



Plainfield Park District Annual Report 2021





Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Plainfield Park District Friends and Families:

2021, what a year. The Plainfield Park District continued to navigate and pivot through a challenging year while always being there for you – our most important priority. We started 2021 still in remote learning and under stringent mitigations. The District staff continued to rise to the challenge and do whatever the situation called for to continue to provide exceptional and equitable recreational programming and amenities to all of our residents.

Despite the continued challenges, our dedicated Park District team members adapted continuously. Their dedication to the community was second to none. Strong efforts to ensure safe environments and exciting activities continued. New and engaging activities to bring people into the parks were developed. Team members were truly amazing throughout the entire year!

The Park District team was excited to bring back programming and many popular special events that were lost the previous year. Team members worked tirelessly to make sure we adhered to any mitigations while still providing quality offerings. We hope you enjoyed one or several of them such as Egg-citing Activities, Flashlight Egg Hunt, Daddy Daughter Dance, Drive-In Movies, Party in the PARC, Autumn Family Fun Fest, Haunted Hayrides, Grinchmas on the Green, Breakfast with Santa, and Journey to the North Pole. The District also had some new additions for more than just the children including the Doggie Egg Hunt and the Adult Egg Hunt!

The District continued its capital development plan. Through the course of the year we completed our \$1 million Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) project at Eaton Preserve. Additionally, there were some major renovations at our athletic complexes with the Bott Park ballfield area receiving significant improvements in a detailed quad area and batting cages, as well as Four Seasons pathways being upgraded and expanded. Finally, several neighborhood playgrounds, such as Norman Greenway, were redeveloped and improved.

District trail ways and paths continued to be a focal point. In early fall, the connection between Renwick Road and Settlers Park that runs through Mather Woods was completed, and we are excited about the continuation of this pathway to the south. The District was also awarded an Illinois Enhancement Transportation Program (ITEP) grant for the development of a connection trail to the north side of Riverpoint Estates up to the intersection of Renwick and River roads.

In 2022, we are dedicated to our mission and our values in serving all of our residents. Through the focal points of Community, Fiscal Responsibility, Stewardship of Natural Resources, Health and Wellness, and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; the Plainfield Park District is here for you and as always, we Welcome Everyone.

Dedicated in serving the recreational needs of the Community,

Carlo Capalbo, MPA, CPRE
Executive Director

Leadership Team from left to right: Maureen Nugent, Deputy Director, Josh Hendricks, Director of Marketing and Community Outreach, Carlo Capalbo, Executive Director, Andy Dunfee, Director of Recreation and Facilities, Jennifer Rooks-Lopez, Director of Parks and Planning

Our Mission

The Plainfield Park District seeks to enhance lives through equitable and accessible exceptional recreation opportunities for all.

Our Vision

We aspire to be innovative, diverse, and inclusive in administration, recreation and preservation.

Our Values

Our values center on Community, Fiscal Responsibility, Stewardship of Natural Resources, Health & Wellness, and Diversity, Equitability and Inclusiveness.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Bill Thoman | 2023
President

Jason Rausch | 2025
Vice President

Mimi Poling | 2023
Commissioner

Syed Abedi | 2025
Commissioner

Heath Wright | 2027
Commissioner

Colette Safford | 2027
Commissioner

Rob Ayres | 2023
Commissioner



Financial Profile

Excellence in Financial Reporting

For the 16th straight year, the Plainfield Park District Finance Department's comprehensive annual financial report was awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA). The District first won the award in 2006.

A press release issued by the GFOA stated, "The report has been judged by an impartial panel to meet the high standards of the program, which includes demonstrating a constructive 'spirit of full disclosure' to clearly communicate its financial story and motivate potential users and user groups to read the report. The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management."

Distinguished Budget Presentation Award

In addition to earning the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting, the Plainfield Park District was honored with the GFOA's Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the fifth straight year (first award was in 2017).

To earn recognition, budget documents must meet program criteria and excel as a policy document, financial plan, operations guide, and communication tool.

Congratulations to Deputy Director Maureen Nugent, who oversees the finance department, as well as human resources and information technology.

FEMA Funding

The District applied for and was awarded \$8,900 in FEMA funding to help defray the costs of the pandemic.

