
WAUKEGAN PARK DISTRICT

PRESS RELEASE

Waukegan Park District to Receive \$3,000,000 from Federal Government Spending Bill

Waukegan, Illinois (March 21, 2022) – Congressman Brad Schneider announced that the Waukegan Park District will receive \$3,000,000 from the federal government’s Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022 to help fund the renovation of the historic Carnegie Library, located at 1 N. Sheridan Road in Waukegan. Designated as a Waukegan Historic Landmark and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Carnegie Library will be the new site for the Waukegan History Museum with expanded programming, archives, collections, exhibits, and a research library.

The Waukegan History Museum at the Carnegie is anticipated to attract approximately 5,000 visitors in its first year, having an economic impact on Waukegan’s economy. Additionally, the new museum will provide free field trips and educational resources for approximately 10,000 students in Waukegan Public Schools.

The Waukegan History Museum is operated by the Waukegan Park District and the Waukegan Historical Society and is the repository for all of Waukegan’s rich history.

Congressman Brad Schneider stated, “Funding for the Waukegan Carnegie Library revitalization will increase foot traffic in the heart of Waukegan, transforming both the surrounding community and the local economy. The project’s aim is for nearby businesses to see historic growth as a result of this investment, with independent analyses suggesting the revitalization will generate as much as \$5.3 million in local economic activity. I am proud to have helped secure funding for this transformative investment in the Waukegan community.”

Jacqueline Herrera Giron, President of the Waukegan Park District Board of Commissioners, stated, “Congressman Brad Schneider’s advocacy to fund our community projects will impact the continued work that the Waukegan Park District is committed to bringing to our residents. The Board of Commissioners applauds the Congressman’s efforts. The \$3,000,000 will help the Waukegan Park District and the Waukegan Historical Society transform the historic Carnegie Library into a state-of-the art museum with expanded space for programming, exhibits, and more.”

Jay Lerner, Executive Director of the Waukegan Park District, stated, “The Waukegan Park District is extremely grateful of the efforts of Congressman Brad Schneider to secure federal funding for the renovation of the Carnegie Library into the Waukegan History Museum. The museum project will benefit the community significantly. Once completed, the Waukegan History Museum at the Carnegie will be a regional destination that will boost tourism and strengthen the local economy.”

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About the Waukegan Park District

Established on December 26, 1916, the Waukegan Park District (WPD) has 53 properties and more than 742 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 WPD include the Field House Sports, Fitness and Aquatics Center, Waukegan's Greg Petry SportsPark, Waukegan Skate Park, BMX Track, SplashZone, Percussion Playground, recreational centers, disc golf course, dog exercise area and agility course, outdoor sports fields, picnic areas, playgrounds, splash pads, and sports courts including basketball, tennis and pickleball. A full range of programs and services are offered year-round for all ages, from infants to seniors, as well as special need populations. Healthy lifestyles, wellness initiatives, and a connection with the outdoors and nature are integrated throughout programs, services, and special events. Arts and cultural activities are provided by the Jack Benny Center for the Arts, Waukegan Symphony Orchestra and Concert Chorus, and the Waukegan History Museum. We offer something for everyone!

A member of the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD), Illinois Park and Recreation Association (IPRA) and the Park District Risk Management Agency (PDRMA), the WPD employs 64 full-time and about 235 part-time, seasonal, and temporary employees and is recognized by the IPRA as an Exceptional Workplace.

Nationally accredited by the NRPA Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) and State accredited through the IAPD Distinguished Agency Accreditation, the WPD has received Government Finance Officer Association (GFOA) awards for Distinguished Budget Presentation and Certificate for Excellence in Financial Reporting for eleven consecutive years and received the coveted GFOA Triple Crown Award recognizing the WPD's Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting, Popular Annual Financial Reporting and Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for 2019. The WPD was awarded the NRPA National Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management in 2013 and named a Gold Medal Finalist in 2012, 2013, 2019, and 2021.

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