



**CHAMPAIGN
PARK DISTRICT**

2019-2029 Comprehensive Plan

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February 27, 2019

Dear Champaign Park District Residents,

Our parks and recreation system is a reflection of the community's long held values and support for park land, green space, fitness and wellness. Today's system of urban parks, trails, recreation facilities and programs is a major contributor to Champaign's nationally acclaimed high quality of life and the result of the community support and investment. For over 100 years, the Park District has promoted the community's access to nature, health, and wellness in the areas of parks and recreation. It is in this tradition that we are proud to submit the Park District's Comprehensive Plan. This plan presents the framework and policy that will assist and guide the Park District in the stewardship of our parks, recreation facilities and programs. The Comprehensive Plan includes broad policies and initiatives that will help shape the services that the Park District will provide to the community over the next ten (10) years.



We invite the reader to delve into the details of the plan to see first-hand how the outlined strategies blend the analysis of parks and facilities with the community's current and future needs, and the order in which the Park District intends to undertake them. This plan is a strategy moving forward. We are not committing to all ideas detailed in the Comprehensive Plan, but instead will explore all options and look to the community prior to committing to implement any project.

Many thanks to our existing customers for the opportunity to serve you. We encourage residents whom we have not yet served to explore what the Park District has to offer to you and your family. To all, this is your plan and our commitment to continuous improvement. Please contact us if you have any questions.

Warmest regards,

Craig Hays
Board President

Joseph DeLuce, CPRP
Executive Director

Champaign Park District 2019-2029 Comprehensive Plan

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Residents of the Champaign Park District



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01 Introduction

The 2019 Comprehensive Plan was developed by the Park District to help guide future policy decisions, inform capital outlays, and direct future planning efforts. According to the American Planning Association, a *comprehensive plan* is the “adopted official statement of a legislative body of a local government that sets forth (in words, maps, illustrations, and/or tables) goals, policies, and guidelines intended to direct the present and future physical, social, and economic development that occurs within its planning jurisdiction.” The Comprehensive Plan builds upon the Mission, Vision, and Values developed and adopted in the *Champaign Park District Community Focused Strategic Plan*, published in 2016. First enacted in 1999, the Park District Board of Commissioners *Comprehensive Assessment Policy* instructs that a new comprehensive plan should be issued every ten years to evaluate evolving “economic conditions, population shifts, and changing social needs of the community.” The 2019 plan will help identify strengths and weaknesses of the Park District and develop strategies to close gaps in service, ensure efficient planning, and evaluate future resource use.

Document Structure

The 2019 Comprehensive Plan is separated into the following sections:

01 Introduction: Reviews Park District Mission, Vision, and Values. Provides a brief history of the Park District and community, and reviews recent initiatives completed by the Park District.

02 Inventory: Provides a snapshot of the Park District’s existing land use and programming, and identifies strengths and weaknesses of the Park District.

03 Financial Assessment: Details existing financial status of the Park District and community and how that may affect future planning, programs, and staffing.

04 Demographics and Trends: Considers makeup of our service area and how that may change over the period of our Comprehensive Plan.

05 Community Engagement: Identifies important themes from input collected from residents, staff, and the Board of Commissioners.

06 Agency Initiatives: Reviews internal planning priorities set by Park District documents and initiatives of sister agencies. Provides broad guidance for future capital outlays.

07 References: Lists documents cited by the Comprehensive Plan and provides an appendix of Park District documents which informed the Comprehensive Planning process.



Champaign Park District History

Champaign's parks have been a part of the City's fabric nearly as long as the City has been in existence, with land for Champaign's first park made available in 1854. This property was originally laid out as a public square and possibly as the site for the county courthouse. However, in 1859 the 12.7 acre property became the first park in Champaign County and was named White Park in honor of the man who made the land available. Known as the "Commons", the two square block space was put to work by settlers as a cow pasture in 1861 when the city council adopted a motion "to permit calves to be turned into the City Park at \$.35 per month."

The Park District first organized as a Township Park District in 1911. It had limited taxing power and depended on donations of land to establish the park system. The majority of Champaign's current parks were acquired through donations and in the mid 1920's parks that were owned by the City of Champaign were transferred to the Park District. Since then, all public parks have been held by the Park District. The first tax levy was made in 1912 and collected in 1913.

By the middle of the 1950's, it became evident that due to the exploding growth of the community and the limited taxing powers of the Township Park District, the current structure was inadequate to meet the needs of residents in the community. Therefore, in 1955 the Park District was reorganized as a General Park District by a referendum of voters. The Park District has since been a local unit of government with its own legal and financial responsibilities and is governed by five local residents who are elected into office for six-year terms.

The Park District also maintains pieces of history in some of its facilities. The Springer Cultural Center, located in the heart of downtown Champaign, was originally constructed as a post office in 1904 and was later listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975. Springer is currently the main location for cultural arts programs within the Park District and houses cultural, recreational, and educational programs for all ages as well as workshops, lectures, exhibits, and performances.

Another historical facility located in downtown Champaign and owned by the Park District is the Virginia Theatre, which has been part of this community's history and culture since 1921. Built in the tradition of great vaudeville movie palaces of the 1920's and early 1930's and now on the National Register of Historic Places, the Virginia Theatre is a beautiful facility with a rich link to our past.

Home to the Douglass Community Center, Annex, and Library, Douglass Park traces its origins back to the early 1930's. Named after Frederick Douglass, the park and community center are the heart of African American history in Champaign County. The original Douglass Community Center was built in 1945 to serve African American residents as well as the United Service Organization (USO) facility for African American servicemen from Chantrelle Air Force Base in Rantoul. Douglass Park hosts popular special events like Juneteenth and Champaign-Urbana Day, when community members gather to celebrate their elders and history.

Now celebrating over 100 years of parks, the Park District maintains 63 parks and 11 programmed facilities across 718 acres, which serve a direct population of 87,432. The Park District offers over 1,500 programs and special events each year. With specialty facilities like the historic Virginia Theatre, the Sholem Aquatic Center, Prairie Farm, and the Newt Dodds Tennis Center, the Park District has something for everyone.

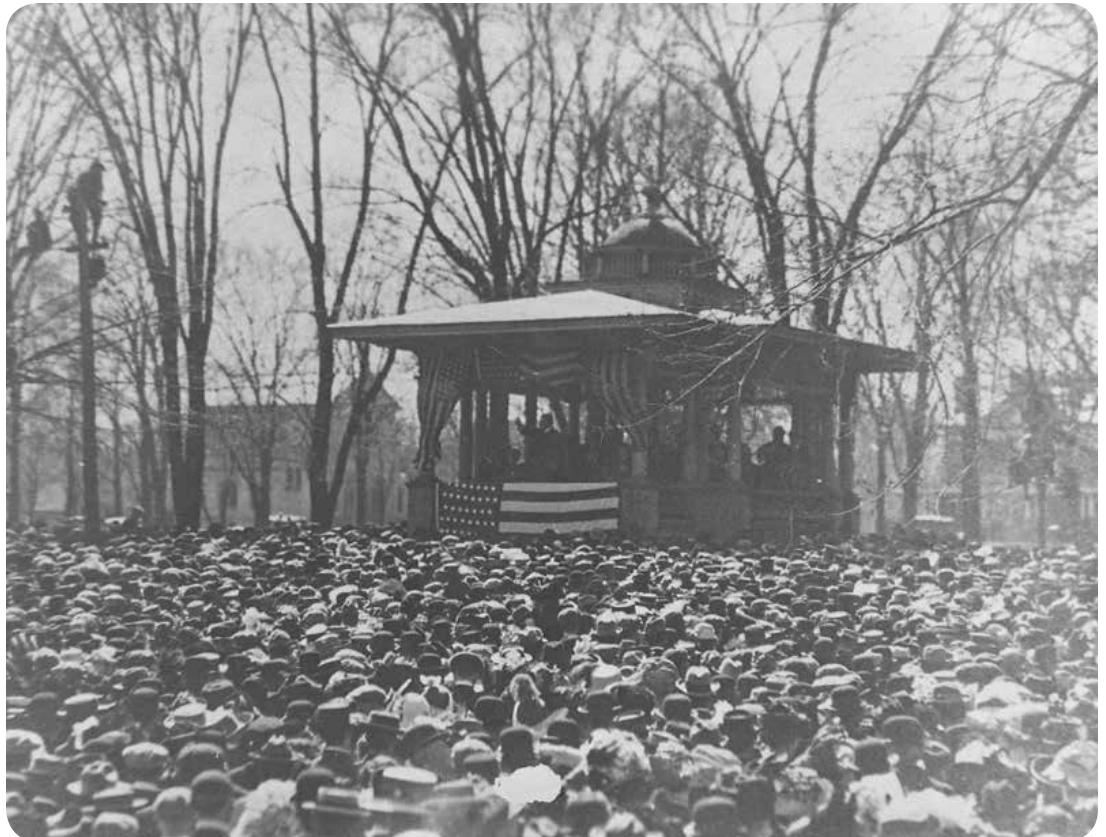


Figure 1-Crowd gathered at West Side Park to hear presidential candidate Theodore Roosevelt speak (1912).

Geographic Conditions

The Park District is located in East Central Illinois. Champaign, Illinois can be considered a twin city with Urbana as both are home to the University of Illinois. Champaign is semi-urban, with older neighborhoods enjoying a relatively mature urban forest; however, much of the new growth to the north and west is occurring on farmland with little tree cover.

The climate of Central Illinois is highly seasonal. There are four distinct seasons with variable conditions: cold winters, hot summers, and temperate spring and fall. Central Illinois is prone to extreme weather conditions such as frequent thunderstorms, occasional tornadoes, and heat waves. These conditions heavily drive the programs and amenities offered by the Park District. Indoor recreation space is vital to promote physical activity and social interaction during winter months. The Sholem Aquatic Center, a seasonal facility, offers a respite during summer heat waves. Program managers have to be adept in providing alternative activities for the somewhat unpredictable nature of Central Illinois weather.

This region of Illinois was once dominated by tallgrass prairie, specifically the “Grand Prairie.” The Grand Prairie is the most eastern stretch of tallgrass prairie and was dominated by hundreds of species of perennial grasses and wildflowers. Central Illinois had been covered by tallgrass prairie following its last glaciation, roughly 8,000 years ago. However, with the advent of the steel plow in the 1800’s, the fertile soils created by prairie have largely been converted to agricultural lands. Efforts in Park District parks to recreate natural areas typically follow the structure of tallgrass prairie.

Central Illinois’ topography is a remnant of its glaciated past—very flat. Before the area was settled and mechanically drained for agriculture, Champaign was historically damp. Located at the headwaters for three watersheds, many now channelized streams begin in Champaign. The Park District works closely with the City of Champaign in its efforts to more sustainably manage high rainfall events.



Figure 2-Watershed map of Illinois, highlighting the three watersheds within the Park District.



*Did you know?
Our horticulture staff maintains over
40 acres of natural gardens and
restorations.*

Parks, Facilities, and Trails

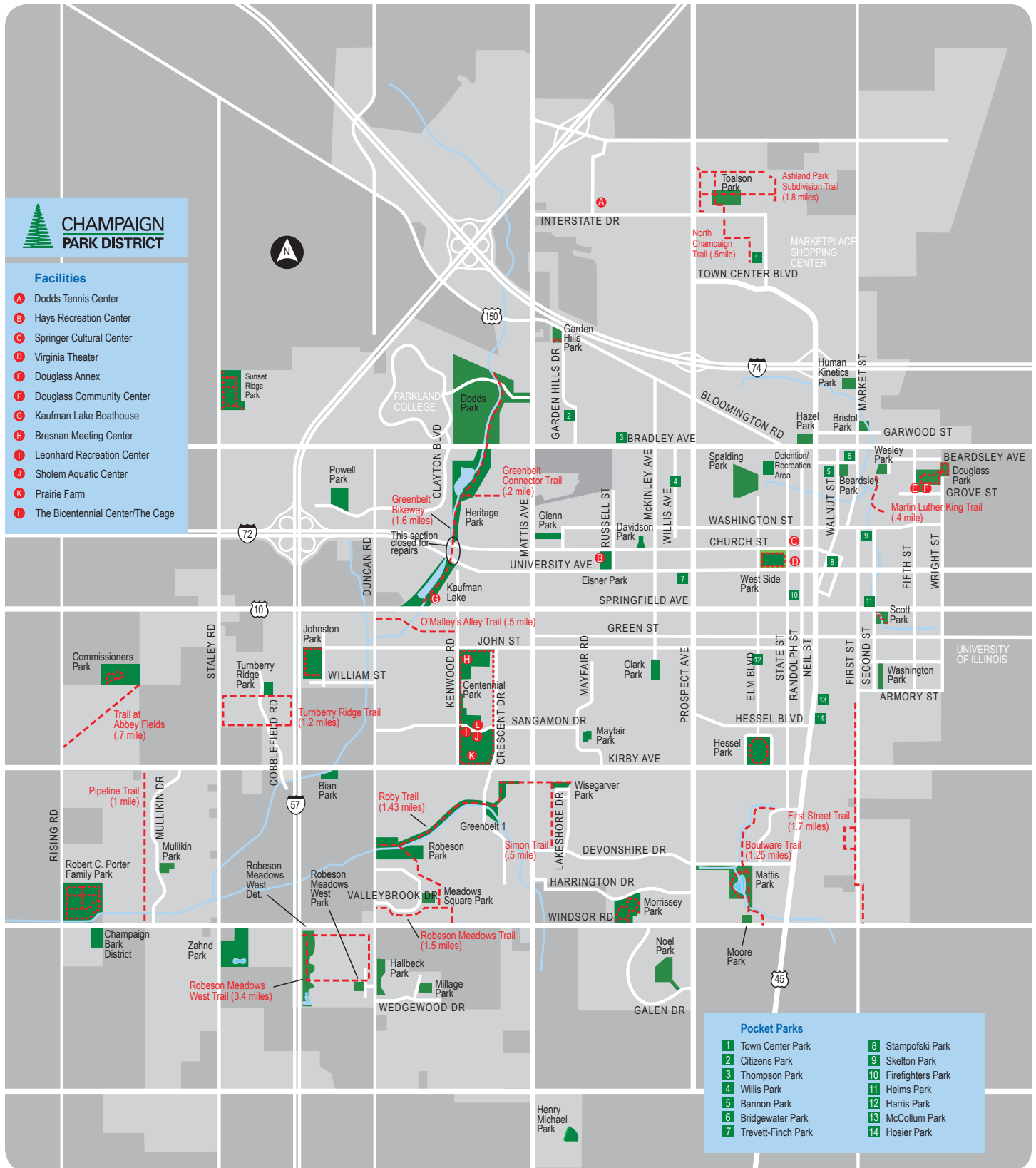


Figure 3-Diagrammatic wayfinding map of the Park District. A version of this map can be found in the program guides made available to the residents of the City of Champaign.

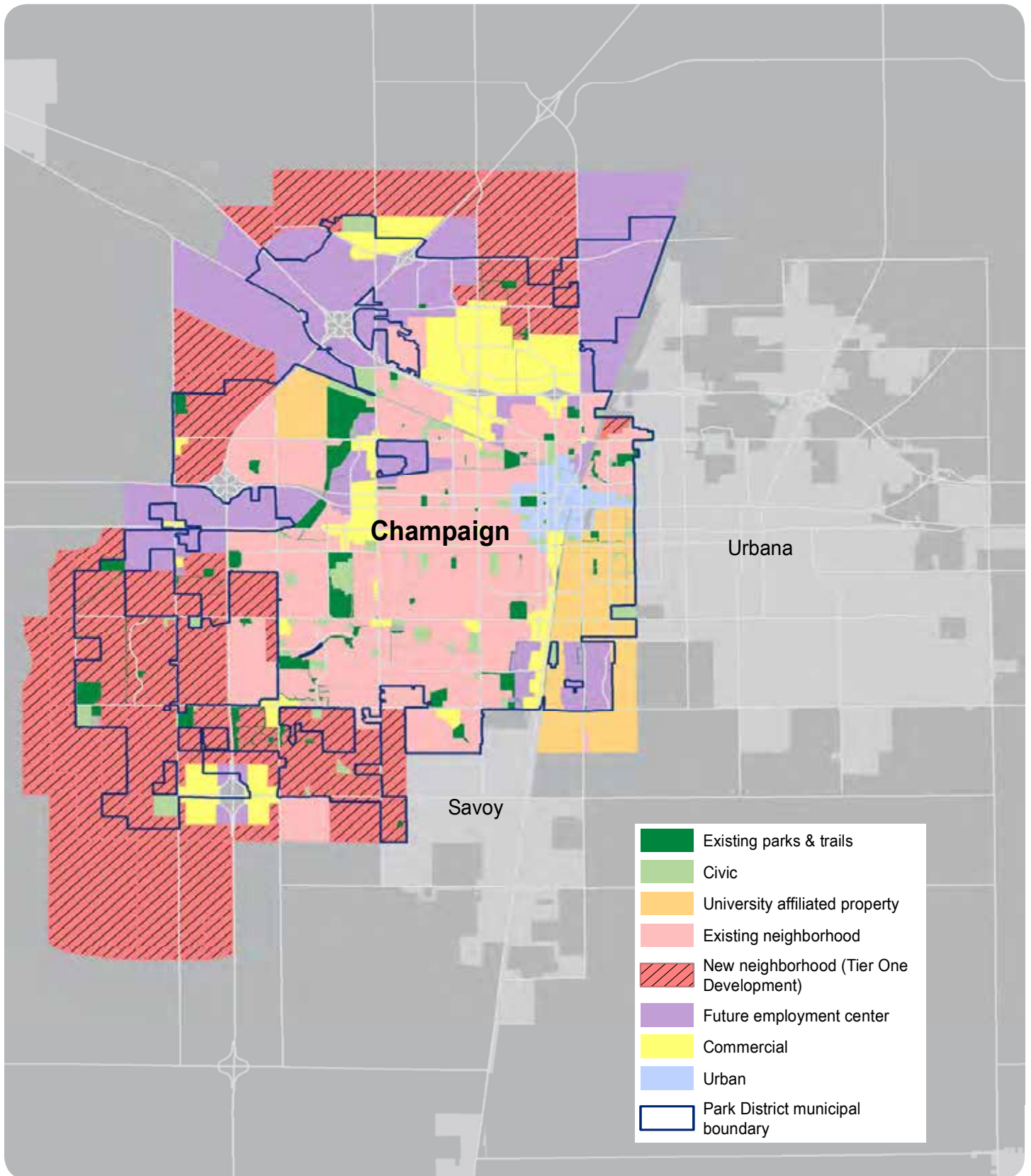


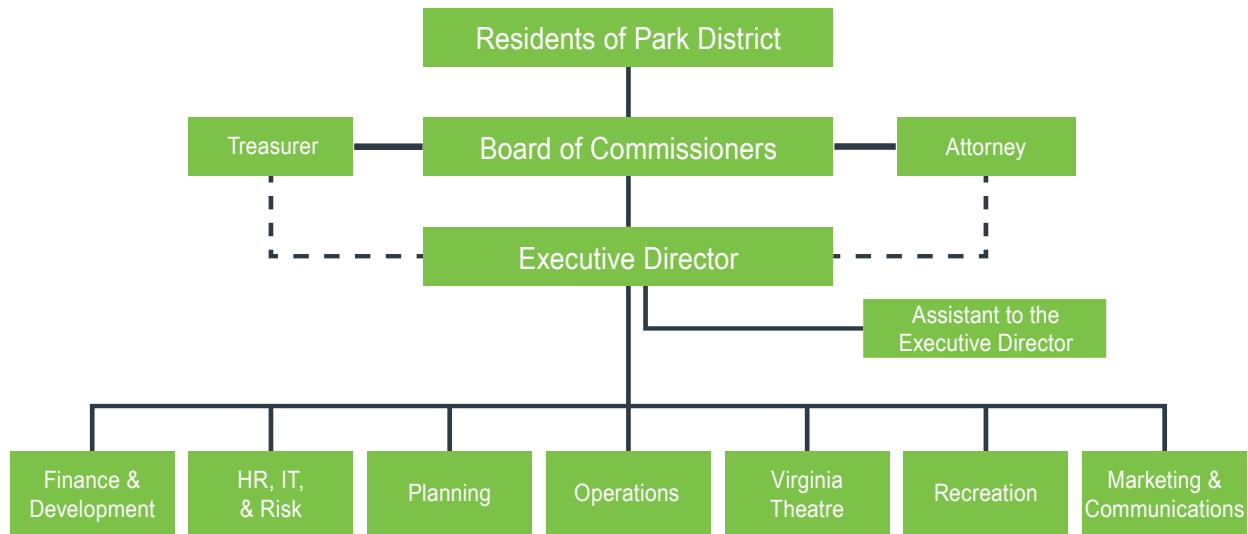
Figure 5-Map of future and existing land use in Champaign. Land use data based on the *Champaign Tomorrow* Comprehensive Plan.

Organizational Structure

Although the Park District was organized in 1911, it was not established as a separate unit of local government until 1955 by referendum. The Park District is governed by five elected residents of Champaign who volunteer their services. The Commissioners elect a President and Vice President, and approve a Treasurer, Board Secretary, and Assistant Secretary, which are considered paid services. Commissioner terms are six years and there are no term limits. Each Commissioner is elected as an “at-large”

representative; there are no electoral subsets for the Park District. The Board of Commissioners holds meetings twice a month; all Board meetings are open to the public.

The staff management team is comprised of the Executive Director and seven Department Heads. There are 71 full time staff, 9 full time II staff, and approximately 700 part time and seasonal workers.



Allied Agencies

Especially because of its location in a twin city and university town, the Park District is part of a diverse fabric of park and recreation agencies.