Property Taxes and the Park District

For every \$1 paid in property tax, just 3 cents goes to the Plainfield Park District, which we use to maintain park space and facilities, fund recreation programs, and put on special events throughout the year.

Financial Profile

Photo: Shelter at Village Green

How Do We Measure Up?

The Plainfield Park District staff works hard to provide the most recreation opportunities and park space at the lowest cost possible for our residents through advanced planning, stringent budgeting, and an ongoing eye toward process improvements. Take a look to see how far your tax dollars go compared to neighboring park districts:





2021 Recreation Programming Rundown

Never skipped a beat!

The Recreation Department provided numerous opportunities in a "new normal way" by following COVID-19 safety protocols. The year started with capacity limitations for all indoor classes, which caused the popular basketball league to change its program format. Staff pivoted to provide the players practice time and skills competitions for fun every Saturday in January and February. As the year continued, the Department continued to see a high demand for in-person classes.

When the weather finally warmed up in Spring, capacity limitations were lifted for in-person programming and enrollments surged even more. Great Adventures Preschool enrollment returned to pre COVID-19 numbers along with other programs such as dance, equestrian, athletics and summer camp.

In 2021, the Recreation Department welcomed back the re-opening of Ottawa Street Pool after it was completely closed in 2020 due to COVID-19. Ottawa Street Pool improved its appearance with a new roof, fresh paint, and repaired and patched cement. The pool fully re-opened to the public June 10, 2021 with no restrictions or reservations required as the state entered Phase 5 of the Restore Illinois plan. Despite the later than normal start, Ottawa Street Pool still sold 410 memberships and 5,982 daily admission passes. Swim lessons exceeded expectations with increased enrollment from previous years.

Multiple new programs were also introduced in 2021 to great success including the Adult Egg Hunt, Hawaiian Luau, and You Can't Catch Me Fun Run.



Recreation by the Numbers

1,047

Ottawa Street Pool
Swim Lessons

Ottawa Street Pool
Memberships

410



5,982

Equestrian
Lesson Enrollments

Ottawa Street Pool
Daily Passes Sold

3,396

594

Summer Camp
Enrollment

Athletic
Class Enrollments

2,927

2,538

Special Events
Enrollments

Preschool
Enrollments

113

9,437

Total Program
Registrations



The Best of 2021

Exceptional Workplace

Plainfield Park District was honored with the 2021 IPRA Exceptional Workplace Award and received their plaque at the 2022 IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference held January 27-29 at the Chicago Hyatt Regency.

The award consists of 48 weighted questions pertaining to the District's operations well as developed wellness and diversity policies. Upon being awarded, the District is now recognized as an Exceptional Workplace for the next 5 years.

Plainfield Park District was cited for, "Through a unified team vision they embrace the core principles: Work/Life Balance, Communication, Stability, Collaboration, Creativity, Pride, Accountability and Openness."

The Park District also had to meet the following criteria:

- Have wellness and diversity policies
- Conduct regular safety trainings
- Support continuing education for staff
- Recognize staff members for achievements
- Participate in team building exercises

"The Plainfield Park District is committed to providing a work environment that is appreciative and dedicated to our team members. Continuously keeping in mind our team's well-being and development is a high priority. We want the District to be a place where team members enjoy working and look forward to each day."



Photo: from left to right: Maureen Nugent, Deputy Director, Angela Williams, Marketing Manager, Carlo Capalbo, Executive Director, Andy Dunfee, Director of Recreation and Facilities, Josh Hendricks, Director of Marketing and Community Outreach.

New adventures await

The Park District lost two valued and long-tenured employees in Director of Administrative Services Wendi Calabrese and Recreation Manager of Adult Services Kathy Whalen, both of who retired in the past year.

Wendi served the District in a variety of roles in her 24 years including administrative assistant, guest services and executive assistant. She was a part of many accomplishments while with Plainfield including celebrating its 50-year anniversary, becoming an Illinois Distinguished Accredited Agency, implementation of Board Documents system and integration of the online registration system.

Kathy was at Plainfield for 21+ years and started at the District in 2001 as the first senior citizen coordinator, which was then a joint

position between the park district and Plainfield Township. She built strong relationships with participants and co-workers and will be missed by all.

