



2024 was an exciting year for the Park District of Oak Park.

The Park District of Oak Park made meaningful strides in planning, facility improvements, and community partnerships – ensuring that our parks, programs, and services continue to enrich the lives of residents today and for years to come.

Planning

We completed the final steps of our 10-year Capital Improvement Plan and 5-year Strategic Plan, both of which expired at the end of the year. To prepare for the future, we dedicated much of the year to developing the 2025-2029 Comprehensive and Strategic Master Plan, which will guide the District over the next five years. This process involved hosting input sessions, conducting focus groups, and gathering feedback through quantitative surveys from community members, stakeholders, partners, and staff. Additionally, we performed a thorough analysis of our parks, facilities, programs, and finances. The result is a comprehensive plan that reflects our community's needs and aspirations and sets a clear path forward.

Facilities

In 2024, we held a design contest for the replacement of the 100-year-old Field Center, scheduled for decommissioning by year-end. The winning design, featuring innovative rammed-earth construction and sustainable features, underscores our commitment to environmental stewardship. This new facility will double the capacity of our afterschool program and provide expanded offerings for dance and theater. We eagerly anticipate its opening in 2026.

We celebrated the one-year anniversary of the Community Recreation Center (CRC) in May, and by December 2024, 10,000 individuals had memberships to the Center. From the free walking track and youth afterschool program to monthly memberships, about one in five Oak Park residents now utilize the CRC in some capacity.

After 59 years of operation, the diving well at Rehm Pool was removed and reimaged to better serve residents

of all ages. The renovated space will feature two water slides leading into a 3.5 feet deep well, a lily-pad crossing, and a current pool for fitness and wellness activities. Scheduled to open in 2025, this exciting addition will bring new opportunities for recreation and engagement to the community.

Partnerships

Partnerships continue to play a vital role in expanding our reach and enhancing our services. We are proud to highlight several successful collaborations from 2024:

- **District 97:** In collaboration with D97, we provided two free weeks of summer camp for income-eligible children. Seventy-three youth in grades 1-5 participated in camps ranging from arts and crafts to sports and general day camps. Due to its success, this program will continue in 2025.
- **Oak Park Area Arts Council:** Through this partnership, a vibrant mural now adorns the parking lot at the CRC on Madison Street. Designed and installed by youth from the Off the Wall Summer Arts Program, the mural celebrates the history of Madison Street's motor row and adds a beautiful new feature to the community.
- **Oak Park Public Library:** To increase access to our facilities, we partnered with the library to offer free weekly passes to Ridgeland and Rehm Pools, the Cubhouse Indoor Playground, and the Ice Arena. Library cardholders can check out these passes, enabling more community members to enjoy our facilities.

Following a year filled with significant accomplishments, impactful partnerships, and forward-thinking initiatives, the Park District of Oak Park is excited to embark on 2025 with optimism and determination.

2024 HIGHLIGHTS



Community Engagement

We will actively work to foster ongoing dialogue, relationships, collaborations, and partnerships with and within the community.

- Hosted 25+ free community events
- Facilitated input sessions, focus groups, stakeholder meetings, community surveys, and staff workshops to support the development of our Comprehensive Master Plan
- Conducted numerous program satisfaction and customer service surveys and gained valuable community input
- Collaborated with the Chamber of Commerce to host a community-wide Health & Wellness Fair
- Held Park Master Plan meetings for Field Park, Austin Gardens, and Carroll Park to plan for future park improvements



Sustainability

We will thrive through renewal, maintenance, and stewardship in all aspects of operation.

- Earned Best Green Practice Award – 9th year in a row
- Created Urban Forestry Plan
- Installed new solar panels on our 11th facility
- Acquired first electric vehicle
- Installed two EV charging stations at the CRC parking lot
- Installed two solar picnic tables at Stevenson Skate Park
- Planted over 1,200 native plants in the parks
- Planted 36 new trees in our parks (substantially reduced due to Cicada emergence)
- Acquired robotic field painting device saving time and resources



Integrity

We will adhere to moral, honest, and ethical principles with a focus on accessibility, inclusion, and transparency.