The **Urbana Park District**, founded in 1907, has 19 parks, with a total of 555 acres, of which 234 acres are natural areas. Their public facilities include the Brookens Gym, the Crystal Lake Park Family Aquatic Center, the Lake House in Crystal Lake Park, the Anita Purves Nature Center, the Phillips Recreation Center, and the Urbana Indoor Aquatic Center, which is a shared use facility with the Urbana School District, Unit 116. Urbana has a population of 42,014.

The **Village of Savoy Parks Department** maintains seven parks encompassing over 75 acres and is a subset of the Village of Savoy. The Savoy Recreation Center is a vital resource for the community, with a fitness center and athletic courts as well as providing programming at the larger parks. The City of Savoy was incorporated in 1956 and has an estimated population of 8,177 residents.

The **Champaign County Forest Preserve District** is a government agency charged with the stewardship of six forest preserves covering almost 4,000 acres in Champaign County, Illinois. The Forest Preserve District, which covers all but seven sections of Champaign County, was established by referendum in 1935.



Figure 6-Park District Board of Commissioners, circa 1975.

Neighbors and Partners

The Park District frequently partners with agencies, community groups, educational institutions, and businesses to better serve residents. As a special district, the Park District has the authority to enter into agreements such as easements, leases, and land management agreements.

The **City of Champaign**, which shares its boundaries with the Park District, has a population of roughly 87,432 and encompasses 23 square miles. The City and Park District work closely from a planning and operational perspective. The City owns some property that the Park District manages as public parks, such as Bristol Park. Alternatively, the Park District cooperates with the City for drainage infrastructure projects, trail management, and event planning on Park District property.

The **Urbana Park District** and Champaign Park District work closely on several initiatives such as trail plans, programming, and the Champaign-Urbana Special Recreation Program (CUSR). In 1985 the Champaign Park District and Urbana Park District partnered to operate a joint program known as the Champaign-Urbana Special Recreation Program. The program currently serves nearly 400 special needs residents every year, providing them with quality recreational opportunities with the assistance of specially trained staff. Both the Champaign and Urbana Park Districts also work together to offer “resident” pricing to patrons from each respective Park District so that residents of Urbana can enjoy Champaign Park District programs at the reduced rate, and vice versa.

The **University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign** is a public research institute located in both Urbana and Champaign. The University was founded in 1867 as a land-grant institution. It has a student population of over 45,000 students. The University is situated on 6,730 acres and is the largest employer in the area with nearly 14,000 employees. The Park District owns and operates several parks in “Campus Town.” The Park District frequently reaches out to various academic departments for academic advice and regularly works with interns and volunteers from the University.

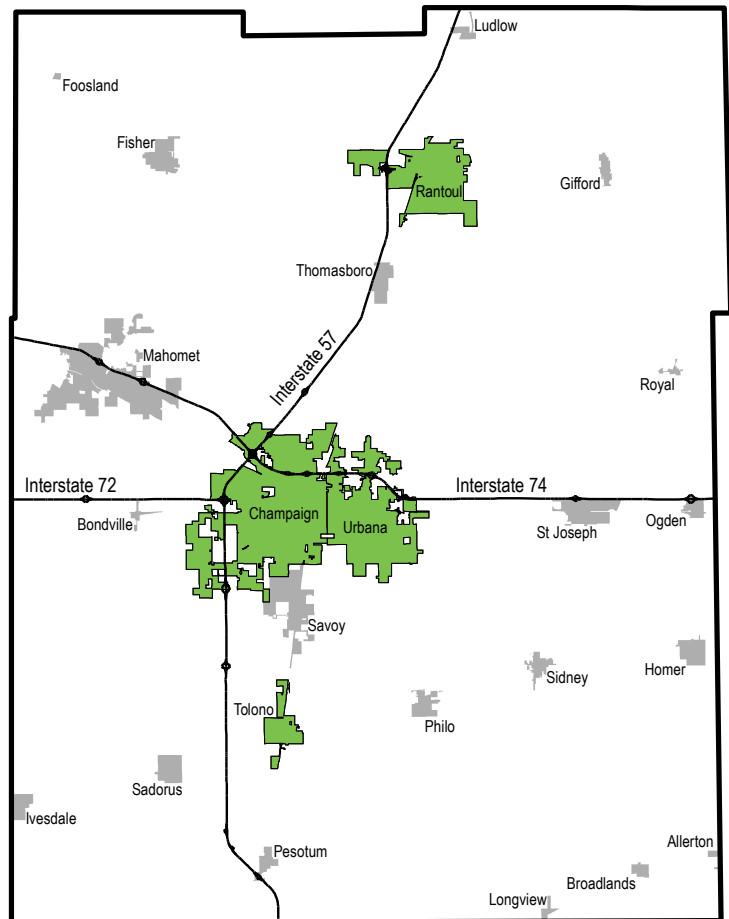
Parkland College is a two year community college and a member of the Illinois Community College System. The college has an average annual enrollment of 20,000 students and a full time faculty. Parkland is the 10th largest employer in Champaign, employing 707 people. Parkland College is directly adjacent to the Park District’s largest property, Dodds Park.

The **Champaign Unit 4 School District** serves over 10,000 students in Champaign, Savoy, and Bondville, Illinois. The Park District and School District frequently partner to offer programming and to share open space and facilities. The Park District contributed to gymnasium enhancements at Barkstall and Stratton Elementary Schools in exchange for opportunities for Park District use. The Park District recently entered into an intergovernmental agreement allowing Unit 4 to utilize Spalding Park for high school baseball and tennis.

The **Public Art League (PAL)** is a non-profit organization that promotes public art throughout the community. Annually, PAL juries potential pieces from commissioned entries. From this selection, the Park District leases public art from the Public Art League with support from the Park District Foundation and community donors.

The **Champaign County Regional Planning Commission (RPC)** is an intergovernmental organization that provides planning, childhood education, and technical assistance in Central Illinois. RPC has assisted the Park District with several planning documents.

The **Urbana & Champaign Sanitary District (USCD)** is a municipal body which treats wastewater for Champaign, Urbana, Bondville, and Savoy. The USCD leases property to the Park District for its dog park in Southwest Champaign.



■ Park Districts within Champaign County
■ Municipalities within Champaign County without a Park District
 Champaign County Forest Preserve District

Mission

A mission statement should concisely summarize the goals and purpose of an organization in a matter that helps guide both large-scale strategies and daily decision making. Mission statements may evolve as the goals of the Park District change, or as the needs and wants of the community change.

The current Park District Mission, drafted in 2013, was approved by the Board of Commissioners as part of the *Champaign Park District Strategic Plan 2020 Vision: Effective and Efficient in the*

Pursuit of Excellence. As part of the 2016 *Champaign Park District Community Focused Strategic Plan*, the Park District also issued a set of Values which support our Mission and help to guide our administration, operations, programming, and planning. Staff are dedicated to promoting a culture of service to the community and utilize both the Mission and Values in their day-to-day decision making.

To enhance our community's quality of life through positive experiences in parks, recreation, and the cultural arts.

Vision

A vision statement can be thought of as a mission statement for the future. It should be aspirational and assist an agency in setting long term goals.

The current Park District Vision was drafted in the process of developing the 2019 Comprehensive Plan. Staff leadership presented a proposed vision statement to the Board of Commissioners in early 2019. With some modifications the Vision was approved as part of this plan.

To provide the community with parks, trails, facilities, and programs to promote their pursuit of wellness and healthy living.



Values

Stewardship: We conduct our business fairly, transparently, and with integrity. We are fiscally responsible to our residents. We strive to offer affordable programs and services for all residents. We preserve natural resources and promote good conservation and stewardship practices. We provide opportunities for health and wellness for our residents. We strive to provide equal access for all users to all of our parks, facilities, and programs. We value and reward honest and forthright employees who provide excellent customer service and stewardship of public resources.

Organizational Excellence: We know and respect our roles and responsibilities, and work together to accomplish our goals. We work with other agencies and groups throughout the community to accomplish our goals. We encourage all residents to participate in planning, designing, and advocating for parks and recreation. We recognize that being good is simply not good enough. We promote staff development. We follow best practices in providing quality parks, recreation, and cultural arts. We assure safety through a comprehensive risk management program.

Innovation: We value employees who present creative and proactive solutions to challenges. We encourage doing things differently, progressively, creatively, and with an entrepreneurial spirit. We value an innovative environment that enhances our community's parks and programs. We value our ability to anticipate, influence, and embrace change.

Customer Service: We offer consistent, customer-focused service across the organization. We strive to say YES! to our customers for the right things. We actively seek and value customer feedback. We care about our team members and customers.

Diversity: We provide quality parks, programs, and services that meet the diverse needs of all ages and abilities in our community. We embrace the diversity of our team. We value diversity in all its forms and actively seek people with different perspectives and experiences. We encourage inclusion.



02 Inventory

Residents have access to quality programs, trails, facilities, and parks through the Park District. Reviewing a snapshot of current offerings allows the Park District to set performance standards and continually work towards making sure they are met. Internal standards are developed by consulting several agency standards such as those of the Illinois Distinguished Accredited Agency and the National Recreation and Park Association.

The Park District owns and manages a total of 718 acres of property of which, 708 acres are developed for public use. There are three distinct types of property: parks, trails, and facilities. There is some overlap in these distinctions. For example, the Leonhard Recreation Center, a facility, is located within Centennial Park, while the Springer Cultural Center is a specific facility property separate from park space.

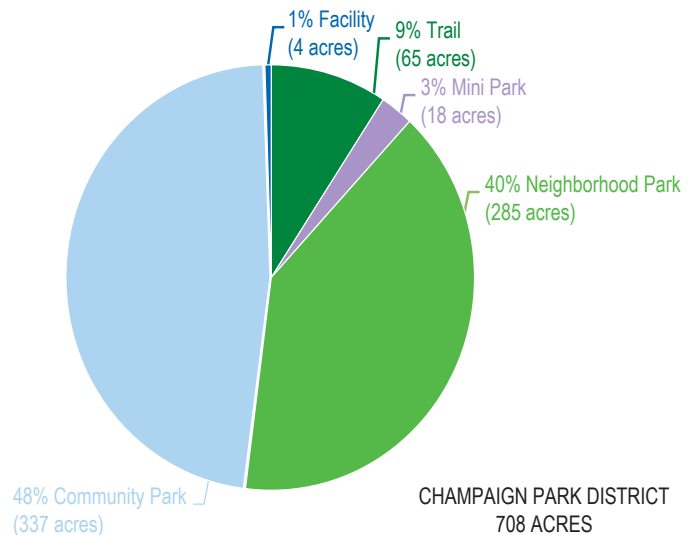


Figure 7-Approximate acreage by land use type.

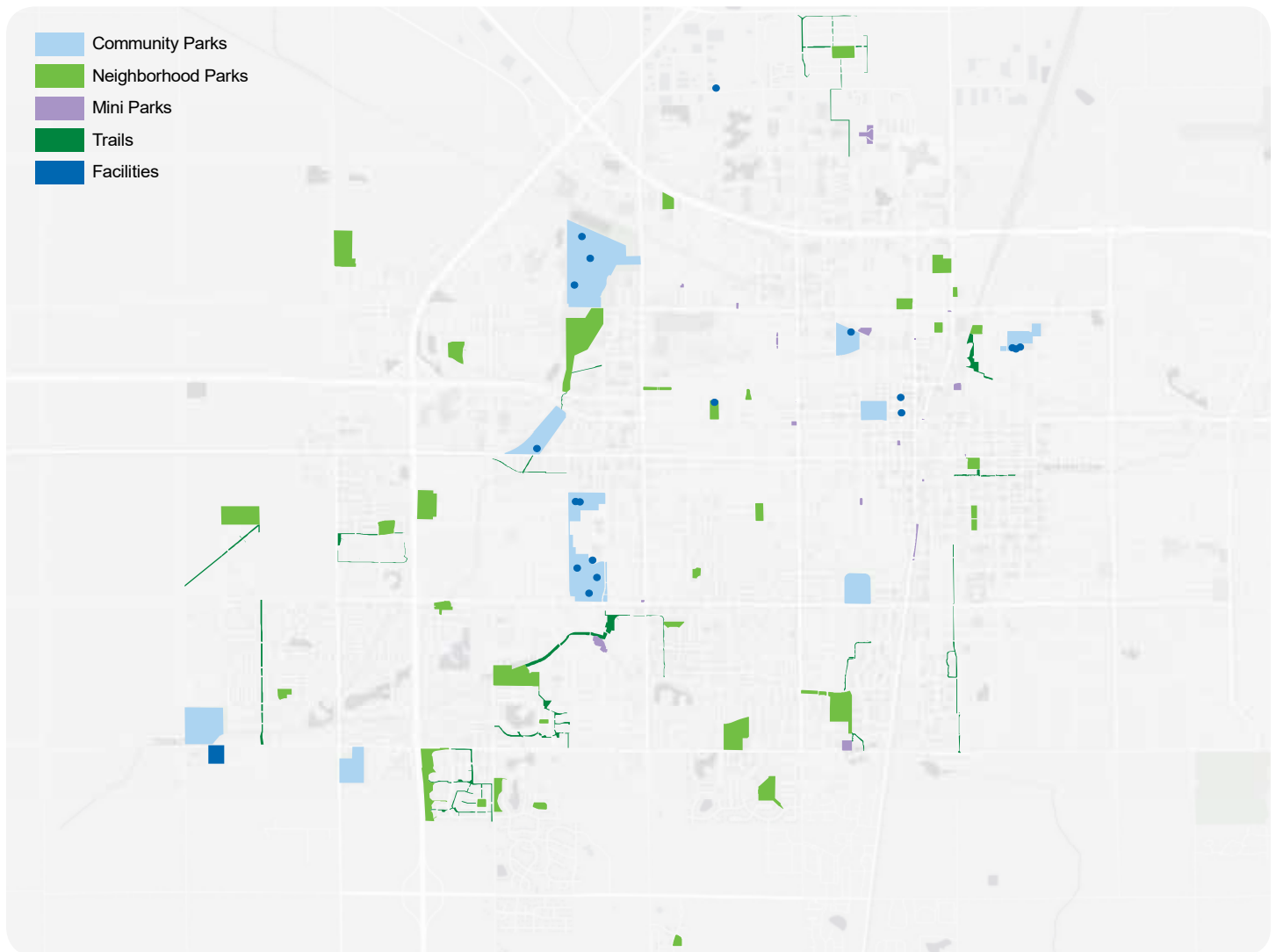


Figure 8-Distribution of parks, trails, and facilities by type.

Parks

There are a wide variety of parks across the Park District. Their sizes range from large, regional destinations with sports complexes and concession stands, such as Dodds Park, to the traffic calming flower island in downtown Champaign, Stampofski Park. There are 63 total parks, 47 owned by the Park District, 2 partially owned, and 14 owned by others and managed and programmed by the Park District. Several parks are adjacent to school sites which also offer open space, sports fields, and playgrounds. The average park size is 25 acres. Overall, 92% of the parks are owned by the Park District (589 acres). The remaining 8% of managed properties are owned by affiliated agencies and community partners such as the City of Champaign. A third of mini parks are not owned by the Park District. Mini Parks are often unique arrangements with other agencies and are typically a beautification effort. The Park District also owns property which has a shared use with other agencies such as the baseball complex constructed by the Unit 4 School District in Spalding Park.

Per 1,000 Park District residents, there are approximately 8.1 acres of park space (including trails). According to the National Recreation and Park Association, the median acres of park per 1,000 residents for communities ranging from 50,000-99,999 people is 9.4. However, the Park District rate of 8.1 acres/1,000 residents is well within the lower and upper quartile range of 5.1 to 15.0 acres/1,000 residents for comparable communities.

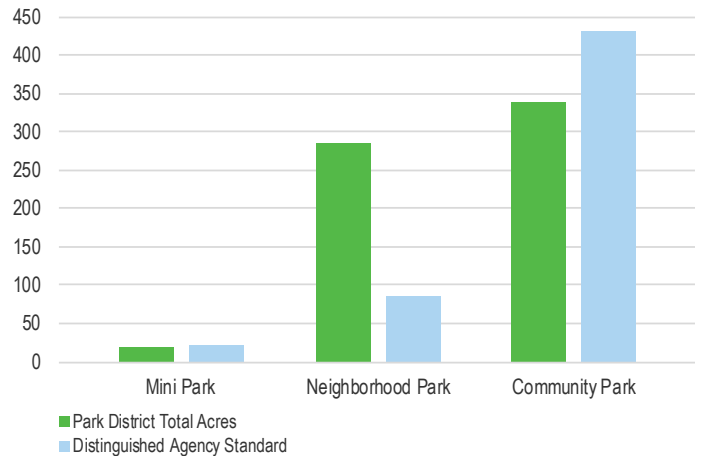
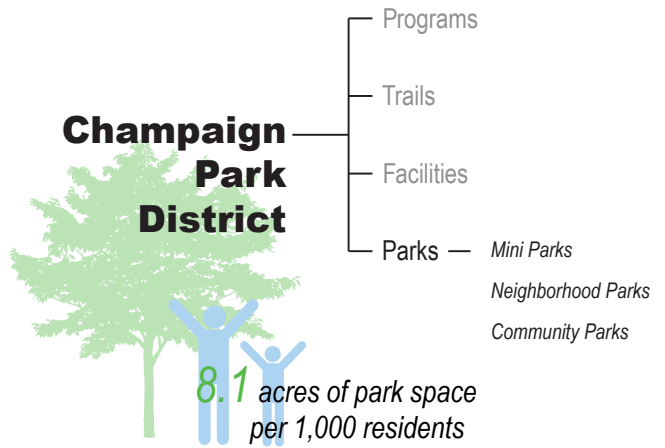


Figure 9-Diagram comparing relative sizes of the Park District's smallest and largest parks, Stampofski and Dodds respectively.

Park Typologies

The Park District has three park typologies. These designations guide programming, funding, amenities, and staffing. The standards below are based on the Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD) Distinguished Agency Accreditation Program. However, there are a few typology exceptions to the IAPD Accreditation due to neighborhood context.

Mini Parks are specialized properties that the Park District primarily utilizes for signage, beautification projects, and program advertising. These parks serve as a gateway to the Park District and the community it serves. Mini Parks are often situated on busy corridors and serve as a respite for pedestrians. It is preferable for these parks to have bench seating and ornamental plant material. These parks do not include “typical” amenities such as playgrounds or sports fields.

Service area: ¼ mile

Size threshold: (+/-)1 acre

Acreage Standard: .25-.5 acres/1,000 population

Average Park District acreage: .9 acres

Neighborhood Parks are programmed with active and passive elements to suit the needs of the surrounding neighborhood. Examples of active programming in neighborhood parks include tennis courts, basketball courts, and playgrounds. Passive programming might include perimeter paths, picnic areas, or flower beds.

Service area: ¼ mile – ½ mile

Size threshold: (+/-) 15 acres

Acreage standard: 1-2 acres/1,000 population

Average Park District acreage: 8.6 acres

Community Parks are typically considered a destination within the Park District. These parks host a variety of amenities such as bodies of water, parking, concessions, specialized sports fields, or splash pads. *Special Use Parks* are a subset of community parks that are a draw to the entire Park District because of a unique facility such as a swimming pool or dog park.

Service area: 1 -2 miles

Size threshold: (+/-) 25 acres

Acreage Standard: 5 – 8 acres/1,000 population

Average Park District acreage: 33.7 acres

Signature Parks and facilities are defined by iconic features and amenities. This is a designation that is not mutually exclusive; a mini park, neighborhood park, or community park could be a signature park. Signature parks have a higher level of design and maintenance care. These parks are unique in comparison to other parks and have distinguishing features.

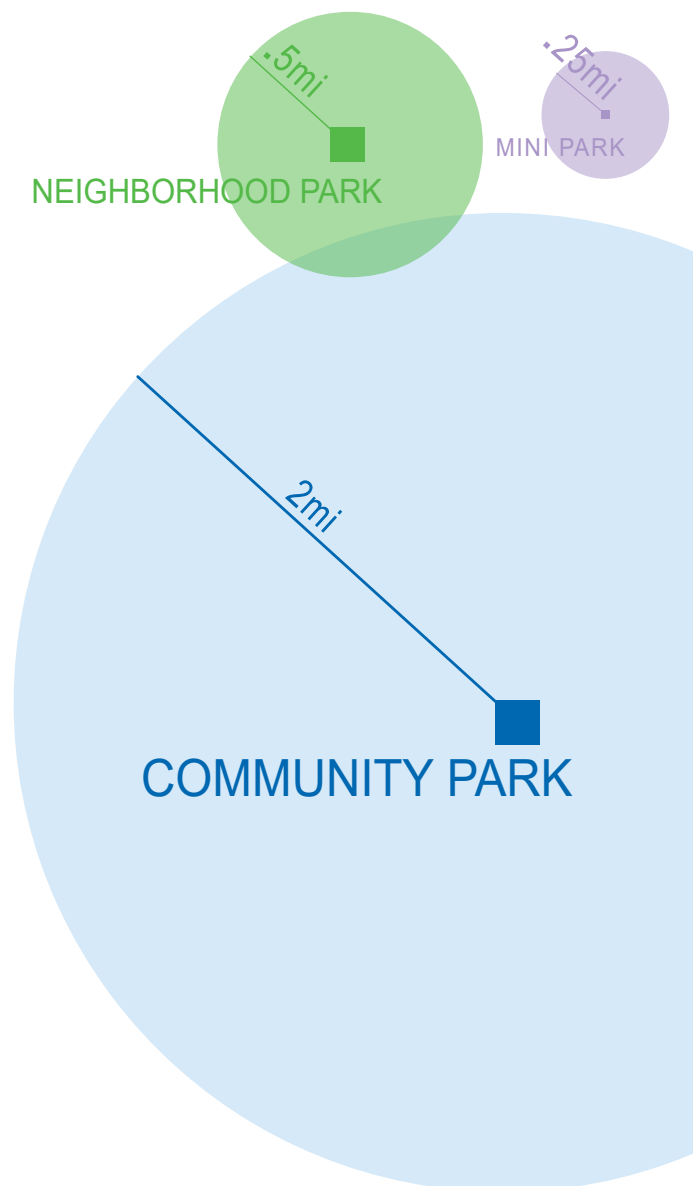


Figure 10-Relative size and service area of park typologies.

