

Illinois Association of Park Districts

Benefits of Membership

2019-2020



IAPD

Illinois Association of Park Districts

211 E. Monroe St.
Springfield, IL 62701
(217) 523-4554 ■ ILparks.org

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About the Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD)



The [Illinois Association of Park Districts](#), headquartered in [Springfield](#) adjacent to the [State Capitol](#), has been serving park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation and special recreation agencies since 1928. It is the oldest and most successful statewide association of its kind in the nation. As a grassroots organization, IAPD's voice for parks, recreation and conservation is strong and respected throughout Illinois and the United States. IAPD represents more than 2,100 locally elected and appointed citizen board members and is comprised of more than 450 park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation and special recreation agencies and corporate members.

Mission Statement

IAPD is a nonprofit service, research and educational organization that serves park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation and special recreation agencies. The association advances these agencies, their citizen board members and professional staff in their ability to provide outstanding park and recreation opportunities, preserve natural resources and improve the quality of life for all people in Illinois.

Vision Statement

As a national leader, IAPD will provide superb association services to its members.

IAPD will achieve our vision by:

- [Educating](#) elected and appointed officials to work in cooperation with fellow board members and professionals to promote a stronger community through public parks, recreation and conservation.
- Strengthening alliances with environmental, economic and human service agencies throughout Illinois and the nation.
- Maintaining a strong relationship with state and national government leaders.
- Establishing grants and other new revenue streams for our members.
- Addressing the problem of decreasing open spaces and natural areas in Illinois.

- Assisting our members in the [promotion of healthy lifestyles](#) for all ages and abilities.
- Assisting our members in meeting statewide and community challenges, such as youth-at-risk, obesity and the demands of a growing senior and diverse population.
- Helping our member agencies thrive in spite of limited tax-based revenues.

IAPD's organizational strengths include the creation and delivery of:

- Orientation, governance and training programs for citizen board members and professional staff.
- [Citizen advocacy initiatives](#) that direct and draw on the power of individuals to educate policymakers on issues of vital importance to the mission of park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation and special recreation agencies.
- Educational materials such as [Illinois Parks & Recreation magazine](#), books and newsletters, IAPD's [website](#), in-depth and challenging educational seminars, webinars and a nationally respected annual [state conference](#).
- Technical assistance that helps member agencies increase their efficiency, meet their goals or acquire additional funding.
- Opportunities for member agencies to save costs on such budget items as goods and services and utilities, telecommunications, insurance and other operational expenses.

The IAPD will continue to achieve these results in a fiscally responsible manner that assures the viability of the association and its membership.

As a statewide GRASSROOTS EDUCATIONAL, RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY ORGANIZATION, IAPD engages thousands of board members and professionals across the state in grassroots advocacy to ensure that the laws passed by the Illinois General Assembly benefit its member agencies. For example, IAPD's advocacy efforts resulted in a permanent grant program, the [Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development Program \(OSLAD\)](#), to provide matching funds to local agencies to assist in the acquisition of open space and the development of recreational opportunities. Other grant programs that are the result of IAPD advocacy include the [Bicycle Path Grant Program](#), which financially assists eligible units of government to acquire, construct and rehabilitate public bicycle paths and non-motorized trails; the [Museum Grant Program](#), which is designed to help public museums in Illinois expand and upgrade facilities and create new exhibitions; and the [Boat Access Program](#), which provides financial assistance to local government agencies for the acquisition, construction and expansion/rehabilitation of public boat and canoe access areas on Illinois' lakes and rivers.

Each year, because of IAPD's efforts and yours, more than 92 percent of the association's legislative initiatives have passed since 1980.

IAPD offers many NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES that connect board members, professionals, legislators and corporate members so that they can discuss and solve problems, share ideas and learn from the experiences of others.

IAPD actively seeks PARTNERSHIPS that will benefit the membership, including alliances with leaders in state government, other nonprofit organizations and the business community.

IAPD's team of HIGHLY KNOWLEDGEABLE AND EXPERIENCED [STAFF](#) is dedicated to helping boards and agency directors overcome challenges by providing quality educational programs and services. Our staff has a combined total of more than 133 years of dedicated service with the Illinois Association of Park Districts. Remember, we are always just a phone call or an e-mail away. Contact us at (217) 523-4554 or iapd@ILparks.org.

Get Involved in IAPD Committees & Councils

You can make a difference by joining an [IAPD committee](#). It's rewarding, results in friendships throughout the state and contributes to the future success of parks, recreation and conservation.