- Abated additional tax income from Cook County's fund recapture from assessment appeals
- Embraced new county law by granting paid time off for all employees
- Assisted VOP in clearing trees following damage from summer tornado
- Continued investing in staff and board training and education to enhance skills and expand knowledge
- Organized Tax Efficiency Task Force comprised of three community members and Board Commissioners to evaluate District operations

The Park District's **Core Values** drive our actions and operations at every level. The following highlights work that advanced these values over the last year.



Innovation

We will continuously try new methods and ideas, adapt services according to trends, and continually improve processes.

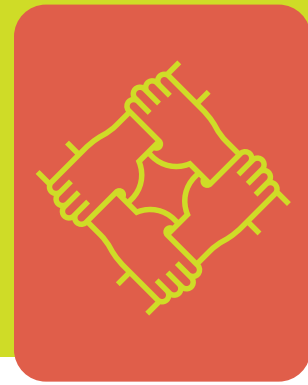
- Installed new PickleRoll product on Barrie courts
- Redesigned and installed new nature play area at Caroll Park
- Introduced new programming including track and field, dodgeball, line dancing, nature, fitness, and more
- Launched POP-Up Park Van to bring more fun to our parks
- Developed online "Welcome Packet" for new residents
- Added new age-based menu to our website based on community feedback
- Implemented two Big Ideas from our employee-led Innovation contest: Low Ropes Course and Ninja Fitness Axel



Responsible Leadership

We will maintain a high performing, engaged, and accountable organization.

- Awarded the prestigious Gold Medal Plaque by the National Recreation and Parks Association – 4th year in a row
- Awarded GFOA Distinguished Budget Presentation – 14th year in a row
- Received \$600,000 OSRAD Grant to support Longfellow Park Master Plan
- Earned Silver International Safety Award for Aquatics
- Engaged in two intergovernmental agreements (IGAs) with VOP and OPPL to serve more residents
- Partnered with D200 to expand programming



Inclusivity

We will value multiple layers of human characteristics and view them as strengths, while striving for all to feel safe and respected in our spaces.

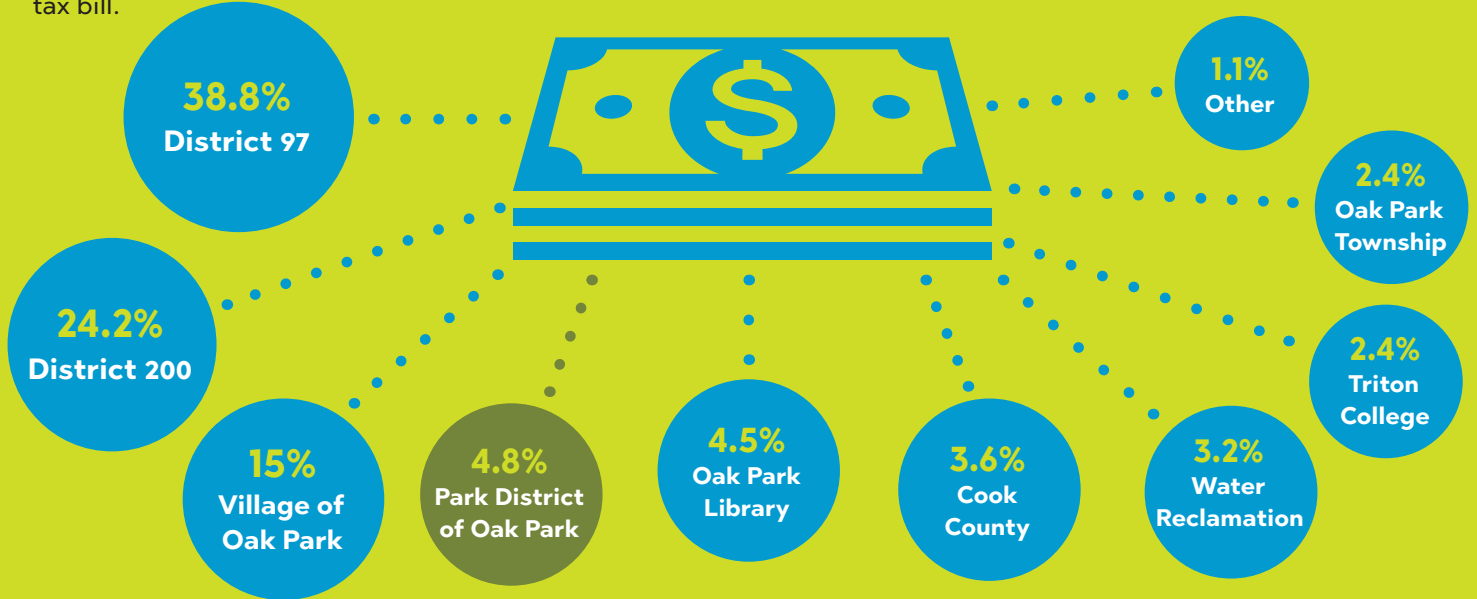
- Provided \$140,450 in scholarships
- Provided \$162,240 in Childcare Discount Memberships
- Awarded financial assistance to 368 families
- Updated ADA Transition Plan based upon community feedback
- Partnered with D97 to provide two free weeks of summer camp for 73 income-eligible youth
- Hosted free, monthly bilingual story hours at the Oak Park Conservatory
- Partnered with the Oak Park Township to host the Back-to-School backpack event at the CRC
- Received a \$100,000 anonymous grant to fully fund the CRC Youth Afterschool program