Inventory of Amenities

Park amenities depend on park classification, neighborhood context, and adjacency to similar features in neighboring parks. Many parks have traditional features such as picnic shelters, playgrounds, and paths. There are also both typical and naturalized landscaping beds which range from small annual beds to prairie reconstructions. Recreational amenities typically include tennis courts, basketball courts, softball/baseball fields, and soccer fields but also include unique recreational opportunities such as ga-ga ball and skate parks. Throughout the 63 parks, there is a range of amenities and levels of development. An inventory matrix is provided to better identify the distinctions between various park types. This information is also provided in the Park District *Program Guide*.

Playgrounds

There are 32 playground structures in the community and neighborhood parks. Playgrounds are often one of the top motivations for park visits. In addition to ensuring that these amenities are fun and enjoyable, equally important is that they are safe. All playgrounds meet the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission standards for safety. The Park District requires that at least three full time staff have Certified Playground Safety Certification. Accessibility is also an important tenet in the National Recreation and Park Association's playground standards. The Park District has one fully accessible playground, located at Eisner Park. This park is also home to the Champaign-Urbana Special Recreation. Accessibility in playgrounds can take many forms such as specialized swings that offer more support, smooth rubber surfacing, ground-level activities, and ramps/platforms which can accommodate wheelchairs. Although the Eisner Park playground is the most accessible, all playgrounds meet or exceed the Americans with Disabilities Act requirements for public playgrounds.

As playgrounds age and safety standards evolve, it is important to plan for scheduled replacement of playground equipment. Generally, playgrounds have a useful life of 20-30 years. The annual capital budget typically accounts for replacing one to two playgrounds per year. This replacement schedule is developed based on the age of the playground and overall condition.



Pavilions

Pavilions and shelters can be found at 19 Park District parks. Many of these structures provide shade for park patrons, space for social gatherings/events, and some refuge in the event of drastic weather changes. Park pavilions and shelters can be rented, but when there are no rentals scheduled they may be used on a first-come, first-served basis.

Skate Parks

Skate parks offer recreational opportunities outside of more traditional sports programming. The Park District skate parks are open seven days a week and are free of cost for users all of ages and skill levels.

There are currently two skate parks in the Park District—one at Spalding Park and one at Sunset Ridge Park. The Spalding skate park is made up of 18,000 square feet of concrete, with three bowls, a snake run, and a street course for skaters, rollerbladers, and bikers. Spalding Park is adjacent to two schools and surrounded by older residential neighborhoods, making it a high-traffic area for visitors and passersby.

The Sunset Ridge skate park is surrounded by farmland and more recent residential development. The skating infrastructure at Sunset Ridge Park is less extensive, but features ramps, rails, and stairs. As residential neighborhoods and the Park District continue to expand, the Sunset Ridge skate park will remain a unique recreational amenity for the neighborhoods of Northwest Champaign.

Athletic Fields & Courts

Throughout its 63 parks, the Park District manages a wide array of athletic fields and courts for sports programming and pick-up games. This includes 19 basketball courts, 27 baseball/softball fields, 26 soccer fields, 24 tennis courts, 5 volleyball courts, and 1 football field. Many athletic fields and courts located within neighborhood parks are not typically designed to fit strict standards; they are designed to promote active recreation and pick-up sports without dominating a proportion of the site. For example, many basketball courts in neighborhood parks are half courts instead of full basketball courts, which allows for more flexibility in their siting and laying, and lowers capital costs. In contrast, many fields in community parks are designed for league play, which allows for Park District programming and rental opportunities.

Some parks also feature unique amenities such as bocce ball, disc golf, and pickleball courts. As trends in active recreation evolve, the Park District continues to “test” new amenities in one or two parks and potentially expand these if their usage is popular. As an example, the Park District introduced its first outdoor pickleball court at Hessel Park. As demand grew for the sport, especially among the baby boomer population, the Park District began striping more tennis courts to accommodate pickleball and has 7 courts to date in several parks.

	Park	Park Size (acres)
MINI PARKS (18 ACRES)	Bannon Park	0.06
	Bridgewater Park	0.15
	Citizens Park	0.30
	Firefighters Park	0.40
	Green Street Entryway Park	0.13
	Greenbelt #1 Park	3.44
	Harris Park	0.50
	Helms Park	0.05
	Hosier Park	0.08
	McCollum Park	1.33
	Mini Park IV	0.20
	Mini Park V	0.01
	Mini Park VIII	2.08
	Moore Park	2.87
	Skelton Park	1.42
	Stampofski Park	0.04
	Thompson Park	0.34
	Town Center Park	3.76
Trevett-Finch Park	0.60	
Willis Park	0.66	

Community Gardens

Community gardens are an important park amenity for Park District residents who do not have space to garden at home but are interested in growing their own food or flowers. Gardens can be beneficial for both the community and environment. They help improve community food security by offsetting the cost of fresh produce for growers and also attract native pollinators like bees and butterflies that play an integral role in local ecosystem dynamics. Community gardens can be found at both Dodds Park and Douglass Park.

The gardens located at Dodds Park, known as the Eddie Albert Gardens, provide residents with opportunities to rent 20' x 20' or 20' x 30' plots for a fee. Elevated plots are also offered for participants with disabilities, and plots are available for gardeners of all skill levels, season-by-season or year-round. The Park District provides water access for gardeners from mid-April through the end of the growing season, but it is the gardeners' responsibility to tend and clear their plots.

The Douglass Park community gardens are not available to rent but are used for activities like the Douglass day camps and after-school programs, where participants learn about community gardening and have the opportunity to help plant or maintain garden beds.

Splash Pads

Splash pads offer park visitors the opportunity to cool down in warmer months without making a trip to fee-based facilities like the Sholem Aquatic Center. The Park District's splash pads include features such as ground sprays, spirals, and animal sprayers that are activated through user movement. Because splash pads require significant capital investment and regular maintenance, they are only located in two of the most visited community parks, Douglass Park and Hessel Park. Each are in operation from late spring to early fall.



Park	Park Size (acres)	Restroom	Drinking Fountain	Shelter or Pavilion	Playground	Community Garden	Natural Area	Parking Lot	On-Street Parking	Basketball Court	Baseball or Softball	Skate park	Soccer Field	Tennis Court	Volleyball Court	Splash Pad	Fishing	
COMMUNITY PARK (337 ACRES)	Centennial Park	69.6		x	x	x			x		x	x			x	x		
	Champaign Bark District*	6.9		x					x									
	Dodds Park	104.0	x	x		x	x		x		x							
	Douglass Park	15.5		x	x	x	x		x		x	x					x	
	Hessel Park	22.2	x	x	x	x			x		x			x		x		
	Kaufman Park	29.1		x					x									x
	Porter Family Park	38.2			x	x		x	x									x
	Spalding Park	16.8		x	x	x			x		x	x	x		x			
	West Side Park	13.9		x	x	x												
	Zahnd Park	20.6	x	x	x	x			x			x						
	NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS (285 ACRES)	Beardsley Park	2.4		x		x				x	x						
Bian Park		4.2								x								
Bristol Park*		1.3				x				x								
Clark Park		4.0		x		x				x	x			x	x			
Commissioners Park		20.0			x	x				x	x							
Davidson Park		1.3				x				x								
Eisner Park		4.9		x		x		x	x	x	x			x				
Garden Hills Park		4.5		x		x				x			x					
Glenn Park		2.4			x	x				x	x							
Hallbeck Park		6.0			x													
Hazel Park		4.9		x		x					x	x		x				
Henry Michael Park		2.3				x				x	x							
Heritage Park		41.6						x	x									
Human Kinetics Park*		8.9							x		x			x		x		
Johnston Park		15.1		x		x				x		x		x				
Mattis Park		22.3			x						x							
Mayfair Park		2.1		x		x					x							
Meadows Square Park		1.0		x							x							
Millage Park		2.5		x	x	x					x							
Morrissey Park		19.0		x	x	x					x			x	x			
Mullikin Park		3.3		x	x	x					x							
Noel Park		10.8				x					x			x				
Powell Park		8.0		x	x	x					x	x						
Robeson Meadows West Detention Park		19.5																
Robeson Meadows West Park		2.0		x		x					x							
Robeson Park [†]		24.1		x		x					x			x				
Scott Park	3.9			x	x		x			x	x							
Sunset Ridge Park	19.4		x	x	x		x	x	x	x		x	x	x				
Toalson Park	7.7		x	x	x					x	x							
Turnberry Ridge Park	6.1		x	x	x					x	x				x			
Washington Park	3.8									x	x				x			
Wesley Park	2.8				x					x	x							
Wisegarver Park	2.8									x			x					

* Managed, but not owned by the District

[†] Partially owned by the District

Natural Areas

Natural areas can help foster an environmental aesthetic, create learning landscapes which recreate native habitats, and provide environmental benefits. These areas demonstrate a landscape resembling pre-European settlement. Prior to European settlement, “over half of Illinois, approximately 20 million acres was covered by flat to rolling tallgrass prairie.”

Establishing natural areas on heavily degraded sites takes time and effort. Transforming or restoring an area that has been disconnected from any natural system requires specialized, ongoing care and maintenance. Since establishing the position of Natural Areas Coordinator in 2014 within the Horticulture Department, this effort has been greatly enhanced.

Natural areas have enjoyed a loyal following and continue to be a draw for volunteers, creating opportunities for conservation education which, according to the *Illinois Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)*, was listed as one of the top four outdoor recreation priorities. “Eight out of ten respondents expressed support for the expansion of conservation education as a mechanism to increase appreciation of natural resources.”

There are four parks with natural areas within the Park District, including Porter Family Park, Heritage Park, Scott Park, and Sunset Ridge Park. Porter Family Park is the only park whose programmatic function is primarily dedicated to passive recreation and the ecological stewardship required for maintaining natural areas. It is exemplar of progressive land management techniques and procedures. Although extensive natural areas are not appropriate for all parks, Porter Family Park plays an important role in the Park District. Improvements at Heritage Park are in development, including an expanded natural area along the lake edge and a paved path which will increase pedestrian access to the natural area.

Flower Islands

The Flower Island Program, started in 1988, provides aesthetic enhancements through the deployment of planted beds throughout the city. This beautification effort is partially subsidized by the owners of the beds, many of which are located on commercial or private property. The current number of flower beds is approximately 230. Apart from their regular maintenance of park space, the horticulture group plants around 100,000 flowers per year. This investment requires a regular watering regiment to ensure the success of the flowers.

The Flower Island Program continues to be viewed favorably amongst residents. In addition to general ‘park landscaping’, the Flower Island Program received one of the highest satisfaction ratings of all facilities or amenities included in the *2017 Champaign Park District Community Survey*. The Park District has begun moving toward a mix of traditional annuals and adaptive perennials. Transitioning to more perennials has benefits in that they ultimately require less long term care and resources.

Arbor

In the last four years, all trees within the functional boundaries of the Park District—over 8,000 trees—have been geo-located, inventoried, and given a full condition report. This database continues to be used on a daily basis by the full time Arbor Crew. The Operations Department plants on average 100 trees a year. Roughly 10% of the trees throughout the Park District belong to the *program tree* project, which allows patrons to make a donation in return for a tree planted to commemorate a loved one, celebrate the birth of a new child, or mark a special occasion. The Arbor Crew continues to adapt to emerging threats to tree species such as the emerald ash borer. Preserving this important resource for the community is a high priority for the Park District.

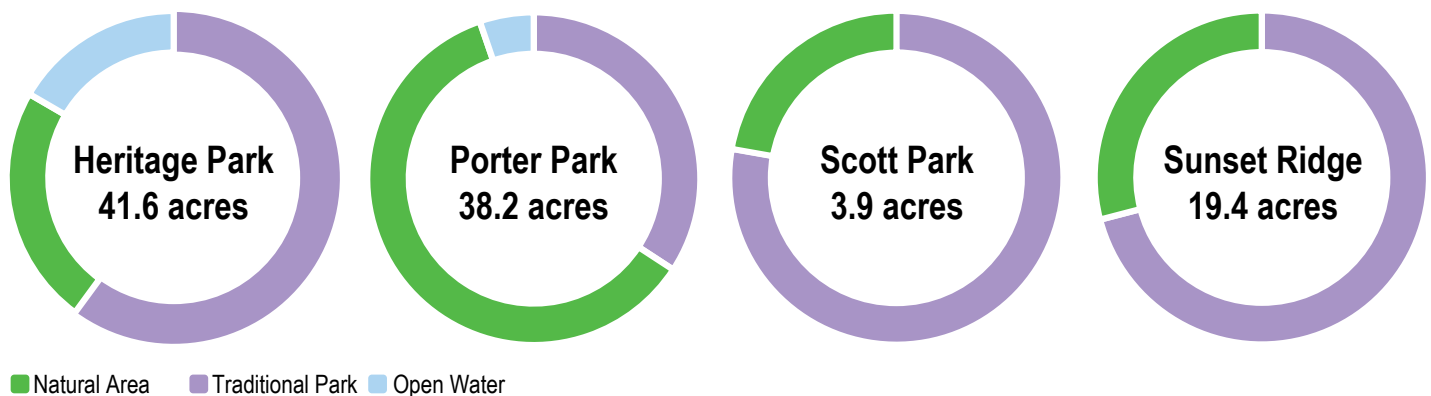


Figure 11-Ratio of natural area to traditional park development in parks which feature reconstructed prairie.

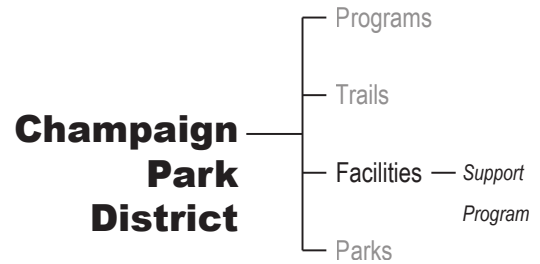
Facilities

The majority of facilities are situated within parkland, however three facilities are standalone buildings: Dodds Tennis Center, the Virginia Theatre, and the Springer Cultural Center. The Leonhard Recreation Center is the only recreational facility the Park District has built in the last decade.

All facilities are owned by the Park District with the exception of shared use facilities, including Material Handling (which is leased from the City of Champaign), the Barkstall Elementary gym, and the Stratton Elementary gym, both owned by the Unit 4 School District.

In 2010, an *Indoor Recreation Facility Conditions and Improvement Study* was produced for the Park District by Architectural Expressions, LLC. This feasibility study looked at each facility from an operations and programming standpoint. Many of the problems outlined in this study with regard to Hays Recreation Center, Douglass Community Center, and the Douglass Annex still persist. These three buildings have reached the recommended maximum lifespan of 40 year replacement/depreciation threshold. While the Douglass Community Center has undergone a number of Capital Improvements over the past ten years, much of it is still difficult to access for mobility impaired visitors.

The *Indoor Recreation Facility Conditions and Improvement Study* also examined the Park District's options for expansion and resulted in the design and construction of the 40,000 square foot Leonhard Recreation Center, which opened in 2014. Additionally, Material Handling, which is used for bulk landscape storage, was constructed in 2012. The land where this storage facility is located is owned by the City of Champaign, but the facility is leased by the Park District.



Facility		App. Area (SF)	Full Time Staff	Parking Spots	Shared Use	Seasonal Facility	Year Built
Community	Douglass Annex	3,811	0	78			1967
	Douglass Community Center	17,058	4	78			1976
	Douglass Library	6,315	0	78	x		1996
	Hays Recreation Center	4,138	6	27			1967
Cultural	Prairie Farm	480	0	61		x	1966
	Springer Cultural Center	24,000	7	24			1904
	Virginia Theatre	30,625	5	0			1920
Recreation	Barkstall Elementary Gym		0		x		
	Dodds Park Soccer Complex	3,473	0	278		x	2001
	Dodds Softball Four Plex	3,685		200		x	2003
	Dodds Softball Three Plex	628	0	106		x	1998
	Dodds Tennis Center	912	2	63		x	1972
	Kaufman Lake Boathouse	609	0	33		x	1978
	Leonhard Recreation Center	40,000	7	133			2013
	Sholem Aquatic Center	6,742	1	142		x	2003
	Stratton Elementary Gym		0		x		
	Bicentennial Center (former Leonhard Center)	12,750	0	53	x		1976
Support	Bresnan Meeting Center	10,409	19	35			1970
	Material Handling		0	0	x	x	2012
	Operations Shop and Yard	5,106	28	38			1967

Trails

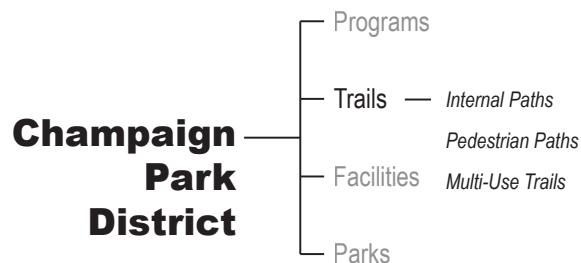
The Park District provides three main types of trails: internal park paths, pedestrian trails, and multi-use trails. Roughly half of the trails connect to either another trail or multiple parks. The majority of the trails serve the neighborhoods in which they are sited; however, there are a few trails that provide connections to other parks and uses, as well as the wider regional trail system. There are nearly 18 miles of trails in total, encompassing 65 acres. Together, these trails provide opportunities for different modes of recreation, improve neighborhood and community connectivity, and help promote healthier lifestyles for Park District residents.

The trails system outside of parks is composed of pedestrian and multi-use trails. These are categorized primarily by width. The Park District *Board Policy 01-08* states that no trail should be considered for either management or ownership if it does not meet an 8' minimum width (with a 20' easement). All 'regional trails' or multi-modal trails must be at least 10' wide (with a 22' easement).

According to the *Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2015-2019*, "agencies with trail development plans indicated constructing more trails than agencies without such plans." In 2008, a joint City of Champaign and Park District trails plan set forth standards for trail widths and outlined areas of trail development opportunity. In 2011, an updated *Champaign Trails Plan* was completed. A Park District specific *Trails Master Plan* was then created in 2017. Like the 2011 plan, the 2017 plan was completed with the help of the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission. All trail plans address trail width standards. The 2008 plan stated that 'internal' paths should be between 6'-8' wide and 'multi-use' paths a minimum of 8'.

The 2011 *Champaign Trails Plan* set a standard for greenways, multi-use, railtrails, and connector trails managed by both the City and the Park District. Greenways are corridors that border naturally sensitive areas with a ditch, buffer, and path, while railtrails run within existing railroad rights-of-way and connector trails connect developments to a larger trail system. Each of these trail types have a minimum width of 10' with the exception of connector trails, which do not have the same traffic as the wider trail system. The minimum width for a multi-use (pedestrian and bicycle) trail is also 10'. The Park District's trails are primarily categorized as connecting and multi-use trails by such standards.

Although generally outside the purview of the Park District, some progress has been made in the City of Champaign with regard to Rails to Trails conservancy efforts, where trails are constructed from former rail lines. The Park District has been in the process of securing access to a connection between Kaufman Lake and Heritage Park, which would formalize what is now an ad hoc arrangement and connect portions of the Greenbelt Trail passing under Interstate 72. This Greenbelt Trail connection would result in a trail between three parks: Kaufman, Heritage, and Dodds.



Trail	Type	Size (acres)	Length (miles)
Ashland Park Subdivision Trail	Connecting	4.89	1.80
Boulware Trail	Connecting	2.30	1.15
First Street Trail	Connecting	5.45	1.74
Green Street Corridor	Connecting	2.08	0.50
Greenbelt Bikeway Trail	Connecting	0.90	1.75
Greenbelt Connector Trail	Connecting	0.64	0.20
Martin Luther King Trail	Connecting	5.65	0.42
North Champaign Trail	Multi-Use	1.66	0.57
O'Malley's Alley Trail	Connecting	1.26	0.52
Pipeline Trail	Multi-Use	5.78	1.00
Robeson Meadows Trail	Connecting	6.54	1.48
Robeson Meadows West Trail	Connecting	7.86	3.35
Roby Trail	Connecting	12.02	1.46
Simon Trail	Connecting	1.02	0.54
Trails at Abbey Fields	Connecting	3.80	0.69
Turnberry Ridge Trail	Connecting	3.26	1.23
TOTAL LENGTH:			18.4



Figure 12-Before and after aerial images of Morrissey Park illustrating the 1.7 miles of internal paths added to the park.

Internal Paths

Internal paths are pedestrian paths within the boundary edges of a park. The Park District has made a concerted effort in building internal paths within established neighborhood and community park property. Within the last ten years, new paths have been added to older parks. Starting with Hessel Park in 2006, paths have also been added to Morrissey, Johnston, and Garden Hills Parks. This has been a highly successful endeavor by the Park District and the work is ongoing. Accessory amenities to internal paths typically include benches, water fountains, trash receptacles, and dog waste stations. The Douglass Park internal path also includes outdoor workout stations. This is a popular amenity the Park District is evaluating for future internal paths.

In 2014, the Park District conducted a comprehensive *Internal Park Paths Study* which sought opportunities for increasing the circulation within all parks. Although this type of largescale infrastructure is not appropriate for every park, we continue to explore opportunities for increasing access to this highly valued amenity. Internal paths are planned for Spalding Park and Zahnd Park to improve accessibility and connectivity to the adjacent neighborhoods.