Both were recognized by the Park Board of Commissioners with resolutions passed in honor of their commitment and extraordinary contributions to the District.



Top Photo: Wendi Calabrese
Bottom Photo: Kathy Whalen

Park Board Commissioners attain elite board member status

Plainfield Park Board Commissioners Bill Thoman and Syed Abedi were honored at the Illinois Association of Park Districts/ Illinois Park & Recreation Association Soaring to New Heights Conference held January 27-29 at the Chicago Hyatt Regency.

Bill, president of the Plainfield Park Board of Commissioners, attained IAPD Master Board Member status within the IAPD Board Member Development Program. Master Board members must attain 750 board member units (BDUs) through participating in educational programs, volunteer participation, event attendance, legislative communication, local board service, agency development and other various endeavors. Bill was elected to the Plainfield Park Board in 2017 and re-elected in 2019. He is the chairperson of the Plainfield Park Board Governance & Accountability Committee.

Commissioner Syed advanced from Notable Board Member to Distinctive Board Member by attaining 400 BDUs. Syed was elected to the Plainfield Board in 2019 and is the chairperson of the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee and co-chair of the Capital & Development Committee.



Top Photo: Commissioner Bill Thoman
Left Photo: Commissioner Syed Abedi
Bottom Photo: Scout's Summer Fun Hunt



Soaring to New Heights

The Park District had a banner weekend at the Illinois Association of Park Districts/Illinois Park & Recreation Association Soaring to New Heights Conference held January 27-29 at the Chicago Hyatt Regency. Marketing Manager Angela Williams shined in the Agency Showcase Competition, which spotlights communications and marketing work exhibited by park, recreation, and conservation agencies throughout Illinois.

Angela earned a first-place award in the Integrated Photography category and a second-place finish in Agency Showcase, which is an overall presentation of Plainfield Park District's marketing material from 2021.

Angela also garnered second-place finishes for informational communications (the District's Annual Report), brochure series (The Oak Leaf), and logo design (Welcoming Everyone logo). She

also earned a third-place finish in the promotional communications category for Scout's Summer Fun Hunt Map. Speaking of Scout's Summer Fun Hunt Map, the program earned IPRA Outstanding Program and Special Events Award (Division II).

Scout's Summer Fun Hunt was a free offering to the youth of the Plainfield Park District encouraging children and their families to get out in the parks and enjoy nature and the District's numerous amenities. Residents were encouraged to pick up an 11x17 tri-fold brochure/map that featured various locations in the District to visit. Upon completion of the fun hunt, participants turned in their completed maps and received a goodie bag of prizes.



2021 Parks & Planning Overview

Planning Ahead

In June, the District was awarded an Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program grant for \$383,170 for the development and trail expansion of the DuPage River Trail along Renwick Road. The District applied for two Open Space Lands Acquisitions and Development (OSLAD) grants in 2021.

1. Van Horn Woods Park, if approved, would include trail connections between both Van Horn two and three, a new disc golf course, and improvements to the playground and existing bike park.
2. The purchase of six acres of property at the end of Bentley Road that will connect the DuPage River trail pathway from Caton Farm Road to Hammel Woods. The purchase and development of this property will be in cooperation with the Conservation Foundation and Forest Preserve District of Will County.

Photo: Eaton Preserve

Improving Parks & Facilities

The No. 1 goal of the Parks and Planning Department is to "Improve and maintain a quality system of parks and facilities that excite the community."

In January of 2020, the District was awarded a \$400,000 (OSLAD) Grant from the State of Illinois to be used toward improvements at Eaton Preserve Park. That project was 90% completed in 2021, with only a few items remaining to be completed in 2022. Improvements included a new pergola on the foundation of the old barn, look-out area, and roof and lighting of the silo. Two honey bee hives are also being installed.

Other major park improvements in 2021 included improvements to the Bott Park Quad (photograph) and installation of batting cages, paving the quad at Four Seasons Park, and remodeling existing playgrounds at Woodside, Old Renwick and Norman Greenway.

Tree Giveaway

In April of 2021 the District hosted its second annual tree giveaway at PARC. In honor of Earth and Arbor Day, the District partnered with Living Lands & Waters and its Million Trees project, handing out 200 saplings to residents.



Photo: Bott
Park Quad