Members of IAPD committees serve one-year terms and are eligible for reappointment. Joint committee members serve three-year terms.

General Committee Guidelines

- Investigate and provide the facts that demonstrate the need for committee action.
- Analyze the issues and data to determine appropriate courses of action.
- Implement plans and ensure a positive end result within a specified time frame.
- Make final recommendations to the Board of Trustees and CEO.

IAPD Committees:

[Honors and Resolutions Committee](#)

This committee plans, organizes and arranges for the presentation of annual honors and awards for the association to recognize [board member anniversaries](#), [agency anniversaries](#), [park district youth license plate promotions](#) and other outstanding achievements of volunteers, professionals and organizations. This includes awards presented at the annual [IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference](#) and the annual [IAPD Best of the Best Awards Gala](#).

[Membership Committee](#)

The Membership Committee encourages membership in the IAPD by all park, forest preserve and conservation agencies; city, township and village park and recreation boards; special recreation associations, departments of the State of Illinois; colleges and universities; commercial establishments, as well as individuals and organizations who are concerned with park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation and special recreation. Since 1980, IAPD has maintained a 98 percent membership retention rate.

[Program Committee](#)

This committee assists in planning the curriculum for educational workshops, seminars, webinars and educational sessions that are offered throughout the year and at the annual [IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference](#). Committee members assist the IAPD staff in planning, organizing, executing, staffing and promoting these educational offerings.

Research Advisory Council

The IAPD Research Advisory Council promotes the benefits of park, recreation and conservation agencies in Illinois by determining and conducting the research needed to ensure the long-term success of the legislative advocacy and public relations programs of the association, as well as to address the individual needs of member districts. Members are appointed from our agencies (commissioners and directors), academia and the business sector.

Municipal Committee

The Municipal Committee promotes special programs and creates educational materials to assist municipal park and recreation departments. Networking opportunities are provided to assist in addressing the unique challenges these agencies face.

Ambassadors Committee

The IAPD Ambassadors Committee consists of past and present board members from Illinois park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies. IAPD Ambassadors are a core group of volunteers who embrace IAPD's mission and vision. Members of the Ambassadors Committee are the voice of the Illinois Association of Park Districts. They volunteer at IAPD events and educational programs and make presentations on behalf of the association.

IAPD/IPRA Joint Committees

The Illinois Association of Park Districts and the Illinois Park and Recreation Association jointly appoint commissioners and professionals representing park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation and special recreation agencies throughout the state to serve on the following committees.

Joint Conference Committee

This committee plans the annual *IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference*, which serves as an educational forum for board members and professionals of park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies. IAPD representatives assist with conference planning, exhibits, educational sessions, operations, special/social events, general sessions, the awards luncheon and other sponsored conference activities.

Joint Distinguished Park and Recreation Accreditation Committee

This committee's goal is to improve the delivery of recreation services to the residents of Illinois through a voluntary comprehensive evaluation process. Providing recognition of agencies that achieve superior levels of service assists in benchmarking the operations of park districts and improves the quality of life for Illinois residents.

Joint Editorial Committee

This is an advisory committee to the editor and managing editor of the bi-monthly *Illinois Parks & Recreation magazine* and annual *Buyers' Guide*. Committee members assist in formulating the editorial calendar and sourcing articles. They suggest authors for articles and also ask contacts at member agencies to write articles for the magazine. The committee is also responsible for distribution of the annual *Give Us Your Best Shot photo contest*.

[Joint Legislative Committee](#)

This committee studies existing and proposed state and federal legislation, recommends initiatives for the legislative platform and communicates legislative activity and calls for action to IAPD and IPRA members. The committee also conducts grassroots educational programs, initiates legislative awareness events, and coordinates activities that increase legislators' understanding and appreciation of our members' missions and the issues that they confront on a local and state level.

You can make a difference by joining an IAPD committee, task force or council! It's rewarding and it puts you in touch with fellow commissioners across the state. Your contributions will affect the future of Illinois parks, recreation and conservation!

Download and print a committee form by [clicking here](#) and mail to IAPD, 211 East Monroe Street, Springfield, IL, 62701; fax to (217) 523-4273; or e-mail it to us at iapd@ILparks.org.