Internal Path	Length (miles)
Beardsley Park	0.1
Bridgewater Park	0.02
Centennial Park	0.1
Dodds Park	0.2
Douglass Park	0.7
Firefighters Park	0.1
Garden Hills Park	0.3
Glenn Park	0.2
Hessel Park	0.6
Johnston Park	0.4
Kaufman Park	0.7
Mattis Park	0.5
Mayfair Park	0.2
Morrissey Park	0.7
Noel Park	0.1
Porter Family Park	1.7
Powell Park	0.2
Scott Park	0.3
Sunset Ridge Park	0.7
Thompson Park	0.04
Toalson Park	0.5
Town Center Park	0.1
Trevett-Finch Park	0.0
Turnberry Ridge Park	0.1
West Side Park	1.1
TOTAL LENGTH:	9.70

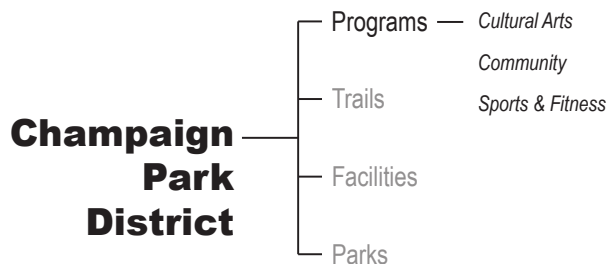
Programming

One of the strengths of the Park District is the quality, quantity, and variety of programs it offers to residents of Champaign and beyond. There are three dominant types of Park District programs: cultural arts, community, and sports & fitness. Within these categories, there are programs offered across the Park District for people of all ages and abilities. Some programs are targeted to more specific user groups, such as Champaign-Urbana Special Recreation (CUSR) and the 50 Plus! programs. However, there is also a wide variety of programs open to larger groups, such as Enrichment for All, Group Fitness, and special events. Programming is organized and facilitated by the Recreation Department, with support from other staff as needed. Although modest fees are charged for most programs, many of the facilities which host these programs are subsidized by the Park District.

In FY2018 the Park District offered 389 unique programs, of which 1,177 sections were available to the community. The majority of programs have a modest fee for participation. Champaign Urbana Special Recreation, which is a joint program with the Urbana Park District, offered 160 unique programs throughout the same year.

Program Locations

Park District facilities are home to the majority of the programs offered by the Park District. Occasionally, programming is located outside of a Park District facility, such as School's Out Days trips to local and regional destinations. All Park District facilities offer diverse programming, but there are some facilities that are more specialized than others. For instance, the Virginia Theatre and Springer Cultural Center primarily host cultural programming, whereas the Douglass Community Center offers both sports & fitness and community programming on a regular basis. Douglass Community Center, the Douglass Annex, and the Leonhard Recreation Center are considered more multifunctional because of the types of space and size of space in the facilities. Leonhard Recreation Center has considerable dedicated fitness space, but it also has multipurpose rooms and the gymnasium can be turned over for community programming.



	Tax Support vs Revenue FY15	Tax Support vs Revenue FY16	Tax Support vs Revenue FY17	Tax Support vs Revenue Average	Average Visitors/Year (2015-17)	Dollars Spent/Visitor
Dodds Tennis Center	\$27,947	\$11,511	\$12,318	\$17,259	49,522	\$0.35
Douglass Annex	\$23,320	\$15,499	\$15,670	\$18,163	9,861	\$1.84
Douglass Community Center	\$149,723	\$165,700	\$174,815	\$163,413	24,594	\$6.64
Hays Recreation Center	\$11,390	\$23,961	\$5,318	\$13,556	7,641	\$1.77
Leonhard Recreation Center	\$38,877	\$135,118	\$166,343	\$113,446	85,291	\$1.33
Prairie Farm	\$77,357	\$72,592	\$70,653	\$73,534	17,366	\$4.23
Sholem Aquatic Center	\$140,846	\$251,083	\$146,386	\$179,438	69,708	\$2.57
Springer Cultural Center	\$186,085	\$166,993	\$195,571	\$182,883	34,532	\$5.30
Virginia Theatre	\$199,970	\$160,454	\$207,038	\$189,154	N/A	N/A

Figure 13-Yearly program facility costs as subsidized by tax support or supported through revenue.

CULTURAL ARTS

Programming in the cultural arts at the Park District is dominated by performance and visual arts. Performance arts include theatre, dance, and music lessons. Youth Theatre continues to be a very strong program for youth participation along with our various youth dance classes. Both youth and adult theatre have successfully expanded to include CUSR. Visual arts programming includes drawing, painting, and pottery. These programs range from one time workshops to season long studio courses. There is a mix of adult, children, and family programming within the performance arts, which makes it an attractive sector for many groups. Individual instruction is also offered for guitar and drums. There are also several special events that are cultural arts focused such as local art shows, lunch hour concerts, and acts at the Virginia Theatre.



COMMUNITY

Community programs offer residents needed services, personal enrichment, and opportunities to gather as a group. Community related programming is often targeted towards specific user groups such as school-aged children or seniors. Youth based programming includes early childhood care, School's Out Days, and afterschool care. There are many community programs for the 50 Plus! seniors including potlucks, fashion events, and regular card games. Although there is a lot of age-specific community programming, there are many community special events that are fun for all groups such as the Taste of Champaign in West Side Park. Enrichment for All programs also offer a variety of options for groups of all ages and abilities such as rocketry and sky-watching events.



SPORTS & FITNESS

The Park District excels in its sports & fitness program offerings. There are a range of both youth and adult sports, 50 Plus! group fitness, and opportunities for CUSR participants. Popular special events are sports & fitness oriented such as the CUSR Cupcake 5K, Taste of Champaign Pie Run, and the Frozen 5K. There are opportunities for team sports for both youth and adults such as weekly adult softball leagues and seasonal youth soccer. Both Douglass and Leonhard Recreation Centers also offer drop-in open gym times for those who may not have the time for regularly scheduled events. First String Basketball and Baseball programs continue to be part of larger community partnerships. Tennis programming is one of the most successful offerings at the Park District; there are a range of tennis offerings for individuals and teams at a variety of abilities.



03 Financial Assessment

In the State of Illinois alone, it is estimated that over ten billion dollars in economic activity was generated by parks and recreation agencies in 2015. According to the National Recreation and Parks Association *Economic Impact of Local Parks* report, Illinois is second only to California in contributing to local economies through parks and recreation. The Park District contributes heavily to its local economy through a variety of means including salaries, sponsoring local events, purchasing services from local companies, and funding construction, to name a few.

Each spring, the Board of Commissioners approves the annual budget which is compiled by staff. The fiscal year of the Park District begins May 1st and ends April 30th. The budget is guided by the Mission, Values, and Goals of the Park District. The approved budget is made public through the Park District website and residents have the opportunity to comment on the budget process during Board meetings.

Revenue and Expenditures

There are two main components of the annual budgets: revenue and expenditures. There are several sources of revenue for the Park District, with real estate taxes accounting for the largest source of revenue. An estimated 71% of the Park District's revenue is generated from local real estate taxes, with the remainder primarily generated from charges from services provided by the Park District and contributions/sponsorships. The Park District also receives some revenue in the form of interest income, special receipts and other reimbursements, grants, and merchandise/concession sales, which together account for 6% of the estimated revenue. Special receipts are revenue from the City of Champaign which include funds from the Kraft property, TIF District receipts, and easement fees.

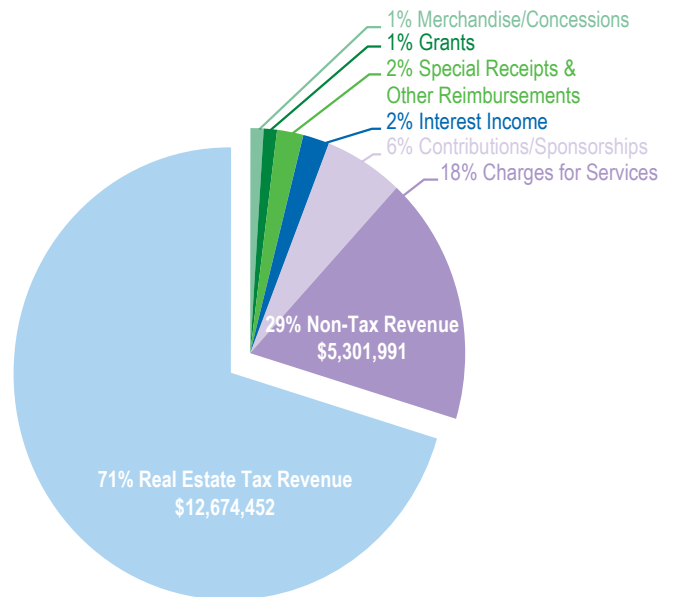


Figure 14- FYE2019 Estimated Revenues, excluding transfers from other funds in the amount of \$6,591,101. Figures from FYE2019 Champaign Park District Budget.

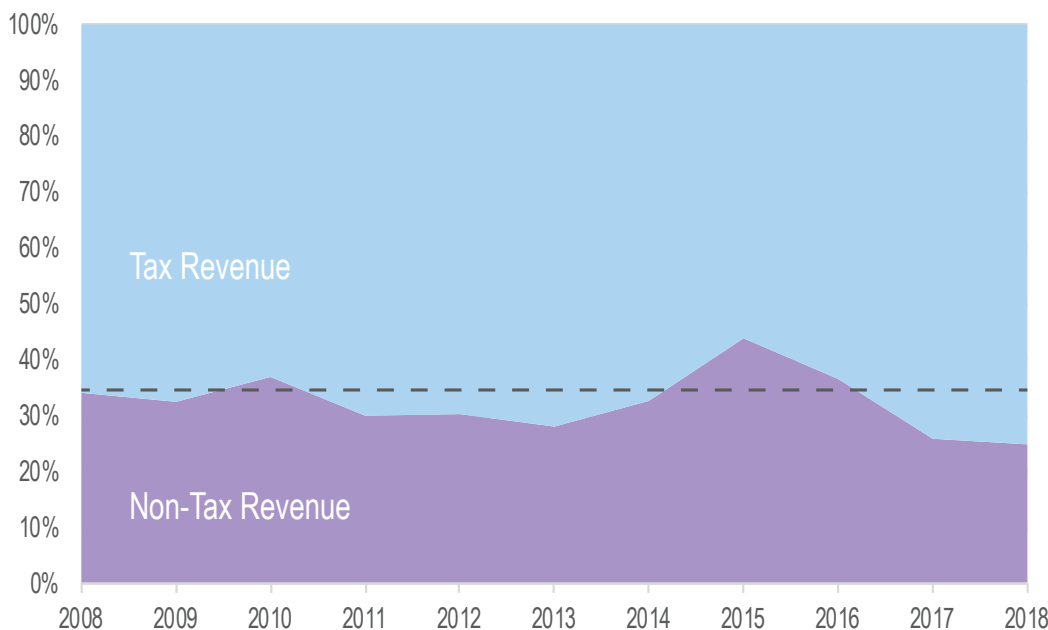


Figure 15-Ratio of non-tax revenue and tax revenue with 35% non-tax revenue target rate highlighted. Figures from the Park District annual budgets.

Relying on property tax for revenue has its benefits and risks. Although a generally reliable source of revenue, property taxes are based on the equalized assessed value of the property. When the housing market is healthy and assessment values are high, generated revenue reflects that; however, if there is a housing market decline similar to that of 2007, property taxes also follow that trend, resulting in diminished revenues for the Park District. As a result, the Park District sets goals to diversify its income sources. In the short term, the source of non-tax revenue should be at least 25%; however, the long-term goal is to increase non-tax revenue to 35%. This increased diversification will help buffer the Park District from potential future financial crises. According to the 2017 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development *Comprehensive Housing Market Analysis*, current housing trends in Champaign have recovered from the 2007 housing decline. Although the housing market is still somewhat soft in the Champaign area, payrolls have improved slightly since 2013 and overall home vacancy rates have declined. A demand in new housing is forecasted until 2020, but construction of new homes has not come close to the boom in the mid 2000's.

Expenditures per Capita

Analyzing the expenditures per capita can help contextualize the yearly budget and helps identify spending trends. The expenditure per capita is calculated by dividing the total expenditures of the Park District (including operating and capital) by the population of the Park District. The average expenditure per capita from FYE2008 to FYE2017 was \$173.03. This figure fluctuates primarily due to changes in the capital budget. For example, the increased expenditure per capita in fiscal year 2014 was a result of the construction of the Leonhard Recreation Center and improvements at the Virginia Theatre.

The National Recreation and Park Association provides the median expenditure per capita in its annual *Performance Report*. The data within the *Performance Report* is an aggregate of collected data from member agencies. The median expenditures per capita of all agencies who report to the National Recreation and Park Association is \$77.32, which is considerably lower than that of the Park District. However, when compared to the expenditure per capita of agencies with a similar population density to Champaign, IL, the Park District is within the reported range of \$66.91 to \$202.42. The wide range of expenditures per capita is due to the varying levels of service and types of amenities provided by individual park and recreation agencies. For example, a park district that offers extensive recreation programming for its residents will have a significantly higher expenditure per capita compared to one that offers limited programming.

The expenditure per capita is a helpful figure because it accounts for changes in the population as well as the breadth of services and amenities offered by the Park District.

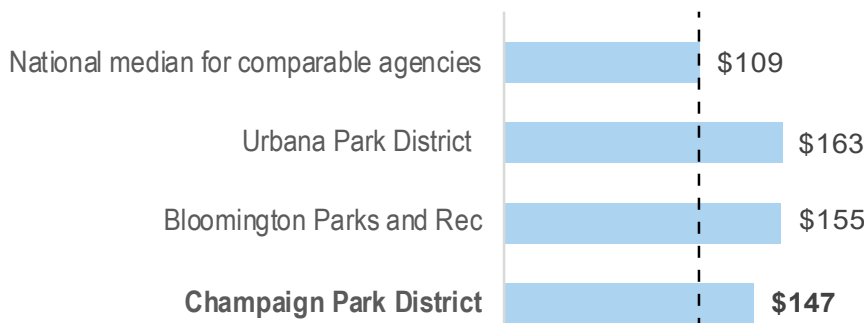


Figure 16-Operating expenditures per capita of comparable agencies as of 2017 (does not include capital expenditures).

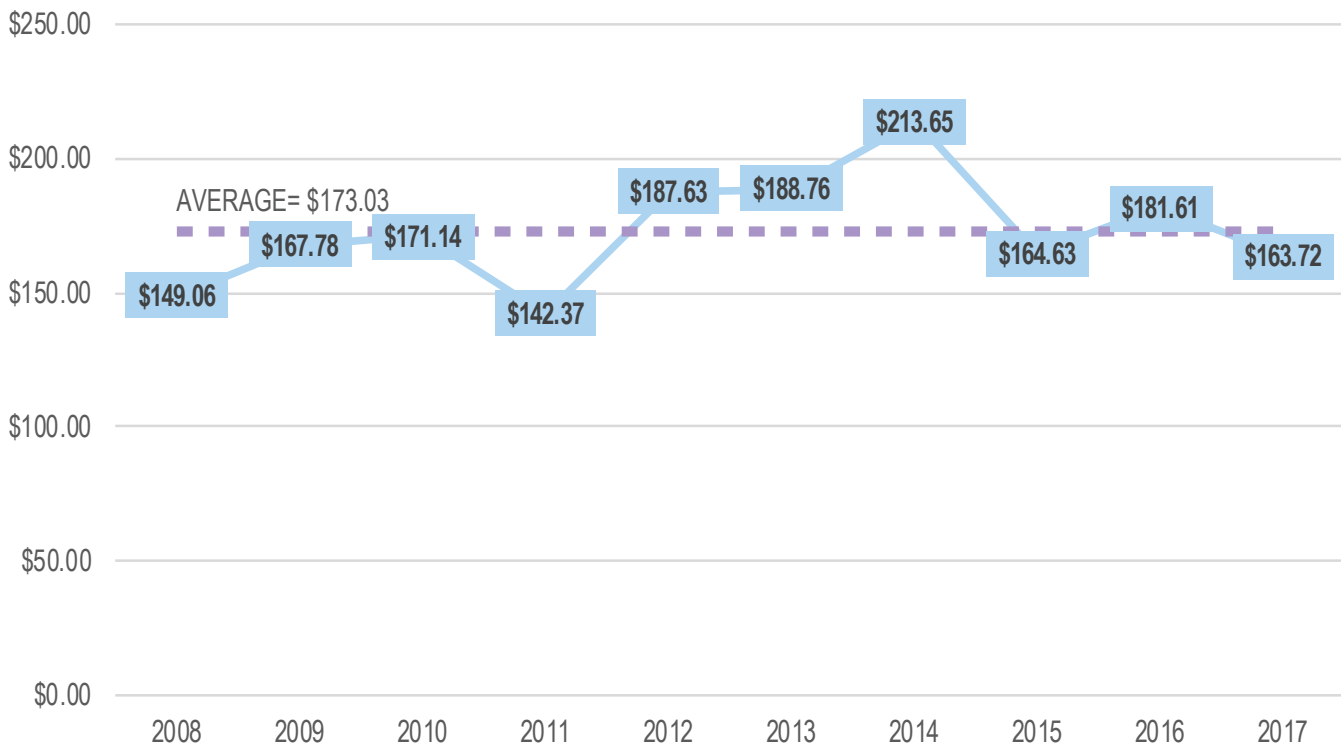


Figure 17-Total expenditures per capita by year with ten year average (includes operating and capital expenditures).

Staffing Resources

Since 2000, full time staffing levels at the Park District have been relatively constant, ranging from 63 to 72 full time staff. The largest department by staffing is Recreation, with 30 full time staff; the second largest department is Operations, with 24 full time staff. The National Recreation and Park Association publishes an annual review of performance benchmarks, which tracks facilities, programs, budgets, and staffing. The ratio of Administrative and Planning staff to the entire organization is consistent with national averages. However, the percentages of Recreation and Operations staff are inconsistent with national trends. On average, the highest proportion of full time staff is Operations or Maintenance. The highest proportion of full time staff for the Park District is Recreation. Over 40% of Park District full time staff are in the Recreation Department, compared to 33% in the Operations Department. This discrepancy is the result of the breadth of programming that the Recreation Department offers and the variety of facilities managed by the Recreation Department.



How the Park District full time staffing levels compare to national averages depends greatly on the metric used to equate Park District to other agencies. When focusing on the population of Champaign as a way to compare the Park District to agencies nationwide, staffing levels are similar to the median. For agencies located within a city with a population of 50,000 to 99,999, the median number of full time staff is 56.5. The median number of full time staff since 2000 at the Park District is 70. When comparing the Park District to national averages using metrics other than population, there is a large difference between the number of Park District staff and national averages. The Park District has fewer staff than agencies with similar operating expenditures, number of parks, and total acres maintained. National averages of the number of full time staff for agencies with similar expenditures and number of parks are over double the number of full time staff at the Park District. However, it is important to note that the Park District does employ a large number of seasonal employees and outsources some work through independent contractors such as mowing select parks and trails.

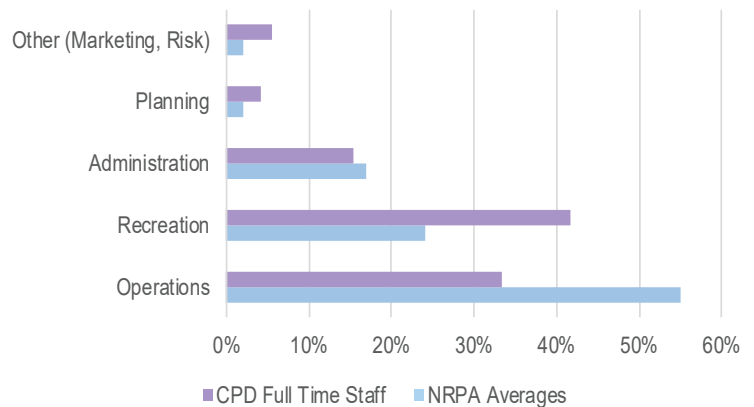


Figure 18-Park District full time staff by department compared to NRPA agency averages.

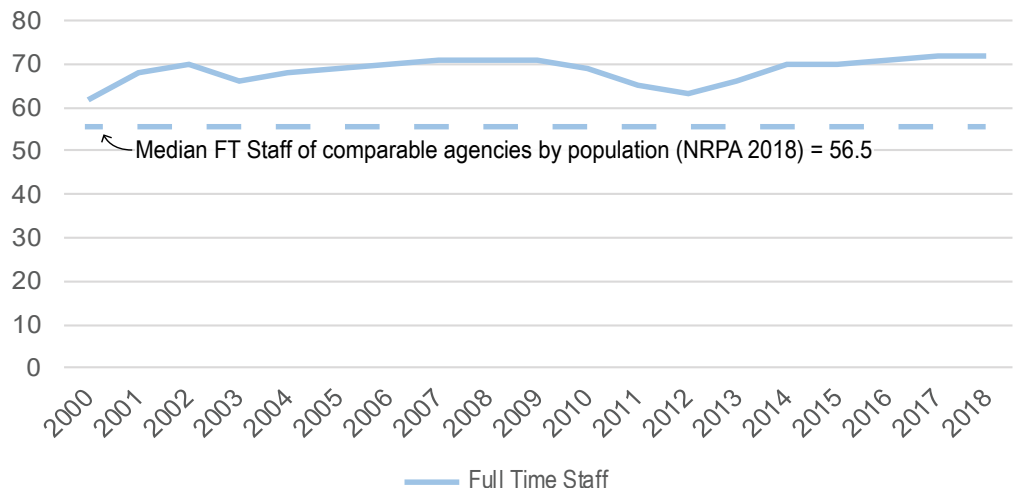


Figure 19-Park District full time staff by year and median for comparable agencies.

