



NATIVE PLANTS IN OUR PARKS

Across our parks, we are expanding pollinator habitats through thoughtful stewardship that strengthens ecosystems and improves open space health. By planting native grasses, trees, shrubs, and flowers, we boost biodiversity and create resilient habitats that support wildlife while enhancing natural spaces for people.

Native plantings provide food, shelter, and nesting habitat for pollinators, including bees, butterflies, and other beneficial insects. Expanding these plant communities creates healthier habitats that sustain pollinators and support ecological balance. We also integrate bioswales and rain gardens that capture stormwater runoff, improve water quality, and add habitat through native vegetation.

We remove non-native species and replace them with native plant communities that enhance wildlife habitat and provide year-round resources for pollinators.

A Community Garden at Cheney Mansion produces vegetables each summer for local food shelters, with volunteers helping the Park District donate over 500 pounds of fresh produce annually.

EV CHARGING STATIONS

Ten EV charging stations at CRC and Ridgeland Common with dedicated parking spots allow facility visitors to charge their electric vehicle.

COMPOSTING

Composting takes place across our parks and facilities, including staff breakrooms, helping reduce waste and return valuable organic material back to the earth. Collection efforts at major locations, including the Oak Park Conservatory, Cheney Mansion, and Ridgeland Common, support a greener and more environmentally responsible community.

CARRY IN/ CARRY OUT

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.

+ FOR MORE INFO

 pdop.org/environment

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To learn more!

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SUSTAINABILITY

in our parks



PARK DISTRICT
of OAK PARK



Sustainability is engraved throughout the Park District of Oak Park. We integrated sustainability into our Comprehensive Master Plan, committed to Sustainability as a Core Value, identified key initiatives in our Strategic Plan, and our Sustainability Plan charts a course for future environmental stewardship. Through various initiatives, we've reduced our environmental footprint, with ongoing efforts to further mitigate resource depletion. Our holistic sustainability strategy includes waste reduction, energy efficiency, green energy production, education, water conservation/reuse, native habitats, green procurement policies, and more.

Annual Savings through Sustainability Efforts

- Interior LED Replacements: \$15,172
- Exterior LED Replacements: \$65,155
- Solar Panel Systems: \$81,000
- Water: \$100,857

TOTAL: \$262,184



WATER

Five cisterns installed across various Park District locations re-purpose water for irrigation and toilet flushing. These systems conserve around **1,250,000** gallons of water and save **\$100,857** annually.

SOLAR PANELS

Eleven Park District facilities housing over **1,364** solar panels currently generate over **828 MWh (828,000 kWh)** of green energy annually. This energy generation is equal to **78** homes or **692** acres of U.S. forests in one year. Annual carbon reduction is estimated to be 587 metric tons of CO₂.

GEOTHERMAL

Austin Gardens Environmental Center, Carroll Center, and Pleasant Home are equipped with geothermal systems with a total capacity of **57.2 tons (686,400 BTUs)** providing energy-efficient climate control. Sixteen geothermal wells were installed at Cheney Mansion, with the system scheduled to begin providing heating and cooling in 2026.

LED LIGHTING

All facility lights have been transitioned to LED lighting with funding sources from ComEd grants covering nearly **50%** of the total cost.

Interior Lighting: Received a ComEd incentive of **\$9,372** to replace 40 high bay light fixtures in the garage space at our Administration building, reducing energy consumption by **19,031 kWh** per year.

Exterior Lighting: Converted remaining 118 park walk lights and exterior court and field lights to LED reducing energy consumption by **599 kW** per year.

SUSTAINABLE FACILITIES

Austin Gardens Environmental Education Center

Platinum LEED Certification, geothermal system, solar panel system, rainwater harvesting cistern, rain gardens, green roof, high efficiency building envelope.

Ridgeland Common Recreation Complex

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

Carroll Center

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

Community Recreation Center

All-Electric, high efficient VRF/heat pump HVAC system, solar array and battery backup system, high efficient building envelope, rain garden, permeable pavers, electric load monitoring, daylighting and occupancy lighting & outlets.

