
WAUKEGAN PARK DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

To: All Media

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For Immediate Release

Waukegan Park District Starts Extreme Makeover for Bowen Park Playground

WAUKEGAN - The Bowen Park Playground located at 1800 North Sheridan, is undergoing a complete transformation this summer. In order expedite construction of the new playground, demolition of the existing structures began during the last week of March. The new playground has been redesigned to provide accessibility to all and create a safe and challenging play environment. The new layout will have a similar footprint to the existing park, but a new theme. The playground will incorporate the natural environment into the play environment and be called "Forest Findings".

The planned layout will consist of a series of tiered play areas arranged on the hillside in Bowen Park. Some of the play equipment is custom designed and will be found exclusively in Bowen Park. Each play area represents a part of a forest ecosystem. At the top will be the Squirrels' Nest/lookout towers, representing the forest canopy. Children will be able to climb and crawl through fully enclosed rope suspension bridges between elevated towers as if they were squirrels.

The area between the forest canopy and forest floor will be packed full of activities including a spider web climber, an owl overlook, a log to crawl through and swings. A highlight in the play area will be the dual 40' long tunnel slides from the Forest Tower Play Structure to the forest floor.

The lower part of the playground represents the forest floor. Children will be able to splash in the water, observe animal footprints, sit on a fungi bench and play beneath giant trillium.

Around the perimeter of the playground will be a 10-station exercise trail to provide activities for parents. Additional features include an outdoor stage for outdoor classroom discussions, as well as benches and interpretive signs, which will be provided to discuss the forest and its ecosystem.

The playground renovation is being partially funded from the State of Illinois Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) grant program. For information on the park renovation, please call Elmer Martinez at 847-360-4726.



About The Waukegan Park District

The Waukegan Park District, encompassing 46 neighborhood and community parks with 719 acres of land, serves the culturally-diverse community of Waukegan through its traditional and non-traditional parks-sports programming for the entire family as well as leisure programming for senior adults. Park District programming also encompasses professional music, dance, theatre and visual arts instruction through the Jack Benny Center for the Arts, cultural enrichment through the Waukegan Symphony and Concert Chorus, the Bowen Park Opera and Theatre Companies, and other quality educational, historical and craft programs through the Bowen Heritage Circle.