Grants

The Park District uses grant funding to support a variety of projects and programs, ranging from open space and facility development to recreational programming and special events. The majority of grant dollars awarded since 2001 have been dedicated to developing and improving Park District facilities and open spaces, together accounting for over \$8 million of the \$8.5 million in total awarded in the last 17 years. Though the grant amounts change from year to year, many of the grants received by the Park District have been awarded by the same organizations and programs such as the City of Champaign, Champaign Rotary, the Illinois Association of Park Districts, Illinois Clean Energy, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

Other grant awards from programs like the Community Foundation of East Central Illinois, the Illinois Arts Council, and PowerPlay! help support the Park District’s programming efforts. These awards have been used to support educational and community programs by covering the cost of program supplies and scholarships for residents to participate in programs beyond their financial means.

Pursuing grant funding opportunities for parks, facilities, and programs is a useful way for the Park District to supplement its non-tax revenue and support projects that might otherwise not be possible. However, grant award amounts and programs are subject to change with political and financial trends. Adjustments in program budgets or the dissolution of entire programs can mean that grant opportunities previously relied upon for parks, facilities, or programs might be inaccessible for a given year or any foreseeable amount of time. The competitiveness of grant programs can also affect the Park District’s ability to secure grant funding, so it is important that grants are not considered a predictable and steady source of revenue despite the many financial opportunities they often present for the Park District.

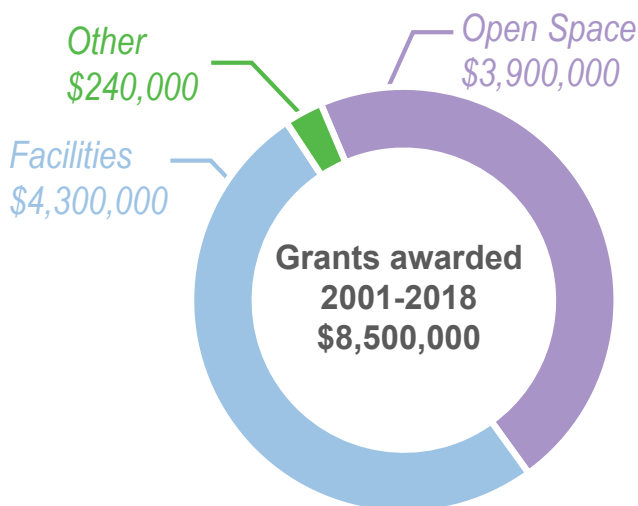


Figure 20-Grant award distribution from 2001-2018 by award category. Grants supporting Park District programs included in “Other”.

Champaign Parks Foundation

The Champaign Parks Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charitable non-profit which provides the Park District with philanthropic support. The Foundation regularly supports Park District efforts such as playground renovations, tree plantings, environmental programming, and program scholarships. Recent fundraising campaigns that have benefited the Park District include those dedicated to securing donations for the Martens Center in Human Kinetics Park, the “new” Leonhard Recreation Center in Centennial Park, and the Virginia Theatre renovations.

The Foundation was established in 2005 and is overseen by a Board of Trustees, which includes a Park District Commissioner liaison, the Executive Director of the Park District, and the Park District Treasurer. Since its inception, the Foundation has donated over three million dollars to the Park District.

Capital Improvements

The Park District’s *Capital Improvement Plan* describes the proposed improvements for the upcoming fiscal year as well as a proposed budget for the following five fiscal years. In order for a project to be considered a “Capital” Improvement, the budgeted costs must exceed \$5,000 and have a useful life of over two years. Examples of Capital Improvements include new facility construction, building renovations, park improvements, or investments in operational machinery.

In the last ten years, the Park District has completed a number of exciting capital developments. The Park District replaced the aging former Leonhard Recreation Center in Centennial Park with a new facility, the “new” Leonhard Recreation Center. This new facility allows the Park District to provide quality community and sports & fitness programming at an affordable cost to the community. The Park District has also enhanced its cultural programming by renovating the historic Virginia Theatre, which hosts numerous Park District programs, movie screenings, and concerts. The playground at Douglass Park was overhauled and a splash pad was added to the park as an additional amenity. The aging splash pad and playground at Hessel Park were also renovated. Several parks have been added to the Park District, including Human Kinetics Park, Commissioners Park, and Henry Michael Park. These updates in facilities and parks help ensure that the Park District is continuing to provide quality amenities that support programming and patron experience in the parks.



04 Demographics and Trends

Champaign, Illinois, home of the Park District, is a growing university town with historic, established neighborhoods, new growth, a bustling downtown, and passionate residents. The Park District functionally shares its boundaries with the City of Champaign. Champaign, IL has an estimated population of 87,432 as of July 1, 2017. The Park District encompasses roughly 23 square miles. Champaign is considered an “urbanized area” by the United States Census Bureau because the population is over 50,000 people. Major employers include the University of Illinois, Kraft Foods, OSF HealthCare and the regional hospital system, Carle. Champaign has its own public school district, Unit 4, as well as a successful community college, Parkland College. Many students and young professionals get their start in Champaign and then emigrate. However, there are many stable, established neighborhoods with lifelong residents as well.

Demographics

The population characteristics, or demographics, of Champaign affect land acquisition, programming, and location of various amenities. Compared to the demographics of the State of Illinois, there is a higher percentage of the population in Champaign between the ages of 18-64. This is most likely due to the location of the University of Illinois; many students reside within the City of Champaign. There are 33,432 households in the City of Champaign, with 2.3 persons per household. This figure is slightly lower than the number of persons per household for the State of Illinois at 2.61. The City of Champaign is a growing community. There was a 7.6% increase in population in Champaign since the 2010 census, compared to a 0.7% decline in population for the State of Illinois. Also likely due the transient nature of college towns, there is a relatively high rate of turnover in housing in Champaign compared to the State of Illinois. Only 70.7% of individuals live in the same house they did a year ago compared to 86.9% for the State of Illinois.

Age Range	Percent of Population in Champaign	Percent of Population in Illinois
0-4 years old	5.5%	6.0%
0-17 years old	16.9%	22.6%
18-64 years old	68.7%	56.2%
65 years and older	8.9%	15.2%

Figure 21-City of Champaign Population by Age as compared to the population by age in the State of Illinois. Data provided by the US Census Bureau for the year 2010.



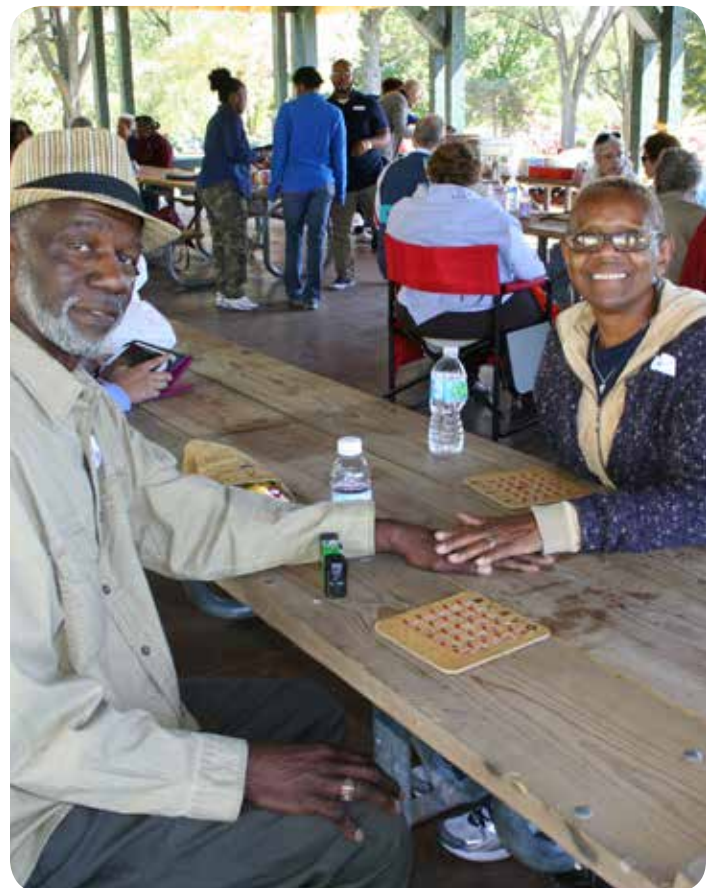
Year Range	Percent of Population Growth in Champaign	Percent of Population Growth in Illinois
2010-2018	+7.6% 	-0.7% 

Figure 22-Population changes in Champaign, IL compared to the State of Illinois since the 2010 census. Data provided by the US Census Bureau.

Changing Population

Local factors affect the makeup of Champaign, Illinois; however, there are also larger demographic shifts anticipated throughout the United States according to the United States Census Bureau 2014 National Projections. Due to declines in fertility rates and net immigration, it is expected that the rate of population growth will slow down over the next few decades. As baby boomers age, the overall demographics of the nation will shift. Currently, 15% of the population is over 65, by 2030 that number will grow to 21%. Although the major effects of this demographic shift may not be seen in full force until after the 2019 Comprehensive Plan expires, anticipating a population shift will help ensure that the appropriate amenities and programs are offered for an evolving community.

Not only are the age demographics of the population expected to shift, but also the racial makeup. By 2020, it is forecasted that the United States will evolve into a “majority-minority” nation, meaning that no one race will make up more than 50% of the national population. The fastest growing races are “two or more races,” Asian, and Hispanic. Increasing diversity may have an influence on trends in recreation and desired park amenities. According to the National Equity Atlas, from 2000 to 2015, the percentage of minorities in Champaign increased 10% between 2000 and 2015. It will be important for the Park District to stay abreast of these changes by soliciting feedback from the community and following industry trends.



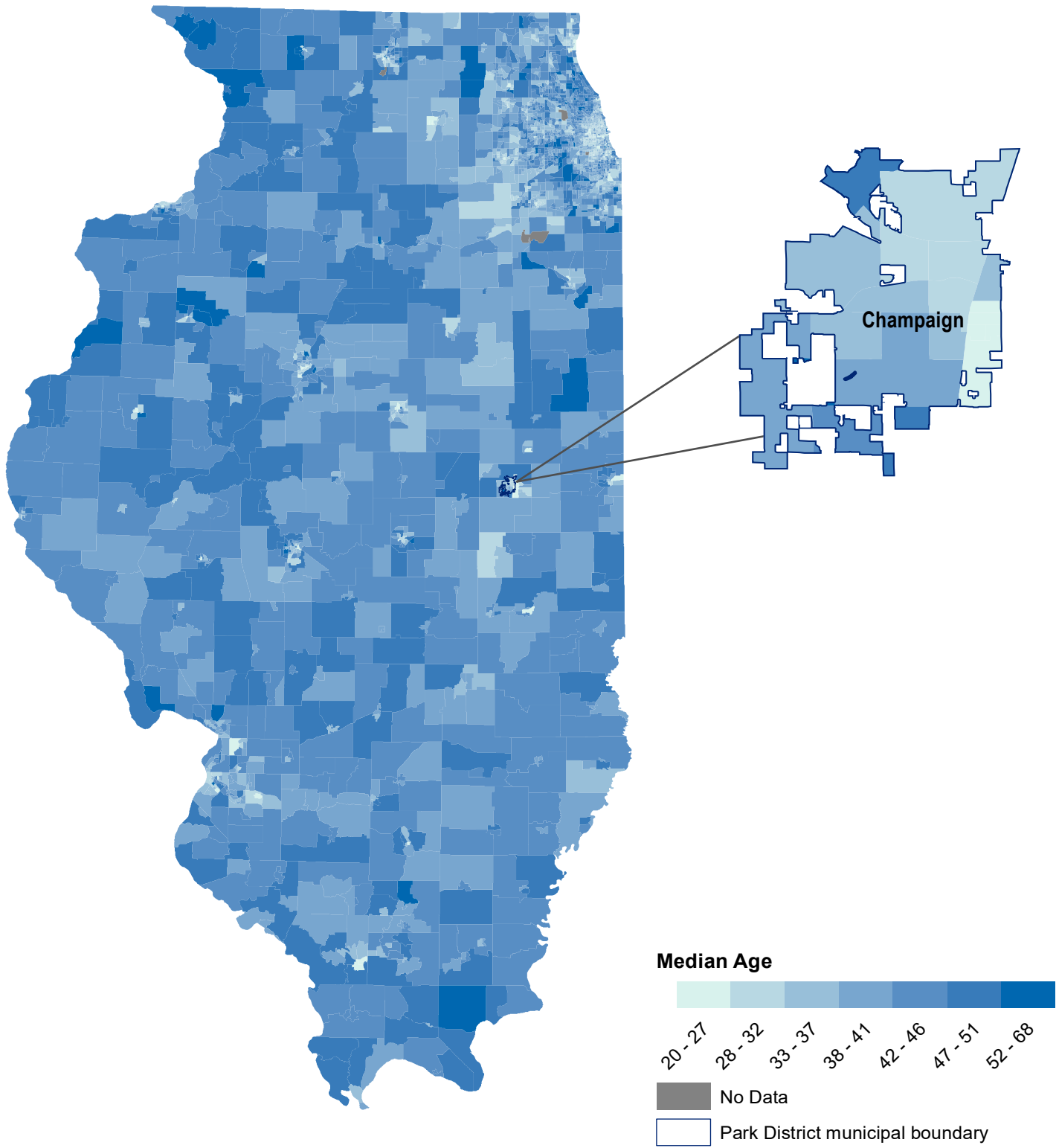


Figure 23-Median age in Illinois by census tract. Source: US Census American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2013-2017.

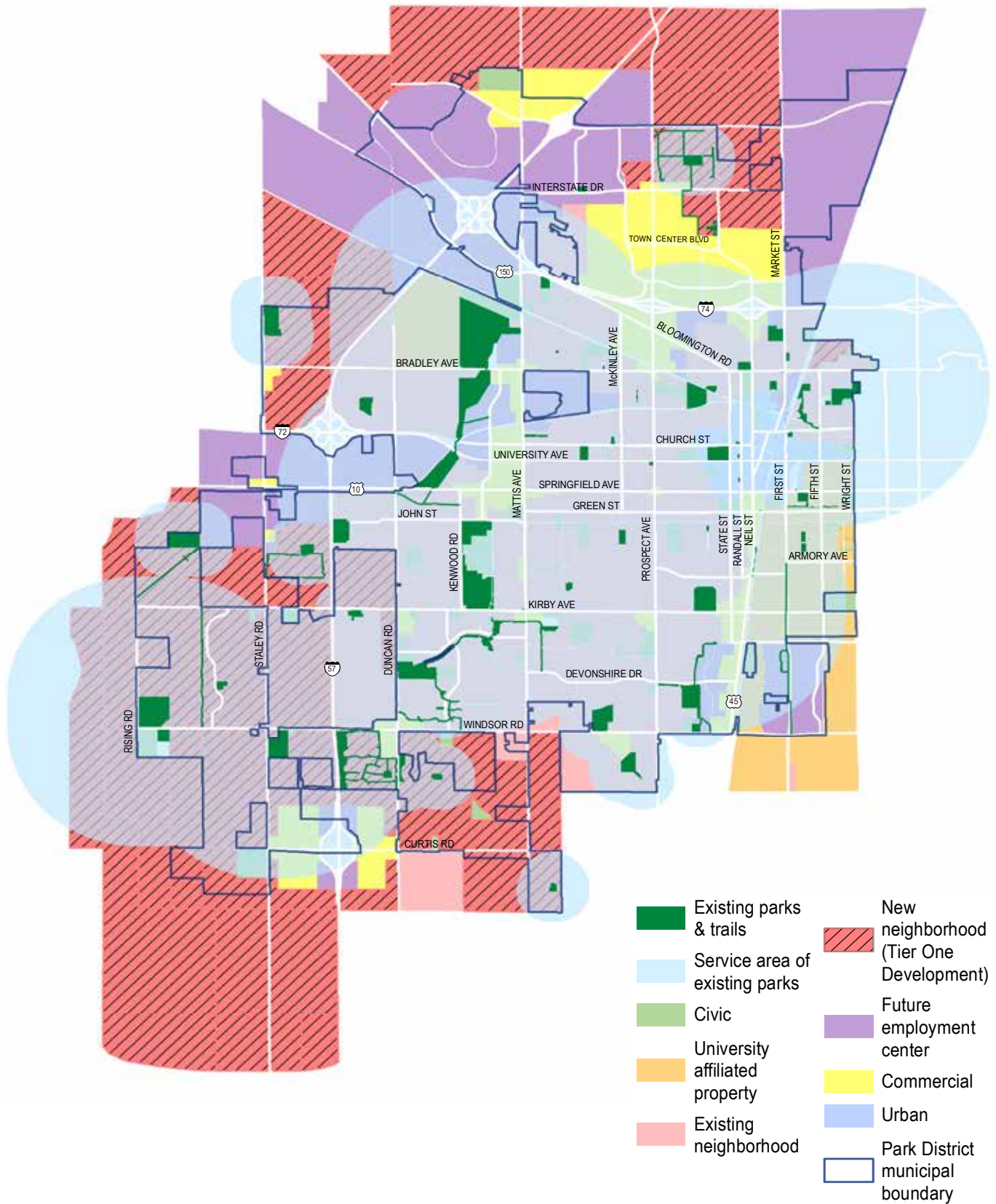


Figure 24-Highlight of residential growth areas delineated in the *Champaign Tomorrow* “Future Land Use Map” that lie outside of existing service areas of mini, neighborhood, and community parks.

Anticipating District Expansion

As the City of Champaign grows both in population and in area, it is important to ensure that land acquisition is aligned with future land use maps. It is also important to consider access to existing parks and trails when evaluating park expansion. “New neighborhoods” north of Interstate 74 would not have direct access to existing parks south of the Interstate, despite their proximity. In comparison, “new neighborhoods” in Southwest Champaign have

access to existing parks such as Zahnd Park and Porter Family Park. As a precedent for anticipatory growth, Hessel Park was founded in 1918; however, much of the surrounding neighborhood was not developed until the early 1950’s. Although Hessel Park at one time was a park in the middle of nowhere, by the time the homes were developed, there was a mature park for the community to enjoy.

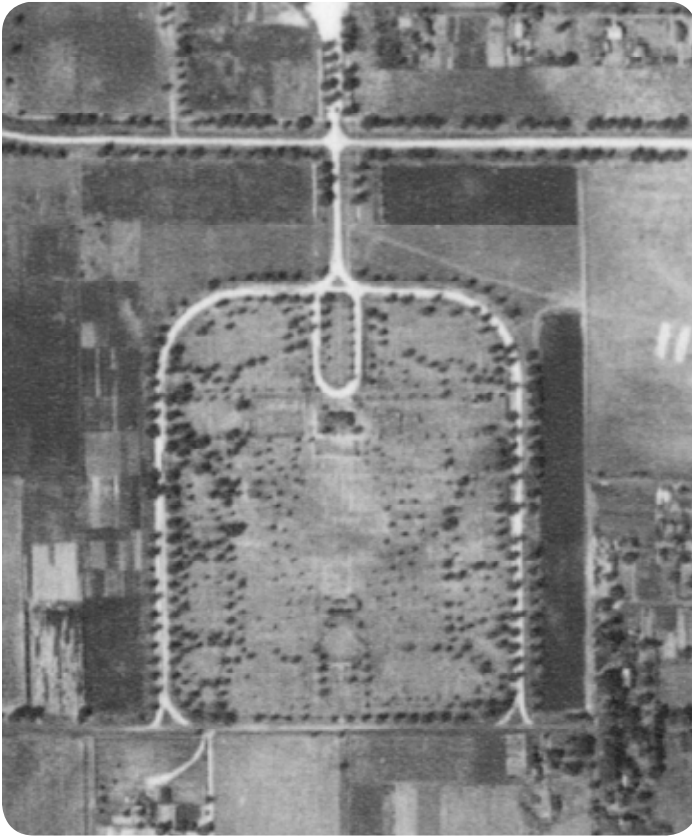


Figure 25-Aerial view of Hessel Park from 1936.



Figure 26-Aerial view of Hessel Park from 1958.



Figure 27-Early view of Hessel Park prior to development of adjacent neighborhood. Photograph by Harold Holmes.

