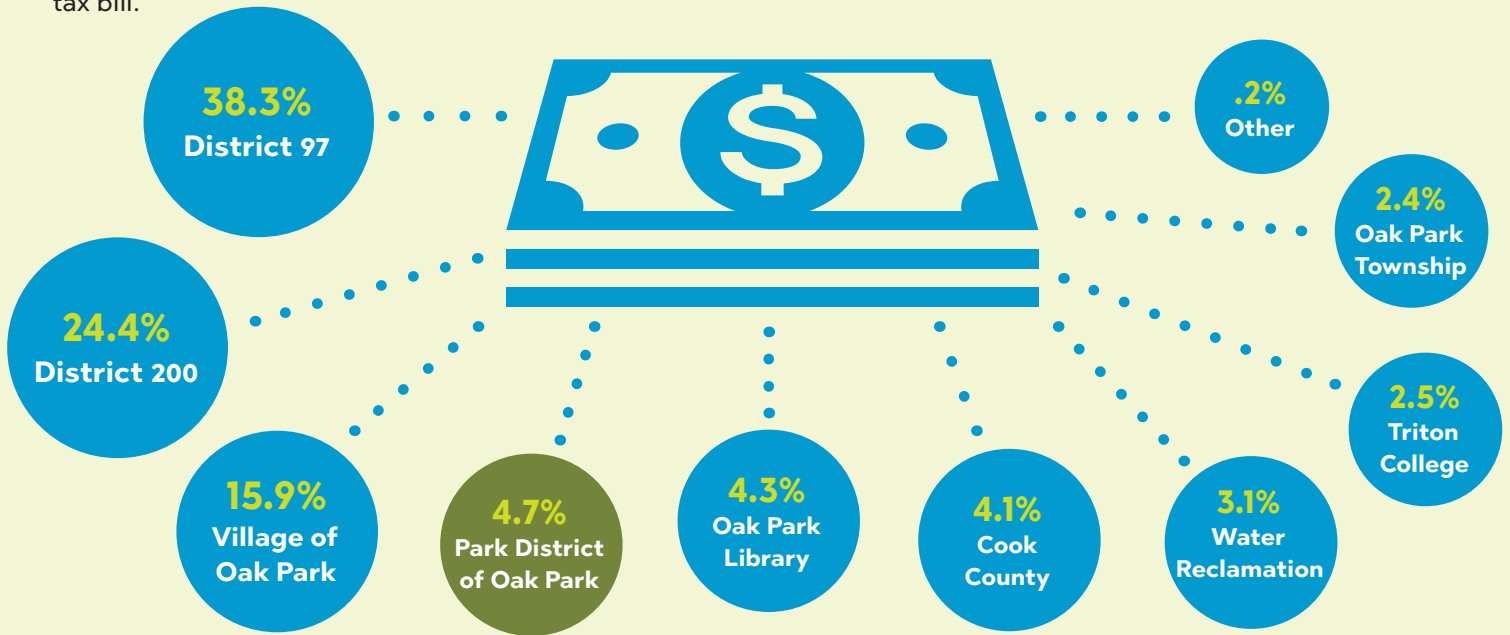
82% CONSIDER THE PARK DISTRICT A GOOD/GREAT VALUE



Your Tax Bill How It Supports Community Services

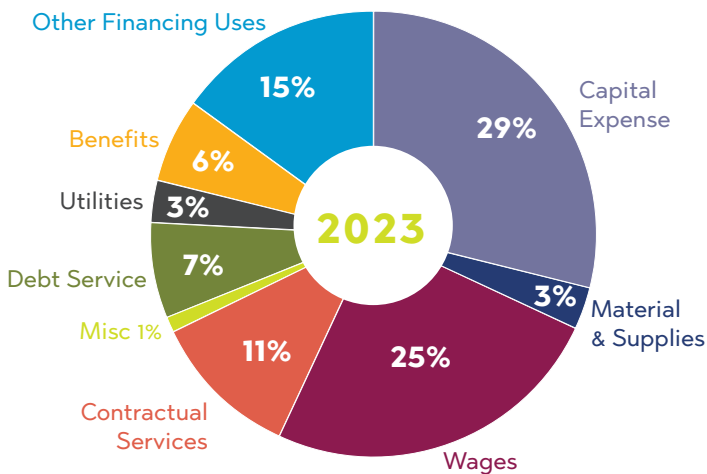
Approximately 4.7% of your 2023 property tax bill is paid to the Park District of Oak Park.

The taxes collected fund less than half of our operating expenses. The Park District funds the remaining expenses through earned revenue from program fees, facility rentals, grants, and donations. Maintaining diverse revenue streams allows the Park District to continue to maintain a balanced budget while limiting the tax burden to under 5% of the total tax bill.



Breaking Down the Numbers

EXPENSES



REVENUES