IAPD Staff



Peter Murphy, Esq., CAE, IOM
President and CEO
e-mail: pmurphy@ILparks.org

- Works with the [IAPD Board of Trustees](#) to advance the Association's [mission](#) and [vision](#)
 - Acts as Association's spokesperson
 - Directs boardmanship training and education
 - Manages the Association's operations and personnel
 - Directs the Association's legal, legislative and educational programs
 - Provides legal consultation to members
 - Leads the Association's [Executive Search service](#)
 - Conducts [Board Self-Evaluations](#) for agency members and leadership teams
 - Manages the Association's affinity partner relations
 - Directs grassroots legislative advocacy and training – state and federal
 - Provides testimony to the General Assembly on behalf of the Association
 - Responsible for the Association's finances - investment and fundraising
 - Directs the Association's comprehensive programs and services
 - Provides technical assistance to member districts
 - Directs research projects to serve members' needs.
 - Serves as an [IPARKS](#) board member
 - Establishes on-going partnerships with state and national organizations that further open space protection and the development of recreational opportunities.
 - Authors books and magazine articles on boardmanship, leadership, legal topics and governance
 - Serves as President of the [Friends of Illinois Parks Foundation](#)
 - Develops corporate and nonprofit partnerships
- Committee Liaison: All Committees



Jason Anselment
Legal/Legislative Counsel
e-mail: janselment@ILparks.org

- Manages Association legal & legislative programs
 - Acts as legal counsel to membership
 - Maintains legislative database
 - Responsible for Association's lobbying – state and federal
 - Monitors all new bill introductions
 - Maintains relationships with legislators
 - Provides grassroots advocacy training
 - Provides testimony on behalf of the Association to House and Senate committees
 - Authors [Legal News](#), [Legislative Updates/Alerts](#) and *Statehouse Insider* columns
 - Provides legal and technical assistance
 - Provides legal consultation to members
 - Serves as [IPARKS](#) ex-officio member
 - Serves as Secretary of the [Friends of Illinois Parks Foundation](#)
- Committee Liaison: [Joint Legislative](#)



Kari Catton

Executive Secretary

e-mail: iapd@ILparks.org

- Assistant to President/CEO
- IAPD board correspondence
- Maintains IAPD board and committee directory
- [Board Self-Evaluation](#)
- General public and member inquiries
- General office assistance



Bobbie Jo Hill

Public Relations Director

e-mail: bjhill@ILparks.org

- Media Relations
- [Board Member Development Program](#)
- [IAPD e-News](#)
- Park District Youth License Plate Program
- [Park District Conservation Day](#) at the [Illinois State Fair](#)
- [Parks Day at the Capitol](#)
- Flying 4 Kids Statewide Kite Fly
- Best of the Best Awards Gala
- [IAPD Summer Golf Tour](#)
- [Soaring to New Heights Conference Awards](#)
- [Outgoing Board Member Awards](#)

Committee Liaison: [Honors & Resolutions](#), [Joint Distinguished Park and Recreation Accredited Agency](#)



Alan Howard

Finance Director

e-mail: ahoward@ILparks.org

- Association's accounting, financial statements, payroll and record keeping
- Annual budgets and audit
- Membership dues
- Membership database
- Advertising management
- [Soaring to New Heights Conference](#) registration and finance

Committee Liaison: [Joint Conference](#)

Rachel Laier

Publications Director

e-mail: rlaier@ILparks.org

- Editor, [Illinois Parks & Recreation magazine](#)
- [Buyers' Guide](#)
- Graphic Design
- Special publications

Committee Liaison: [Joint Editorial](#)



Shannon Sartain

Legal Secretary

e-mail: ssartain@ILparks.org

- Assistant to legal/legislative counsel
- [Joint Legislative Committee](#) correspondence
- Legislator correspondence
- Publications assistance
- General public and member inquiries
- [Legislative Updates and Alerts](#)
- General office assistance



Sue Triphahn, CMP

Educational Services Director

e-mail: striphahn@ILparks.org

- [Soaring to New Heights Conference](#) director
- Educational program planning
- Seminars, workshops, webinars symposiums and roundtables
- Board & committee meetings
- Educational program registration
- Special events
- [IAPD Summer Golf Tour](#)
- Best of the Best Awards Gala
- Sponsorships
- Committee Liaison: [Program](#) and [Joint Conference](#)



Wayne Utterback

Director of Communications & Digital Content

e-mail: wutterback@ILparks.org

- [Illinois Parks & Recreation magazine](#)
- [Buyers' Guide](#)
- Graphic Design
- Video & Audio Production
- Photography
- Print & Digital Publications, IP&R Magazine, membership materials
- Social Media Marketing
- Website Maintenance