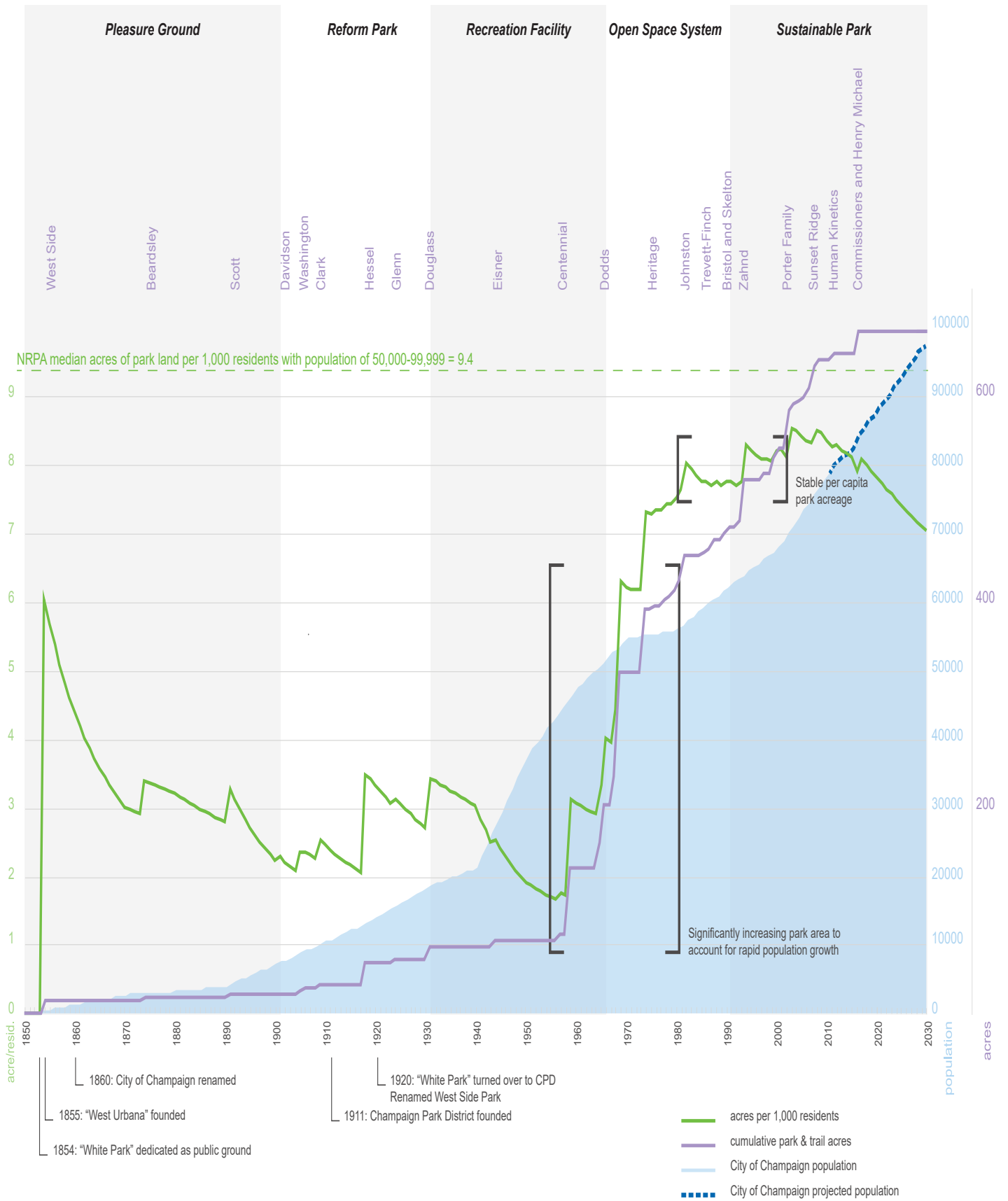


Figure 28-Timeline of Park District land acquisition compared to the increase in population of the City of Champaign.

Meeting Demands

The acres of parkland per 1,000 residents (illustrated in Figure 28) is a common metric used to evaluate open space and was somewhat steady from the time “West Urbana” (now Champaign) was founded in 1855 to the 1930’s. However, in the 1940’s and 1950’s there was a significant decline in the Park District’s acres per resident during a population boom in Champaign. Shortly thereafter, from 1959 to 1969 the Park District added several large parks, including Centennial Park, Mattis Park, Spalding Park, Kaufman Park, and Dodds Park, significantly increasing the park acres per 1,000 residents in a relatively short time span.

The Park District has added three new parks—Human Kinetics Park, Henry Michael Park, and Commissioners Park—since 2010, increasing the park acreage by over thirty acres. However, due to a steady increase in the population of Champaign, the acres of park land per 1,000 residents has still declined since 2010. At its peak, the park acreage per 1,000 residents for the Park District was approximately 8.5 in 2003 following the addition of the 38.2 acre Porter Family Park. The current acres of parkland per 1,000 residents is approximately 8.1 according to Champaign population estimates.

A growing population is beneficial to the Park District in terms of property tax revenue; however, in order to maintain the park acres per 1,000 residents, increasing acreage will be necessary. Forecasting population growth can be extremely difficult because of the many factors that affect migration such as economic conditions and housing availability. Despite the uncertainty in the rate of growth of Champaign, it is worth noting that there has not been a period recorded by the United States Census Bureau where the City of Champaign has ever had a decline in population.

The Park District continues to work towards improving open space accessibility in tandem with population growth and city expansion. Land acquisition funds are set aside annually in order to take advantage of development opportunities when they arise.

Shifting Ideologies

The motivations for providing public green space have evolved over the centuries. According to Cranz and Boland in their seminal *Landscape Journal* work, “Defining the Sustainable Park,” there are five typical park models which reflect the social issues of the time: Pleasure Ground, Reform Park, Recreation Facility, Open Space System, and Sustainable Park. Each of these models had a goal in social reform from public health to recreation services or preventing public riots. Modern pressures such as climate change, habitat degradation, and pollution have triggered the most recent park type, the Sustainable Park. This ideal assumes that open space is not only for a specific type of resident but for all residents (human and non-human). When considering the demands for additional open space in the Park District, it is important to consider general societal pressures in addition to immediate program needs.



Pleasure Ground: West Side Park



Reform Park: Glenn Park



Recreation Facility: Centennial Park



Open Space System: Spalding Park



Sustainable Park: Porter Family Park

05 Community Engagement

The Park District solicits input from patrons and residents through surveys, community meetings, and during monthly Board meetings. For the purposes of the Comprehensive Plan, input was incorporated from two broad public surveys, an internal staff survey, staff interviews, and from SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) activities with the Board of Commissioners and select staff. From these solicitations, several themes emerged: the importance of customer service, a focus on natural areas, increasing walking and multi-use paths, and maintaining high standards of care for existing facilities and parks.

Community Surveys

The Park District periodically reaches out to the community to get feedback on facilities, parks, and services. Since the last comprehensive plan was issued in May 2008, the Park District has conducted two needs assessment surveys. The first was conducted in 2011 on behalf of the Park District by the ETC Institute and the second was conducted in 2017 by the Office of Recreation and Park Resources at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

The 2011 Community Survey was solicited to gauge public perception on priorities for future improvements of parks, facilities, and programming. Of the 4,000 surveys mailed to residents, 807 were returned, leaving a response rate of approximately 20%. Respondents also had the option of completing the survey via phone.

The 2017 Champaign Park District Community Survey inquired about patronage, participation in programming, facilities, and amenities, enrollment fees, and interactions with staff. The Park District serves roughly 87,432 residents and there was a response rate of 11%. Based on the design method of the survey, the responses are

considered generalizable to the Park District service area. Where possible, themes are drawn primarily from the 2017 survey as it is more recent and several large Capital Improvements have taken place since the 2011 survey (including the construction of the Leonhard Recreation Center). It is worth noting that a disproportionate number of the respondents to the 2017 survey were over 60 years of age compared to the population of the service area over 60. In addition, there was less diversity among survey respondents compared to the wider community of Champaign.

Survey Trends

Although the focus of the questionnaires was not identical for the 2011 and 2017 surveys, several common themes emerged, including *general opinions, facility priorities, land use and amenities, and programs*. For the purposes of the Comprehensive Plan, two main points regarding each theme were highlighted per plan, as well as two points which were shared between the surveys. The full results of each survey can be found on the Park District website.



GENERAL OPINIONS

2011

While a majority of patrons prefer online registration, some utilize phone and in person services

Over three quarters of residents would support some tax increase to support the Park District

Shared

Overall satisfaction with programs, staff, facilities, and parks is high

Patrons prefer the printed copy of the program guide for Park District information

2017

Residents feel the Park District is a good value

Residents feel the Park District provides life-long recreational opportunities

Figure 29-Diagram illustrating similarities between the 2011 Community Needs Assessment Survey and the 2017 Community Survey.

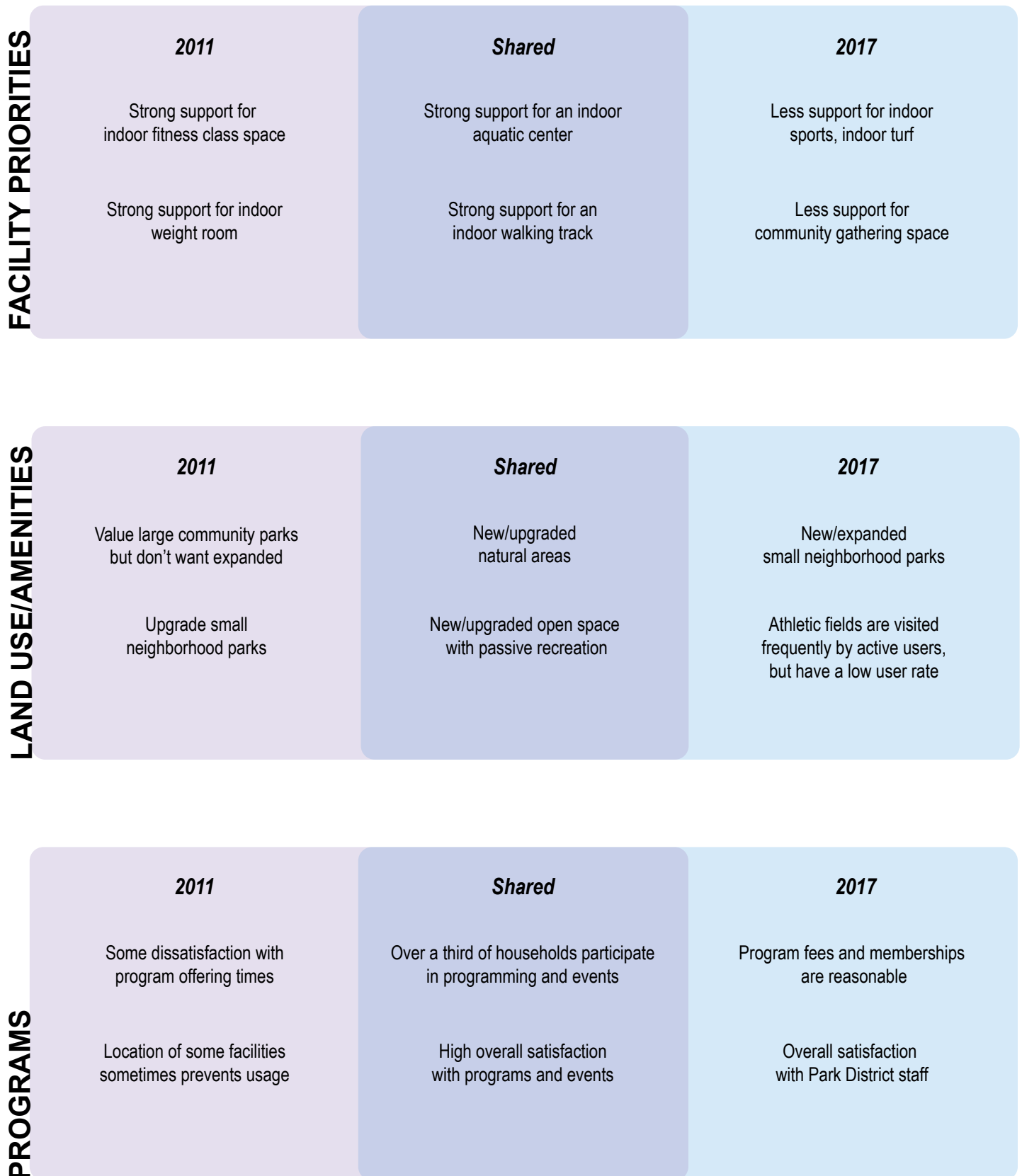


Figure 30-Diagram illustrating similarities between the 2011 Community Needs Assessment Survey and the 2017 Community Survey.

Survey Highlights

The majority of respondents to the 2011 and 2017 surveys were satisfied with programs, staff, facilities, and parks. Many respondents to the 2017 survey made it a point to include qualitative comments commending the Park District for its programs and amenities. Respondents “enjoy the many programs the Park District has to offer” and find the parks to be “beautiful.”

One of the main marketing tools used by the Park District is the *Program Guide*, which is a semi-annual publication that provides detailed information on programs, special events, park amenities, and facilities. This publication is available online, mailed to residents, and is available in all public facilities. Despite increased traffic to the Park District website and a presence on social media, residents still like to refer to a physical *Program Guide*. Similar to the desire to have access to analog and digital information regarding Park District programs and amenities is the desire to have flexibility in registration for programs. Patrons generally prefer online registration; however there are those who use phone and walk-in registration. Retaining options for registration allows ease of registration for those who may not have regular access to the internet or who are not computer savvy.

The Park District strives to provide services and amenities without being burdensome to property owners, as the Park District is largely funded by property taxes. While there was not necessarily a consensus on *what* the Park District should fund if taxes were increased, over three quarters of respondents in 2011 said they would be in favor of some tax increase to support the Park District. Respondents in 2017 also largely felt that they receive a good value for the services offered by the Park District.

The Park District conducts community and neighborhood meetings when possible, especially prior to park improvements taking place. Community meetings were held before beginning planned improvements at Noel, Henry Michael, Commissioners, and Spalding Parks. However, a critique of the Park District which stemmed from the 2017 survey is the role of the public in the planning process. 50% of respondents found that the Park District involves the public in the planning process and only 52% thought the Park District provides enough transparency as a public body.

Facilities

When considering a new facility, the two desired amenities shared between the 2011 and 2017 surveys were an indoor aquatic center and an indoor walking track. The Park District has one existing indoor walking track at the Leonhard Recreation Center,

which has been a popular feature, but does not currently offer any indoor aquatics. In 2011, there was strong support from respondents for indoor fitness class space and weight room space, both of which are now offered at the Leonhard Recreation Center. The support for indoor playing fields, such as indoor soccer with artificial turf, was low among respondents in 2017. In addition, support for community gathering space was low among respondents in 2017.

Generally, respondents are not in support of naming rights of facilities and amenities. Many respondents are also against charging an entrance fee for the Prairie Farm facility, which has traditionally been free for all patrons. Because the majority of respondents are against naming rights or entry fees but also highly value existing facilities, they may also be open to tax increases or fundraising campaigns.

Programs

Satisfaction with and participation in Park District programs is high. Over a third of households participate in either programs or special events at least once per year. Not only is there a high participation rate but there is also a high satisfaction rate for programs and events. 74% of active users in 2017 felt satisfied with fees associated with programs. Overall satisfaction with facility and program staff is also high, as 80% of active Park District users responded as satisfied or very satisfied with staff. The 2017 survey consultants noted that it is unusual for respondents to go out of their way to leave so many positive comments regarding staff and programs and that the Park District should take note of this progress.



Land Use/Amenities

Because there have not been extensive changes in land use or outdoor amenities overall in the parks since the 2011 survey was collected, drawing comparisons between the responses is reasonable. Three themes arose several times in both multiple choice questions and in the free response questions regarding land use and amenities in both surveys. Patrons desire new natural areas and would like to see improvements made to existing natural areas. There is high household participation in natural areas and respondents to the 2017 survey rated wildlife areas/natural areas as the top program or facility to expand. Patrons are interested in both new and upgraded passive recreation spaces as opposed to active recreation (such as playing fields). Patrons also would like to see new and expanded trails and paths within parks. According to the *Illinois Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan* (SCORP), trails are among the most popular and requested amenity in any community. “Eight out of ten (80.7%) respondents to the SCORP survey reported pleasure walking as the most popular outdoor activity in the state.”

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

Strength, weakness, opportunities, and threats, or “SWOT”, helps draw critical conclusions about internal successes and issues as well as external forces that could either help or hurt organizations. Both Park District staff and the Board of Commissioners completed a SWOT exercise as part of the Comprehensive Plan process.

Staff Input

The Park District staff “focus team”, a group of administrators, managers, and coordinators worked on a SWOT exercise in summer 2018. Staff feel that the Park District’s strengths include offering high quality parks and trails, a variety of quality programs, high customer service, and providing a safe environment. Staff also feel that one of the strengths of the Park District is its supportive residents who advocate for the programs and amenities that they utilize and often dedicate their time as volunteers. Operational weaknesses included aging facilities, staff retention, budget reallocations, and agency focus. Staff emphasized the importance of regular maintenance and upgrades for efficiency’s sake but also noted the importance of keeping facilities current to fit the needs of patrons and offer programming. Future partnerships included those anticipated at the future Martens Center, which is seen as an opportunity to increase first time opportunities for the Park District, serve a historically underserved neighborhood, and provide flexibility in programming. Staff are also keen to anticipated demographic shifts as an opportunity to expand senior programming

and to be more progressive in offering multicultural programming and amenities. Service expansion was a unique threat because it is also viewed as an opportunity. While it is exciting to serve new residents, it is a challenge for staff to offer the same level of service to a larger number of people.

Board of Commissioners Input

The Park District Board of Commissioners also completed the SWOT exercise. A questionnaire was distributed to the Commissioners in the fall of 2018 and the results of the exercise were presented during the September 26, 2018 Study Session. Board Commissioners feel that the Park District’s strengths lie in its knowledgeable and passionate staff, the Virginia Theatre, and the quality of special events that the Park District hosts. Like staff respondents, the Commissioners also feel that the Park District excels in the breadth and quality of programming that it offers. However, Commissioners feel that the Park District struggles with financial/operational efficiency, overburdened staff, and a lack of transparency. With these weaknesses in mind, the Commissioners see opportunities for improvement through public and private partnerships, grants, innovative programming and planning, the future Martens Center facility, as well as sponsorships. Staff showed a similar interest in many of these improvement opportunities. The main threats that Commissioners feel present challenges to the Park District are unfunded mandates, a lack of Board/staff innovation, high taxes that limit growth, and recruiting qualified staff.

	STAFF SWOT ANALYSIS	BOARD SWOT ANALYSIS
Strengths <i>Where the Park District excels</i>	Quality parks, trails, & amenities Breadth & quality of programming Customer service Supportive residents & patrons Risk management & safety	Knowledgeable, passionate staff Breadth & quality of programming Virginia Theatre Quality special events
Weaknesses <i>Where the Park District struggles</i>	Aging, outdated facilities Staff retention Natural areas & related programming Funding reallocations Lack of clear agency focus	Financial/operational efficiency Overburdened staff Lack of transparency
Opportunities <i>How can the Park District improve</i>	Partnerships with organizations Demographic shifts City population growth Future Martens Center facility Sponsorships	Public & private partnerships Grants (especially OSLAD) Innovation in programming/planning Future Martens Center facility Sponsorships
Threats <i>External challenges to the Park District</i>	Aging facilities & infrastructure Service expansion with limited funds Competition from other agencies/facilities Recruiting qualified staff Adapting to evolving patron needs	Unfunded mandates (especially wages) Lack of Board/staff innovation High taxes limiting growth Recruiting qualified staff

Figure 31-Park District staff and Board of Commissioners SWOT exercise summary.

06 Agency Initiatives

Comprehensive Plans are meant to help guide policy and decision-making without being too prescriptive or inflexible. *Agency initiatives* identify desired future outcomes and help steer future planning decisions and documents. Initiatives should be broad, but specific enough that the outcomes are measurable. The ten initiatives set forth in the Comprehensive Plan should help guide future strategic plans and annual budgets. Each of these initiatives was developed based on the analysis found in the earlier chapters of this plan, needs assessment surveys, earlier Park District Strategic Plans, and community, staff, and Board input.



- ▶ Ensure that parks and amenities meet the Park District's performance standards and support programming.
- ▶ Increase open space acreage, with a focus on expanding natural areas.
- ▶ Promote financial sustainability.
- ▶ Promote active, healthy living and wellness.
- ▶ Expand existing trail system to improve connectivity.
- ▶ Ensure equitable access to parks, facilities, and programming across the Park District.
- ▶ Maintain high standards for customer service.
- ▶ Improve environmental sustainability and resource conservation efforts.
- ▶ Enhance existing partnerships while developing new partnerships to improve overall performance of the Park District.
- ▶ Promote and encourage public input.

► **Ensure that parks and amenities meet the Park District’s performance standards and support programming.**

The Park District is recognized as an industry leader, including being a past recipient of the National Recreation and Park Association’s Gold Medal awards, which are awarded to agencies that demonstrate excellence in planning, resource management, and service provision. Recent investments in the Leonhard Recreation Center, Douglass Park, the Douglass Community Center, Dodds Park, the Virginia Theatre, and Hessel Park demonstrate the level of quality desired and expected by the Park District’s residents. Encouraging an ethic of *taking care of what we have* is important for ensuring that existing facilities, trails, and parks are well maintained and are scheduled for regular updates in the budget.

While the Park District has many quality trails, facilities, and parks, it is important to regularly evaluate whether or not amenities and open space meet minimum standards. As of 2017, 89% of respondents of the *Champaign Park District Community Survey* were satisfied or very satisfied with the general maintenance and care of facilities and park amenities. However, periodically checking that existing amenities are meeting the needs of the community and that newer or expanding neighborhoods also have their needs met is important to ensure that the entire Park District is being served. In order to meet this goal, clearly outlining and updating standards is essential. As an example, deficiencies were identified in Douglass Park, which is classified as a community park, in both existing infrastructure and the amenities offered. In 2014, grant and capital funds were used to renovate and replace existing

structures such as the playground and additional amenities such as the splash pad were added. Since these improvements were completed, the new and improved amenities have been popular among the community and Douglass Park has become more of a destination.

It is also vital that the facilities support maintenance activities and provide a safe working environment for staff. The Park District is beginning a renovation and expansion of its shop and maintenance yard, including new storage structures, additional vehicle bays, improved venting for air quality, and parking areas for work vehicles. This major improvement will increase staff efficiency and productivity, while providing safe working conditions for staff.

Maintaining high standards is one of the themes that the public, the Board of Commissioners, and staff all rate as a high priority item. Both the 2011 and 2017 needs assessment surveys found high satisfaction of parks and facilities overall and maintaining existing parks and facilities was among the top five spending priorities in the *2017 Champaign Park District Community Survey*.¹ The Park District strives to provide quality parks and amenities, and now may be the time to slow new Capital Improvements to reallocate resources and manpower to planned maintenance. Doing so will allow the Park District to maintain a standard of excellence while staying abreast of necessary repairs and improvements.

“I’m proud of our Park District!”

