

WAUKEGAN PARK DISTRICT

PRESS RELEASE

Park District Seeks Public Input to Parks and Open Space Master Plan

Waukegan, IL (April 11, 2014)... The Waukegan Park District has recently launched a major project to create the District's 2015-2020 Parks and Open Space Master Plan. The first plan was written in 1989 and since then, four updates have been completed all of which have served the District very well. The new plan will guide park improvements over the next 5 years while taking into consideration the changing needs of the community, current vision of the Park District, and resources that are available to the District.

Board President Janet Kilkelly states "this process will lead to a robust Parks and Open Space Master Plan and includes gathering public input, analyzing census data and drafting a plan that helps us reach our vision of being an innovative park district that creatively adapts to our evolving community and provides exceptional parks, recreation and cultural arts that benefit all." Ultimately, a well-developed plan based on an understanding of community priorities will provide a roadmap that guides the future development of the open space system and enables the District to efficiently administer resources.

As part of the process, the District is seeking public input through the creation of a Master Plan Advisory Committee. This committee will inform and guide the planning process and nominations are still being accepted through April 18th. Up to four meetings are anticipated and the committee should complete its work by the end of July. If interested, please contact Tim Girmscheid, Park Planner at 847-360-4755 or tgirmscheid@waukeganparks.org.

In addition, the District will be conducting a series of public focus group meetings throughout the month of May. The public is encouraged to attend these meetings which will be promoted soon through press releases, the website and social media.

About the Waukegan Park District

Established on December 26, 1916, the district has 47 properties and 720 acres of land, including the 18-hole Bonnie Brook and 9-hole Greenshire Golf Courses. Properties are managed to the highest environmental and conservation standards. Facilities operated by the district include the Field House Sports and Fitness Center, the Jack Benny Center for the Arts, the Waukegan SportsPark, the Waukegan Skate Park, the Waukegan BMX Track, recreational centers, an outdoor swimming pool, disc golf course, dog exercise area, outdoor sports fields, picnic areas, playgrounds, and sports courts including basketball and tennis. A full range of programs and services are offered year round for all ages, from infants to seniors as well as special needs populations. Healthy lifestyles, wellness initiatives, and a connection with the outdoors and nature are integrated throughout programs, services, and special events. Cultural

events are provided by the Waukegan Symphony Orchestra and Concert Chorus, the Bowen Park Theatre Company, and the Waukegan History Museum. There is something for everyone! The award-winning District employs 57 full-time and over 250 part-time, year round, seasonal, and temporary employees. The District is a member of the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD), and Illinois Park and Recreation Association (IPRA). The district maintains national accreditation from the NRPA Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA), the Illinois Association of Park Districts' (IAPD) Distinguished Agency accreditation and the Park District Risk Management Agency (PDRMA) accreditation and sustains a Level A Loss Control Program. The district was a NRPA Gold Medal Finalist in 2012 and 2013, and awarded the NRPA National Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management in 2013.

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