Casey Wichmann

Director of Marketing and Development

e-mail: cwichmann@ILparks.org

- Eagle Eye Neighborhood Park Watch Program
- Affinity Partnerships
- Park District Youth License Plate
- Friends of Illinois Parks
- EarthShare of Illinois
- e-Advertising
- IAPD & Corporate Sponsorships
- Corporate/Associate Memberships & Dues
- Director Search Service
- PowerPlay! Beyond School Grant Program
- Web Design & Maintenance, Member Database
- IAPD SocialLink, Social Media Marketing & Advertising, Graphic Design

IAPD Board of Trustees



Kevin Dolan, *Chairman*
Mundelein Park & Recreation District



Adriane Johnson, *Chairman-Elect*
Buffalo Grove Park District



John Hoscheit, *Immediate Past-Chairman*
Forest Preserve District of Kane County



Lester Long, *Vice-Chairman*
Dolton Park District



Lori Palmer, *Vice-Chairman*
Bartlett Park District



Mike Vogl, *Vice-Chairman*
Bloomingdale Park District



Grant Hammer, *Treasurer*
Springfield Park District



Jesse Ortega, *Sergeant-At-Arms*
Mundelein Park & Recreation District



William Casey, *Trustee*
Glenview Park District



Eric Entler, *Trustee*
Park District of Forest Park



Ron Evans, *Trustee*
Hoffman Estates Park District



Gary Gillis, *Trustee*
Pekin Park District



John Hemingway, *Trustee*
Macomb Park District



Greg Lapin, *Trustee*
Deerfield Park District



Mary Kay Ludemann, *Trustee*
Plainfield Park District

IAPD Board of Trustees



Mike Reid, *Trustee*
[Skokie Park District](#)



Jeff Rigoni, *Trustee*
[Lockport Township Park District](#)



Ted Schulz, *Trustee*
[New Lenox Community
Park District](#)



Tyler Smith, *Trustee*
[Rockford Park District](#)

**ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF PARK DISTRICTS' BOARD OF TRUSTEES
2019 REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES**

REGION III REPRESENTATIVES

Kevin Dolan
Mundelein Park & Recreation District
John Hoscheit
Forest Preserve District of Kane County
Greg Lapin
Deerfield Park District
Tyler Smith
Rockford Park District

REGION I REPRESENTATIVES

Bill Casey
Glenview Park District
Ron Evans
Hoffman Estates Park District
Adriane Johnson
Buffalo Grove Park District
Lori Palmer
Bartlett Park District
Mike Reid
Skokie Park District
Mike Vogl
Bloomingdale Park District

REGION II REPRESENTATIVES

Eric Entler
Park District of Forest Park
Mary Kay Ludemann
Plainfield Park District
Lester Long
Dolton Park District
Jeff Rigoni
Lockport Township Park District
Ted Schulz
New Lenox Community Park District

REGION IV REPRESENTATIVES

Gary Gillis
Pekin Park District
John Hemingway
Macomb Park District

REGION V REPRESENTATIVES

Grant Hammer
Springfield Park District



Advocacy

It is our goal to develop and support citizen advocacy initiatives that draw on the power of individuals to educate policymakers on issues of vital importance to the mission of park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation and special recreation agencies.



Since 1980, legislation endorsed by the IAPD has passed 92 percent of the time. Because of IAPD's legislative efforts, countless regulations and new requirements have been avoided, saving member agencies millions of dollars. Thanks in large part to the work of the IAPD, Illinois citizens enjoy more than 642,500 acres for parks, recreation and conservation.



Members of the Glenview Park District with Senator Laura Fine at IAPD's Legislative Reception.

Legislative advocacy involves countless hours of research, preparation, relationship building, education and image building to create a successful advocacy program. It is an ongoing commitment to further the association's reputation as a proactive and trustworthy source of legislative information to our membership, the media, the [Illinois General Assembly](#), the [Governor](#) and members of [Congress](#).

IAPD staff aggressively work at the [State Capitol](#), building relationships with legislators and government officials. To help local board members build relationships with their legislators, IAPD offers the annual Legislative Reception and Conference, Parks Day at the Capitol, Legislative Breakfasts, webinars and other forums for networking. Additional resources such as The Grassroots Commitment legislative advocacy DVD are also available.

IAPD reviews each one of the thousands of bills every year for their impact on park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation and special recreation agencies. Hundreds of these bills are monitored closely and each of the thousands of amendments that are filed as part of the legislative process are also reviewed.