-2017 Champaign Park District Community Survey respondent



► **Increase open space acreage with a focus on expanding natural areas.**

Over the next ten years the Park District should plan for expansion of the City of Champaign and the service areas of existing open spaces, including parks. While additional open space within the developed areas of the Park District will be difficult to find and develop, new growth areas in the northern, northwest and southern/southwestern areas of the Park District are prime for identification and acquisition. According to the *City of Champaign Comprehensive Plan*, “more new neighborhoods are being established without adequate access to parks...without a mechanism to ensure developers donate land for parks in new developments.”² There are 8.1 acres of open space per 1,000 Park District residents. Currently, the ratio of open space to residents is slightly below the median reported by the National Recreation and Park Association of 9.4 acres per 1,000 residents for communities of a population range of 50,000-99,999.³ However the Park District is well within the upper quartile range of 5.1-15.0 acres per 1,000 residents. These ratios assume a stagnant population. As Champaign County and the City of Champaign continue to grow, monitoring this ratio will help the Park District ensure the level and quality of service are not compromised with population growth.

As the Park District expands and develops new parks, natural areas will be an important amenity. The Park District currently manages over 40 acres of natural areas and native plantings; yet, this type of land use represents only about 5% of Park District property. With attitudes on sustainable land use evolving to respond to issues such as climate change, biodiversity, and water conservation, it is important for the Park District to continue to evaluate sustainable solutions. The interest in natural landscapes in our community mirrors national trends. According to the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) over 53% of agencies nationwide offer natural and cultural history programs.⁴ Although there is ad hoc programming offered by the Park District, there seems to be support for a more regular natural area programming effort. NRPA promotes three “pillars” of parks and recreation that includes health and wellness, conservation, and social equity. In their 2018 survey of Americans’ attitudes on parks and recreation, 77% of respondents indicated that conservation efforts were an important priority.⁵ Recent community needs assessment surveys illustrate the importance of natural areas and sustainable initiatives to the community. Nature/environmental programs were the highest ranking program priority for community members, with over one in five respondents to the *2017 Champaign Park District Community Survey* rating nature or environmental programs as a top program area to develop or expand.⁶ There are opportunities to enhance existing partnerships to establish this programming, such as the Master Naturalists volunteer groups, the Urbana Park District, and the Champaign County Forest Preserve District. Additionally, there are opportunities to increase Park District

natural areas and access by adding natural landscape features to existing parks and properties.

The Park District has made efforts to include natural areas in new park developments, such as Porter Family Park and Sunset Ridge Park. Many new parks are located on the fringe of Champaign as it slowly expands; however, it can be difficult for patrons to access parks far from the city center to enjoy this type of amenity. The Park District included a natural stream edge in its renovation of Scott Park, located near downtown and the University of Illinois campus, and this improvement has been a popular feature among residents. The Park District is also in the process of making updates to Heritage Park. There is an existing tallgrass prairie reconstruction that is of particular value to the local Master Naturalists group but the remainder of the park has been historically maintained as traditional open space. In order to improve the quality of the existing lake, increase native habitat, and stabilize the shore of the lake, the Park District is implementing a more natural edge with a gradual slope and native plantings.

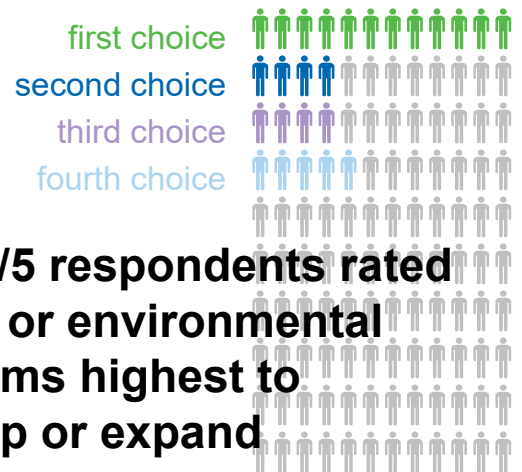


Figure 32-Data from the *2017 Champaign Park District Community Survey*, p36.



► Promote financial sustainability.

Proposed improvements, when combined with previous investments, present a funding challenge. This calls for positioning the Park District with very proactive and systematic practices to ensure long-term financial sustainability. This includes a disciplined focus on renewal and replacement to maintain parks and facilities within a reasonable life-cycle, preventative maintenance programs to head off problems, systems and standards to budget for and monitor results, and long-term financial planning to ensure financial sustainability.

In order to properly account for required maintenance in upcoming budgets, a more exhaustive replacement/maintenance schedule should be developed and updated at regular intervals. There are several replacement schedules included in every annual budget, such as those for playgrounds, vehicles, or flooring, but more exhaustive maintenance schedules for facilities and amenities will ensure that renovations are anticipated and funded adequately. This program should capitalize on existing reports such as the *Park Report Card* and *Facility Report Card*. A renewal-replacement program should also utilize in-progress inventories, such as the GIS tree inventory. Creating and maintaining spatial databases can help day-to-day operations, but they can also be used to inform long term planning. The existing tree, plumbing, and elec-

trical inventories have been successful tools for staff. Expanding this database to additional amenities will help create a better understanding of the condition of parks, trails, and facilities for future planning. A renewal-replacement program should ensure that existing facilities and parks not only are well maintained, but are meeting the Park District's minimum standards of service.

Local support for the Park District is high and national trends suggest that parks and recreation is a valued service. The National Recreation and Park Association reported in a national 2018 survey that 91% of respondents value parks and recreation as an important local government service.⁷ The challenge is managing revenues and expenditures in a manner that provide adequate, equitable services without becoming a burdensome taxing body. The NRPA also reported in their national survey that a third of respondents would support an increase in taxing to support parks and recreation.⁸ Over three quarters of the *2011 Community Needs Assessment Survey* respondents indicated they would support some tax increase to support the Park District.⁹ The *2017 Champaign Park District Community Survey* found that 82% of respondents find they receive a good value for their taxes.¹⁰ However, the State of Illinois has one of the highest property tax rates in the country, so while relying on increases in property tax revenue may seem palatable in theory, in practice it could be met with resistance. Identifying new or increased sources of non-tax revenue is a high priority, but finding successful opportunities to do so will require innovation. For instance, 48% of the *2017 Champaign Park District Community Survey* respondents were against charging entrance fees at the Prairie Farm facility, which is currently free for all patrons.¹¹ The Park District should seek to contribute to non-tax revenues in ways consistent with the needs of the community. Pursuing grant opportunities is one way to do so and, over the next ten years, the Park District should consider pursuing new or recurring grant opportunities to assist with project and program funding. Additionally, revenue from charges for services, contributions/sponsorships, interest income, special receipts, and merchandise/concessions should continue to help diversify the Park District's non-tax revenue source.

 **renewal/replacement for parks and facilities**

 **preventative maintenance programs**

 **systems and standards to budget for and monitor results**




 **long-term financial planning**

receive a good value for District taxes (n=274)



District should consider charging entrance fees at Prairie Farm (n=245)



 agree/strongly agree
 neutral
 disagree/strongly disagree

Opinions of taxes and revenues

Figure 33-Excerpt from the *2017 Champaign Park District Community Survey*, p33.

► Promote active, healthy living and wellness.

One of the three pillars of the National Recreation and Park Association is “Health & Wellness.” According to the University of Wisconsin, health is defined not only by length of life but quality of life.¹² Health and wellness can be affected by health behaviors such as diet and exercise, access to healthcare, social factors such as education, and the physical environment.¹³ Although the Park District is not the only regional agency which offers services related to health and wellness, it does provide programming, facilities, and open space which support healthy, active living.

Organized sport & fitness programs such as softball leagues are a source of healthy living for many patrons. Use of Dodds Park as a competitive sports complex has served the residents and Park District well over the past twenty plus years, but in order to maintain our standards, the Park District needs to continue to invest in sports fields and amenities to maintain their quality. The NRPA reported that in 2018 54% of survey respondents who visit parks do so to exercise or be physically active.¹⁴ While organized sports are a popular source of physical activity, some patrons may not have an interest in organized activities or have other barriers to enrollment. However, there are many park and facility amenities that support healthy living that are not costly or driven by programming. Indoor facilities like the Leonhard Recreation Center provide access to fitness equipment at an affordable price, while outdoor fitness areas such as the workout stations recently installed at Douglass Park provide free exercise opportunities to those who may not have ready access to an indoor facility. The Park District is studying the inclusion of outdoor workout stations as accessory amenities to future and existing internal paths. New active recreation amenities such as pickleball also continue to be evaluated in an effort to encourage more free and unassigned play, sports, and games throughout the parks. Overall trends in recreation evolve and so do demographics; so as baby boomers age, it will be important to ensure there are sufficient active recreation opportunities in the senior programming as well.

The Park District should strategically invest in the park and recreation system to achieve better balance among outdoor and indoor recreation, cultural arts, and community programming with an emphasis on health and wellness. Youth development, physical health facilities and services, and mental health facilities and services were found to be among the top priorities for park and recreation agencies in a 2016 NRPA report.¹⁵ Access to public parks, trails,

facilities, and programs is integral to encouraging healthy living in the community through both organized and unassigned activities.

A 2018 *County Health Rankings Report* lists Champaign County as 41st of 102 counties in Illinois when it comes to health outcomes based on health behaviors, clinical care, social and economic factors, and the physical environment. The survey suggests that investments in early childhood education and fostering a social connection within communities are two of the top approaches to consider for improving community health outcomes. The Park District offers programs and services directly related to early childhood education and establishing social connections, and should continue to support these efforts to promote community-wide healthy living.

Other opportunities for health and wellness exist through the Park District’s cultural arts and community program offerings. Cultural arts programs in theatre, dance, pottery, music, and the visual arts bring community members together through creative endeavors while providing opportunities to acquire new skills. Community programs such as Enrichment for All, School’s Out Days, and 50 Plus! also promote health and wellness for community members of all ages through seasonal and year-round activities and events. Additionally, the Champaign-Urbana Special Recreation Program offers inclusive after school, sports, camp, and social programs for residents with special needs. These programs expose participants to new areas of interest, help them make new friends, and teach participants lifelong skills that go hand-in-hand with healthy leisure habits.



► **Expand existing trail system to improve connectivity.**

Trails and paths continue to be one of the highest valued recreational amenities of the community. They improve accessibility, help create safer conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists, and offer intergenerational recreational opportunities. There is no shortage of planning documents to provide guidance on trail improvements or expansion. The Park District has worked closely with the Regional Planning Commission and City of Champaign on several trails plans, including the *2011 Champaign Trails Plan*, which provides a common vision for a well-connected trail system throughout the community. The Park District has also produced internal trails plans such as the *Champaign Park District Internal Park Paths Study* of 2014, looking at the feasibility of adding paths within existing park boundaries, and the *Champaign Park District Trails 5 Year Action Plan*, which prioritizes recommendations of earlier studies.

In recent years, the Park District has focused its efforts on expanding internal park paths. However, per the *Internal Park Paths Study*, most high priority internal paths have been constructed or are already accounted for in upcoming years in the Capital Improvements Plan. At this juncture, it is recommended that the focus be shifted to improving existing trails and expanding trails. While the Park District has 17.9 miles of trails, many existing trails lack connectivity and others are too narrow to be functional as multi-use trails, i.e., for both bicyclists and pedestrians. Improving overall trail connectivity will encourage healthy activities such as jogging, bicycling and walking, will promote safe pedestrian commuting, and encourage residents to walk or bike to parks. Continuing to work with the City of Champaign Planning Department and the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission will improve the pedestrian and bike circulation throughout the City of Champaign as well as Champaign County.

Some trail developments are currently underway. The Park District is working with the Carle Foundation Hospital and the City of Champaign

on a 10' wide loop trail system located at the "Carle at the Field Development" in Southwest Champaign. The trail will provide extensive recreational opportunities, connect with the proposed Zahnd Park pathway system, and connect to a future pedestrian bridge to cross Interstate 57. The trail will also provide first time opportunities for visitors to the development, which includes clinics, administrative offices, and a hotel. Additionally, the Park District is working to improve the link along the Greenbelt Bikeway between Kaufmann Park and Heritage Park. The existing path follows a rail line in an underpass below Interstate 72. The Park District is making renovations to improve safety, accessibility, and user experience on the trail.

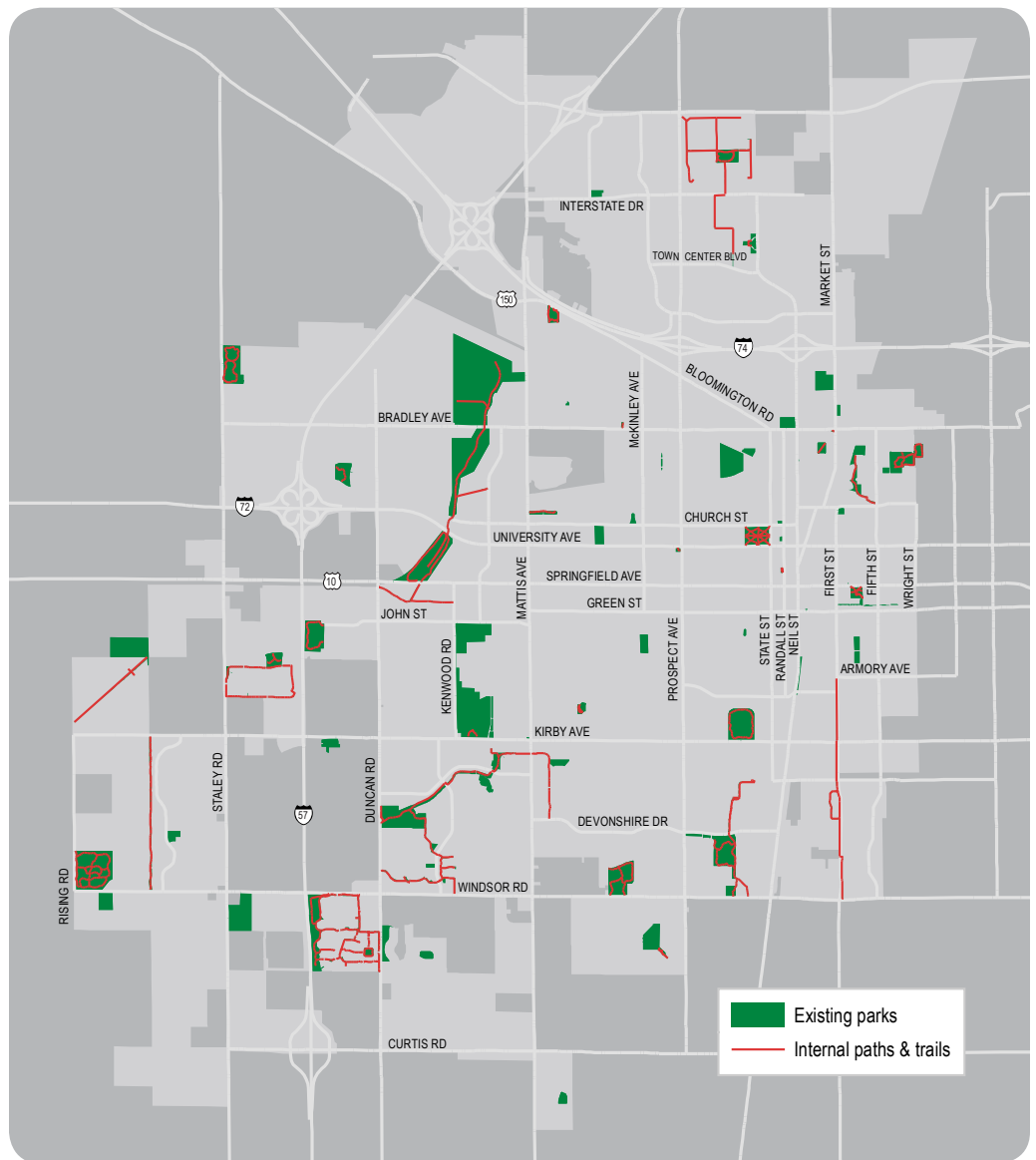


Figure 34- Existing parks, trail routes, and internal park paths in the Park District.

► Ensure equitable access to parks, facilities, and programming across the Park District.

Access and equity are important values of the Park District. Equitable access means that no resident should be prevented from enjoying Park District amenities or participating in programs/events regardless of income, race, gender, geography, or ability. As Champaign evolves, it is important to ensure that new and existing communities have access to parks, facilities, and programs, including those with disabilities. The Park District already takes efforts to ensure that parks and facilities meet the requirements established through the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and continuing to do so should remain a high priority as Park District properties and programs are developed. The Park District began implementing its *ADA Transition Plan* in 2011 and continues working towards ensuring parks, facilities, and trails meet or exceed ADA standards.

Proximity to parks is one way to determine whether a community is being equitably served. When analyzing the service area of the parks, the Park District uses a standard set by Distinguished Accreditation Agency (see chapter 2). Although the population

density of these service gaps is relatively low, which may justify a low priority for expanding park space, the United States Census Bureau tracts at the periphery of town are rather large. Therefore, specific areas within the boundaries of the Park District have been identified as underserved by the following criteria: existing residential development beyond one half mile from a neighborhood park or two miles from a community park. Due to the lack of programmed amenities in mini parks, they were not considered in this analysis. Portions of neighborhoods were identified in North Champaign, South Champaign, and West Champaign as underserved.

To better serve the needs of North Champaign, the Park District has developed schematic plans to construct a community center in Human Kinetics Park, the Martens Center. The Park District will conduct fundraising efforts in 2019 with plans to start construction shortly thereafter. This recreation center will meet the high priorities for adult and youth programming including fitness and other recreation programs, while reducing the need to spend significant capital on existing recreation spaces.

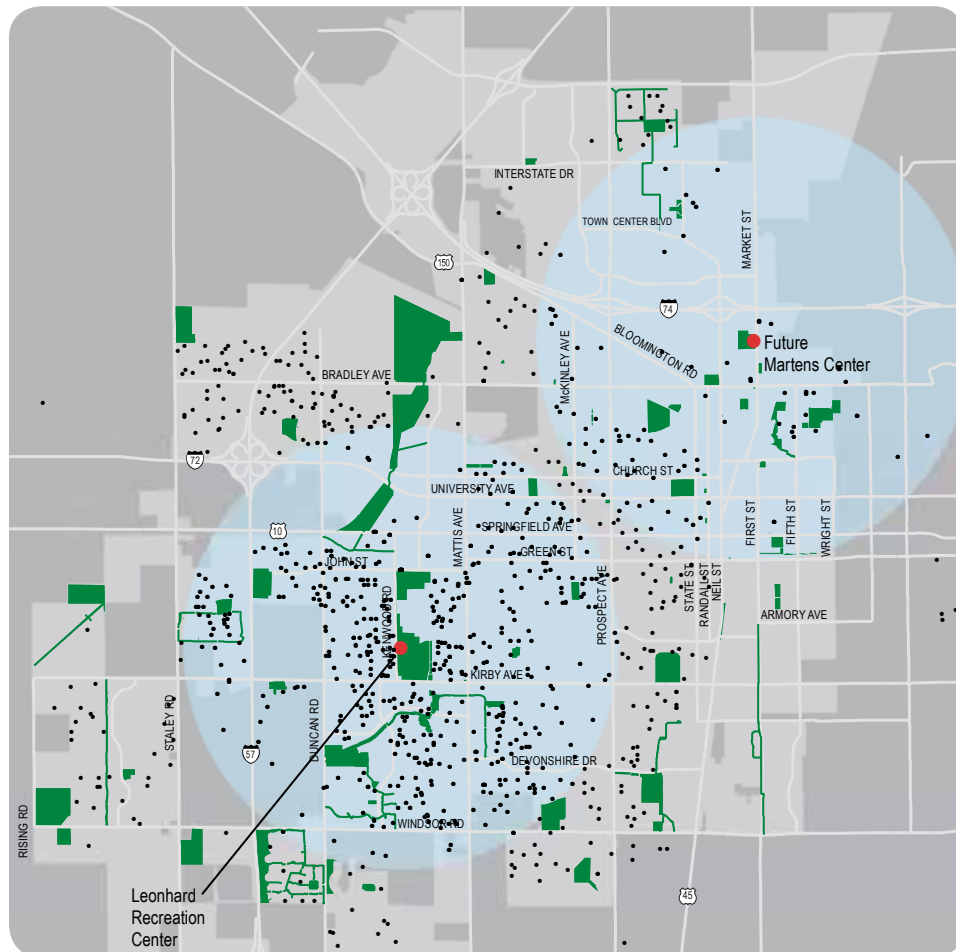


Figure 35- Service area of membership facilities. Service area defined by a 1.5 mile buffer around the facility. Membership information for Leonhard Recreation Center, 2017. 1 dot = 1 membership

Although the Park District recently constructed the Leonhard Recreation Center in Centennial Park, there is still a need in North Champaign for recreation and community space. A membership study of the Leonhard Recreation Center illustrated that over 50% of the household passes for the Leonhard Recreation Center occur within a one and a half mile radius of the center; however, only 8% of pass holders reside within the one and a half mile radius of the proposed Martens Center. Human Kinetics Park is a strategic location for the new center because it is in a historically underserved neighborhood, its service area does not compete with the existing recreation center, and the population density near the park is relatively high.

The need for financial assistance for resident participation in Park District programs also continues to grow, as many families cannot pay for necessary programming like day camp or afterschool without assistance from our scholarship program. As the need to provide financial assistance and free or low cost programs continues to grow, it is important to facilitate donations and identify funding sources to ensure the scholarship program is sustainable.

