



Austin Gardens Master Plan Review

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MEET THE TEAM



Jan Arnold
Executive Director



Chris Lindgren
Superintendent of
Parks and Planning



Ann Marie Buczek
Manager of Marketing &
Communications



**PARK DISTRICT
of OAK PARK**

AUSTIN GARDENS: HISTORY



1947

- Henry Austin Jr. donates land to Park District of Oak Park with condition it remain a public park

1954

- Park District receives ownership with death of Mrs. Austin

1970

- Park District installed first plantings with assistance from Women League of Voters

1975

- Festival Theater begins performing in Austin Gardens

2005

- Site Master Plan Created for Austin Gardens

2016

- Master Plan revisited and AGEEC built



AUSTIN GARDENS

▶ URBAN FOREST

- ▶ SEATING
- ▶ WALKING LOOPS
- ▶ NATIVE PLANTINGS
- ▶ RAIN GARDENS
- ▶ FENCE IMPROVEMENTS
- ▶ DRINKING FOUNTAIN
- ▶ NATURE PLAY FEATURES

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATIONAL CENTER

► Building

- Platinum LEED
- Graywater flushing
- Geo-thermal
- Solar panels
- Green roof
- Insulated envelope
- Triple-pane windows
- All-Electric Design



Park Qualities & Amenities

- ▶ Only green space within urban core of the Village
- ▶ Park features special use of Festival Theatre in the Summer
- ▶ Potential support for tourists visiting Historic District
- ▶ Wildflower area on north portion of site cultivated originally by volunteers; continue to improve the growing conditions
- ▶ Walking path circuit with many benches for sitting is well-used in the neighborhood
- ▶ Pedestrian lighting allows for park to be used in evenings
- ▶ Passive use of park with Nature Theme
- ▶ Unprogrammed open space great for picnics and relaxation



Park Qualities & Amenities

- Festival Theater
- Afterschool for Holmes Elementary
- Environmental Programming
 - Preschoolers
 - Families
 - Seniors
- Fitness
- Picnic Tables
- Winterfest



Recommendations from 2016 Master Plan Review

- ▶ Make entries to park more gracious by enlarging openings to park (removing fence panels) at various locations
- ▶ Increase pedestrian lighting in several locations and switch to LED energy-efficient and effective light fixtures
- ▶ Improve maintenance strategy for the native area and upgrade other ornamental shrub and groundcover plantings throughout park
- ▶ Add Interpretive signage for history and natural features
- ▶ Potential for additional art in park



How are you using the park?

Suggestions for consideration?

Any other thoughts?



THANK YOU