support and engagement and look forward to many great things to come in 2025.

How It Supports Community Services

Approximately 4.8% of your 2024 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.

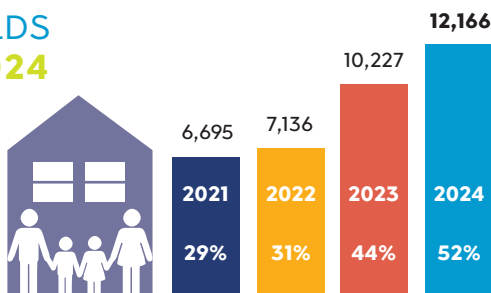


ENROLLMENT STATS 2024

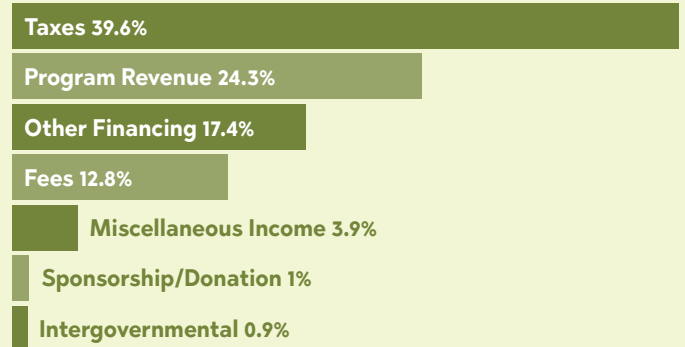
Activity	2024	2023	2022
Adult Athletics & Martial Arts	1,971	1,882	1,498
FLW Races	2,005	1,971	2,097
Community Programs	8,458	7,539	7,501
Active Adults	11,692	11,075	6,358
Early Childhood	525	341	324
Visual and Performing Arts	4,241	4,149	4,296
Health, Fitness, Martial Arts	15,935	9,885	627
Gymnastics	12,457	13,238	13,489
Ice	15,630	14,398	14,901
Aquatics	2,175	1,970	1,632
Teens	2,131	1,906	864
Youth Athletics	7,472	6,460	6,745
Nature & Conservatory	6,764	6,347	6,470
Total	43,853	35,362	14,306

HOUSEHOLDS SERVED 2024

52% of Oak Park Households



2024 BUDGET DOLLARS CAME FROM



2024 BUDGET DOLLARS WENT TOWARDS