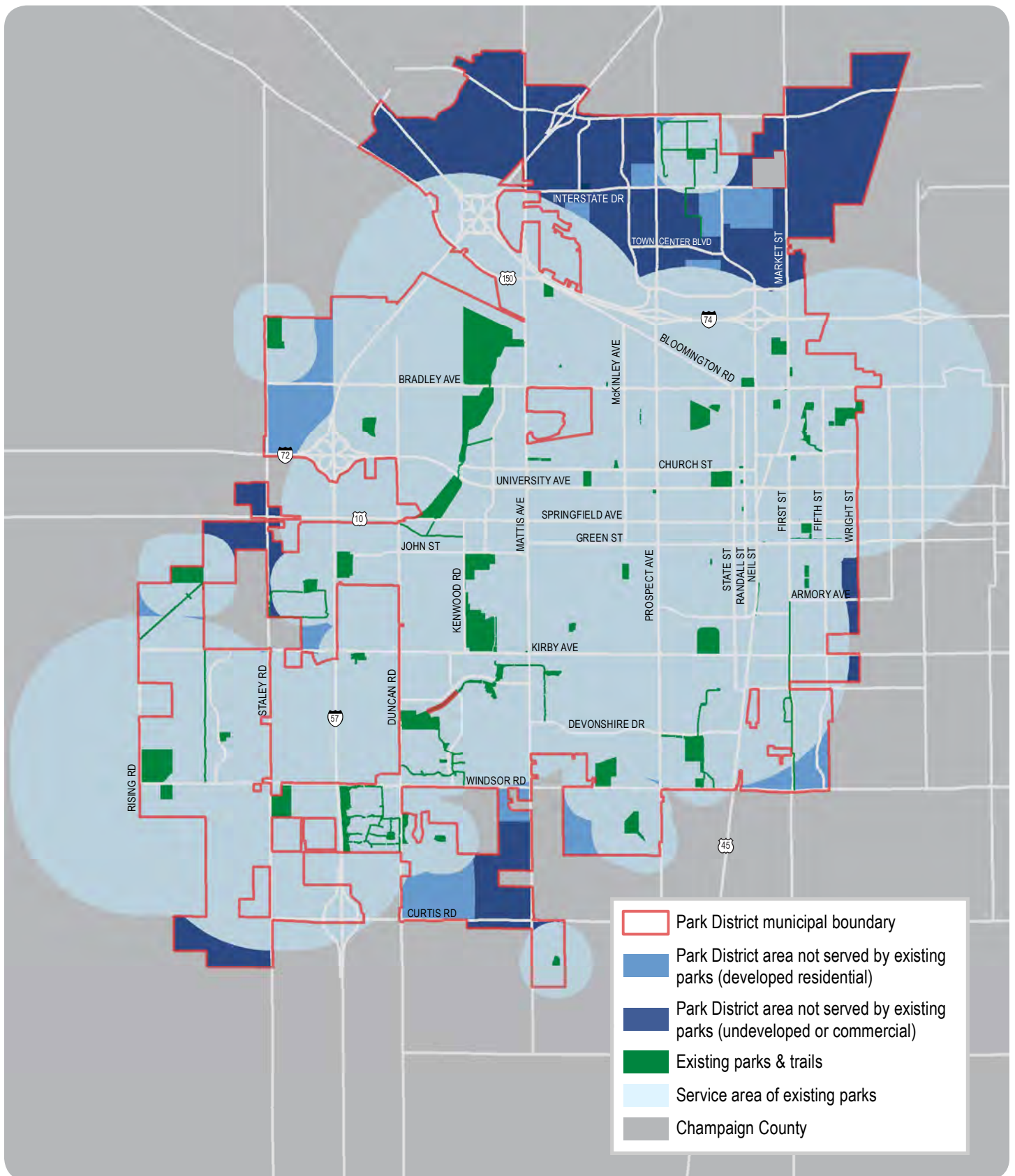


Figure 36- Service area of existing parks. Service area is defined by a one half mile buffer surrounding neighborhood parks and a two mile buffer surrounding community parks. Population density based on 2007 U.S. Census Bureau tract figures.

► **Maintain high standards for customer service.**

The Park District will continue to strive for excellent customer service. Staff should maintain a culture of positivity and inclusion at all times so regular participants and first-time users of parks, facilities, and programs feel safe and welcome regardless of their age, ability, or background. Initial experiences and the awareness of a safe, family-friendly atmosphere shape community perceptions of the Park District and overall interest in pursuing future Park District offerings.



According to the 2017 Community Survey, 89% of active users felt the Park District provides a family-friendly atmosphere and 80% believed the Park District provides first-time opportunities to engage in recreation and arts programs. These first-time recreation and cultural program opportunities were a main tenet of the 2016 Community Focused Strategic Plan and are essential to the Park District's aim to remain competitive with the community.¹⁶ Staff should continue to foster a culture of great customer service to help provide the Park District with a competitive advantage when it comes to program enrollment, facility patronage, and community involvement.

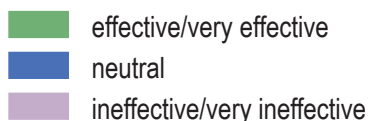
As of the 2017 Survey, 80% of respondents were also satisfied or very satisfied with Park District staff overall. Throughout the next ten years, it will be a priority to exceed the 80% satisfaction rate. Formal customer service trainings could help the Park District meet these stated objectives and improve both internal and external customer service. There are currently a variety of ad hoc customer service trainings available for Park District staff; though, more regularly scheduled trainings would prove beneficial.

"We offer consistent, customer-focused service across the organization. We strive to say YES! to our customers for the right things. We actively seek and value customer feedback. We care about our team members and customers."

providing family-friendly atmosphere (n=244)



providing first-time opportunities to engage in rec & arts programs (n=219)



Effectiveness in customer service

Figure 37-Excerpt from the 2017 Champaign Park District Community Survey, p32.

► **Improve environmental sustainability and resource conservation efforts.**

Environmental sustainability not only improves the ecological function of parks, but also improves resource use. Climate change is expected to increase extreme weather events in Central Illinois, resulting in an increase of heat waves, thunderstorms, and blizzards. Models project that Illinois summers will more closely resemble the current climate of the Dallas, Texas area by the end of the century unless emissions are drastically reduced.¹⁷ Future extremes may increase difficulty in park maintenance and create insecurity in program offerings. Being proactive in sustainability efforts will help offset future uncertainty and conserve resources.

Although environmental sustainability has global consequences, local attitudes also favor sustainability leadership. When asked how effective the Park District is in providing leadership on environmental issues, only 59% of respondents felt the Park District was effective in this regard.¹⁸

The Park District has begun some conservation efforts such as transitioning to LED lighting. The long range cost savings of this technology makes its initial cost easy to justify. Within the last couple of years, full time staff have been transitioning traditional park lighting (metal halide) to LED fixtures and bulbs which can reduce wattage use by 25%. Additionally, future maintenance is

reduced due to the fact that LED lights have a longer lifespan once installed. Park District staff have transitioned Mayfair, Hazel, Clark, and Hessel Parks to LED components and bulbs. West Side Park is gradually being converted as bulbs and fixtures need replacing. New LED lighting at the Dodds Park 3-plex and the soccer complex have been funded through capital budget initiatives.

Alternative fuel sources have also been explored for facilities. The Leonhard Recreation Center was constructed with geothermal heating and cooling. The Park District should continue to weigh the cost and environmental benefits of non-traditional fuel sources for future facilities, such as the Martens Center. Additionally, the Park District's natural areas (see chapter 2) contribute to environmental sustainability and resource conservation efforts by capturing agricultural runoff, managing stormwater, and creating habitat for native species. Natural areas undergo prescribed burns to encourage the germination of native seeds and long term success of native vegetation. In conjunction with these efforts, Park District staff participate in native pollinator outreach to educate the public on the decline of native pollinators like the monarch butterfly and the impact this decline has on Illinois' natural resources. The Park District also has an extensive internal recycling program along with recycling available at parks and facilities.

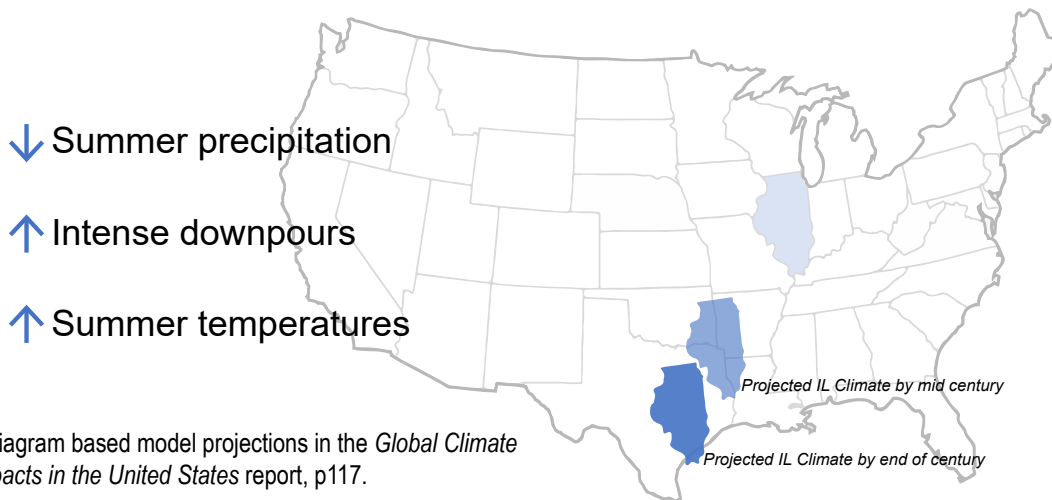


Figure 38-Diagram based model projections in the *Global Climate Change Impacts in the United States* report, p117.

Effectiveness in environmental leadership

providing community leadership on environmental issues (n=167)



- effective/very effective
- neutral
- ineffective/very ineffective

Figure 39-Excerpt from the *2017 Champaign Park District Community Survey*, p32.

► **Enhance existing partnerships while developing new partnerships to improve the overall performance of the Park District.**

In order to maximize services to the community, the Park District frequently partners with sister agencies and community groups to offer programs and amenities. The Park District cannot provide every service to every household; however, partnering with other agencies, companies, and organizations to provide programs, events, and amenities throughout the community helps achieve Park District goals. Partnering with other organizations and agencies is a trend that will continue as more and more demand is placed on the Park District to provide recreation opportunities and similar services. Park District staff and the Board of Commissioners identified improving public and private partnerships as opportunities for improvement during the “Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, and Threat” exercise. Over half of respondents of the 2017 Champaign Park District Community Survey found the Park District is effective in working with other units of government, the private sector, and non-profit organizations, but there is room for improvement on these efforts.¹⁹

While the Park District has many service partners, it has recently engaged with the Don Moyers Boys and Girls Club to provide after school space in the new Martens Center facility. The Martens family encouraged this partnership when donating funds for the new facility and this outside programming will help the Park District expand after school care for up to 200 kids between the ages of 5-12. The Martens Center will provide space for academic, STEM, healthy lifestyles, and arts and music programs in addition to the gymnasium and fitness center. This will allow the existing Boys and Girls Club Park Street facility to be utilized as a teen center.

Partnering with the Urbana Park District to organize the Champaign Urbana Special Recreation Program is another noteworthy partnership for the Park District, and one that serves the wider Champaign-Urbana community. CUSR was founded through an intergovernmental cooperative in 1985 and continues to provide quality leisure and recreation opportunities to children and adults with disabilities. As a combined effort of both park districts, this partnership serves members of the community that might otherwise not receive the same level of service from a single organization.

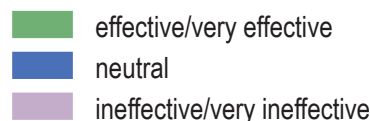


The Park District is also expanding its partnership with the City of Champaign regarding the Boneyard Creek Improvements initiative. The City recently completed a project adjacent to Glenn Park in West Champaign to remove dilapidated homes and construct a wet retention pond. While this project was primarily completed to better manage stormwater in the area, park amenities including paths, benches, lighting, and a shelter enhance the patron experience at Glenn Park. The City is working with the Park District on a similar project at Human Kinetics Park in North Champaign, which the Park District is in the process of acquiring. Cooperation between the City and the Park District improves neighborhood infrastructure while simultaneously adding or improving park amenities. These cooperative initiatives maximize tax dollars while reducing redundancy in services.

Working cooperatively with other units of gov't (n=144)



Partnering with private sector & non-profit orgs (n=135)



Effectiveness in partnerships

Figure 40-Excerpt from the 2017 Champaign Park District Community Survey, p32.

► **Promote and encourage public input.**

As a public agency, input from the community is an important component of the decision making process. Improving the process for collecting public input was an important value for residents based on recent needs assessment survey responses. Public input is also a consideration of several rating agencies and programs such as the Illinois Association of Park District’s Distinguished Accreditation Program, Government Finance Officers Association, and the National Recreation and Park Association’s Gold Medal Award Program. Proper public input is also typically required of granting agencies that fund park and facility acquisition or development.

Roughly half the respondents of the 2017 *Champaign Park District Community Survey* felt that the Park District effectively involves the community in planning efforts and provides transparency.²⁰ Targeted public meetings are important ways in which the Park District can directly engage the public and provide more transparency. Within the last couple of years, meetings have occurred for improvements at Heritage Lake as well as Commissioners, Human Kinetics, and Henry Michael Parks. These face-to-face interactions are great for getting immediate feedback on projects. Regularly scheduled public Board meetings are other opportunities for residents to get involved in the planning process.

In addition to holding public meetings, planning a needs assessment survey on a regular basis will help ensure that the Park District is meeting the needs of the community. These surveys are an integral tool in preparing long-term plans and capital budgets, and provide great insight into community perceptions and trends. In recent years, the Park District has both hired consultants and worked with University of Illinois partners to complete these sur-



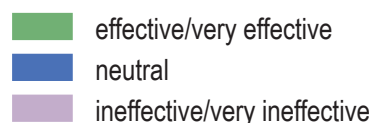
veys. Future surveys should continue to inquire about the general satisfaction of programs, staff, facilities, and parks while including more specific questions regarding potential new amenities.

The Park District Board of Commissioners plays a vital role in promoting and receiving public feedback as the Commissioners are elected by the residents of Champaign and are a valuable resource for input from the community. Commissioners attend bi-monthly meetings which reserve a time for public questions and comments. Information for each meeting can be found on the Park District website for those unable to attend in person. Commissioners also attend community meetings, Park District events, and fundraisers to develop an understanding of the needs of the community.

involving community in planning future projects (n=173)



providing transparency as a public entity (n=155)



Effectiveness in planning

Figure 41-Excerpt from the 2017 *Champaign Park District Community Survey*, p32.

Comprehensive Plan Impact

Parks and open space have been a part of Champaign since its earliest days; the Champaign Park District itself is over one hundred years old. The Park District’s fundamental role is stewardship of public resources—financial, cultural, and natural. The parks and facilities the Park District takes care of and enjoys today all started as simple ideas and plans to be considered by the public, Commissioners, and staff of their day. In this way, the Park District continues the stewardship of finite resources, but also aims to shape our community—our public resources—positively and effectively, grounded in our ability to anticipate and adapt to the changing needs of the future.

The Comprehensive Plan is intended to guide planning, programming, staffing, operations, and capital outlays throughout the next ten years. Comprehensive plans are typically broad in direction; more detailed types of plans follow, helping to define specific projects. A strategic plan, typically issued every few years, uses the guidelines set forth in a comprehensive plan to develop more specific goals related to each department, which are directly related to the yearly budget. Strategic plans offer a calculated approach to make the agency more efficient, effective, and responsive to residents. Correspondingly, park and facility master plans use the inventory, analysis, financial assessment, community feedback, and gaps in service outlined in comprehensive and strategic plans to develop specific plans for parks and facilities. The Champaign Park District keeps master plans for many of its parks and facil-

ities, some of which have been implemented. Some plans are completed by planning staff alone and others are authored with hired consultants depending on the complexity and scale of proposed improvements. The immediacy of plan implementation is dependent on many factors, while the existence of a plan does not necessarily mean that the suggested improvements are imminent. Nevertheless, having a reference plan in place helps prioritize development and may ensure future parks or facility improvements support the goals and benchmarks for a given space. Community input is crucial to the master planning process, particularly at the schematic design phase.

The Champaign Park District 2019-2029 Comprehensive Plan sets forth general guidelines and benchmarks for forthcoming strategic plans and park master plans, and serves as a valuable reference—a “roadmap” of sorts—for the overarching planning and implementation process. Through the park, facility, and program inventory, financial assessment, demographic/trend analysis, community and staff input, and agency initiatives, the Comprehensive Plan provides a snapshot of the strengths and weaknesses of the Park District, and identifies future priority areas. Overall, the Comprehensive Plan serves to ensure that the Park District maintains its commitment to excellence through quality parks, facilities, and programs, and sets the stage for another ten years of success in serving the community of Champaign.

Comprehensive Plan (every 10 years)										
Strategic Plan (every 5 years)					Strategic Plan (every 5 years)					
Community Needs Assessment (every 7-10 years)								Community Needs Assessment		
Performance Measurement Report			Performance Measurement Report (every 4 years)				Performance Measurement Report			
Comprehensive Facilities Assessment (every 10 years)										
Annual Budget	Annual Budget	Annual Budget	Annual Budget	Annual Budget	Annual Budget	Annual Budget	Annual Budget	Annual Budget	Annual Budget	Annual Budget

Park District Mission



Comprehensive Plan



Park & Facility Master Plans



Strategic Plan



Annual Operating Budget

Capital Outlay



Comprehensive plan: 10 years

Average Human Lifespan: 79 years

Lifespan of an Oak Tree: 250 years

07 References and Appendix

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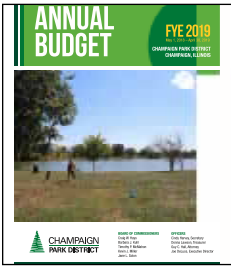
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Annual Budget FYE2018-2019

The *Annual Budget FYE2018-2019* outlines the Park District's commitment and plan to provide service to residents. The budget is the Park District's plan for distribution of available funds and explains the procedures, assumptions, and organizational structure used in its preparation.



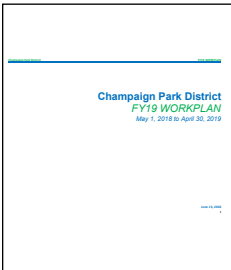
Champaign Park District Community-Focused Strategic Plan, 2016-2019

This document provides a planned approach for the mission, vision, key strategies, goals, and processes for the Park District to be more effective and efficient in the pursuit of excellence. The plan reflects the Park District's increasing responsiveness to residents and provides the Park District with the direction to channel resources that yield the greatest benefit to program participants and guests.



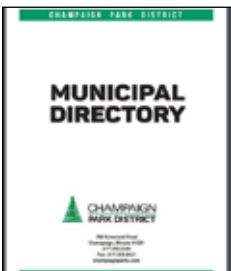
Champaign Park District Facility Report Card, 2018

Using both internal and external participation, the Park District evaluates facilities to ensure standards and guide future needs. The information from the 2018 facility evaluation are gathered in this report card and are used to make recommendations for future years.



Champaign Park District FY19 Workplan, 2018

The *FY19 Workplan* focuses on key priorities from the *2016-2019 Strategic Plan*, *FY19 Capital Projects*, *FY19 Board Priorities* and *FY18/19 Cross Department Goals*. It outlines key action items for each department for completion by April of 2019.



Champaign Park District Municipal Directory, 2017

This directory contains important information about the Park District, including its purpose, community profile, and organizational structure. The directory also provides Park District contact information and resources for public records requests.



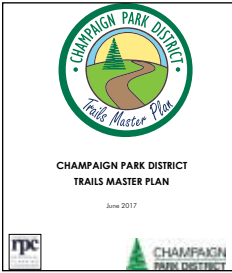
Champaign Park District Performance Measurement Report, 2018

This report provides an objective and quantifiable way in which to see successes and areas in need of improvement for the Park District. It serves as a tool for staff to make data-driven decisions while offering transparency and accountability to the public.



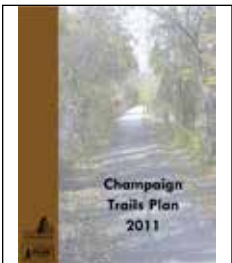
Champaign Park District Public Perception Survey, 2014

The *2014 Public Perception Survey* summarizes the methodology, results, and analysis of a survey conducted by the Park District’s Marketing Department, the purpose of which was to provide actionable information for programming, marketing, and technology staff. The survey included questions about parks, facilities, events, programs, effective marketing avenues, the website, online registration, and overall public perception.



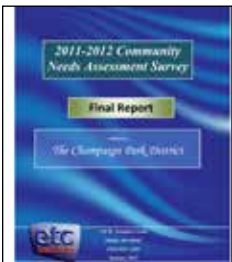
Champaign Park District Trails Master Plan, 2017

This master plan, contracted through the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission, will guide decisions made by the Park District on trails and efforts to create a more integrated trail system throughout Champaign. The plan establishes policies, programs, and projects for further enhancing trail connectivity for the enjoyment of Champaign residents.



Champaign Trails Plan, 2011

The *2011 Champaign Trails Plan* is a combined effort of the City of Champaign and the Park District. The plan provides a vision for a connected trail system throughout the community and sets clear expectations regarding trail standards and development. The implementation of the plan is ongoing as the City and Park District continue to work together in constructing and maintaining new trails.



Community Needs Assessment Survey, 2011-2012

The Leisure Vision/ETC Institute conducted a community survey on behalf of the Park District during the winter of 2011-2012. The purpose of the survey was to help establish priorities for the future improvement of parks and recreation facilities, programs, and services within the community. The survey was designed to obtain statistically valid results from households throughout Champaign.



Comprehensive Park and Open Space Plan Summary Report, 2008

This plan was created by Pros Consulting, LLC in 2008 to help guide future decisions regarding land acquisition and the development/re-development of the Park District’s parks and open space system through 2018. The plan provides findings and recommendations for park related improvements as well as financial strategies and implementation.



Vision 2020 Strategic Plan, 2013-2020

The *Vision 2020 Strategic Plan* provides direction and a planned approach for the mission, vision, key strategies, goals, and processes for the Park District to be more effective and efficient in the pursuit of excellence. The plan reflects the Park District’s increasing responsiveness to our residents and provides the Park District with the direction to channel resources that yield the greatest benefit to resident taxpayers, program participants, constituents, and guests.