IAPD keeps our members current with legislative information sent weekly via electronic *Legislative Updates* when the Illinois General Assembly is in session. Legal news briefs and legislative advocacy videos keep members informed of recent court decisions, new federal rules, important election information, deadlines and training opportunities. Electronic *Legislative Alerts* are sent to members when actions need to be taken on specific legislative issues.

The [IAPD website](#) is a rich source for members to learn more about the legislative process, track bills and access tools to assist in communicating with legislators. The following list includes resources that are accessible in the Advocacy section at [ILparks.org](#).

[Results from Recent Park, Recreation and Conservation Referenda](#)

[New Civics 101](#) - Why you need to know your legislator and why your legislator needs to know you.

[Give Your Legislative Efforts a K.I.C.K](#) - Legislators make more knowledgeable decisions when they understand what we do.

[How to Succeed in Lobbying. . . 20 Easy Steps](#)

[How to Write to Your State Legislator](#)

[Meeting With Your Elected Official](#)

[Building Relationships with Legislators](#)

[How a Bill Becomes a Law](#)

- [Required Votes](#)
- [Legislative Definitions](#)
- [How to Read A Bill](#)

[Legislation Information - Source](#)

[Power of Citizen Advocacy - PowerPoint Presentation](#)

One of the benefits of effectively establishing relationships with legislators is the creation of grant programs such as [OSLAD - Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development](#). An IAPD-initiated program, OSLAD is funded with dedicated dollars from the real estate transfer tax, a system put in place in 1989 by the Illinois General Assembly to ensure annual funds for this critical program. The revenue generated is used to provide grants to park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation and special recreation agencies throughout the state to acquire open space and to develop and improve park facilities. IAPD member agencies in nearly every county in Illinois have received OSLAD grants.



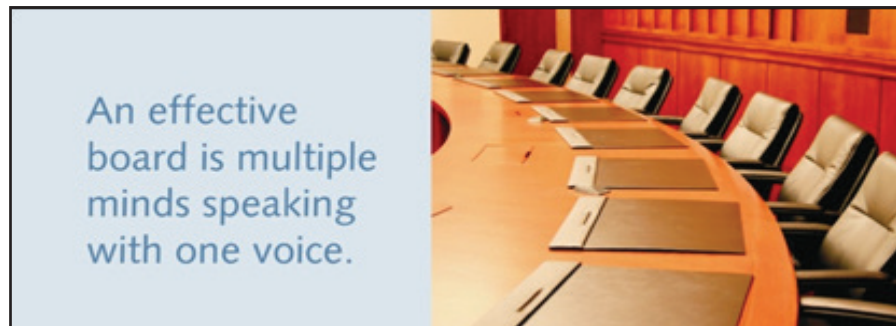
Board Development and Self-Evaluation

Even the best boards should conduct an annual self-evaluation to solidify relationships with one another, businesses, other government agencies and the community. The board should evaluate whether meetings, relationships with the executive, the code of ethics, board policies and other governance situations can be improved.

Board development can help with team decision-making, generating community support for agency initiatives, achieving consensus, working within the [Open Meetings Act](#) and resolving board issues. This specialized training is a great benefit to both new and seasoned board members, as it defines roles and responsibilities, describes duties for oversight and governance, and assists in defining leadership within the agency.

Occasionally, an agency will experience disharmony among its board members, making it difficult to conduct business. When this situation disrupts the decision-making process, IAPD can help. Board development helps to create an atmosphere of trust between board members. This focuses everyone's efforts on moving the agency forward and being more accountable to the public.

In accordance with the [Open Meetings Act](#), board development may be held in closed session with an IAPD representative. This [self-evaluation](#) process allows for maximum growth potential in a private setting while complying with state law.



Legal Services



These services include assistance for commissioners and attorneys on questions involving the powers and authority granted under Illinois state law; consultations with lawmakers on national, state and local levels; and working with the [Joint Legislative Committee](#) comprised of elected citizens, as well as park, recreation and conservation professionals.

IAPD also provides regular e-mail updates with our [Legal News](#), which contains timely legal information such as court decisions and new regulations that are important to members, and [Legislative Updates](#), which keep our membership apprised of the legal impact of current and pending legislation that we are monitoring for our agencies.

Consultation

Free consultation with the [IAPD legal counsel](#) is available to all member agency board members, chief executives and board attorneys on all issues impacting the legal activity of park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation and special recreation agencies.

Website

The legal area of the [IAPD website](#) provides information on legal responsibilities and the laws governing the operation of park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation and special recreation agencies, as well as recent court cases of interest to members. Answers to frequently asked questions are also available.

The [Member Resources Section](#) contains valuable resources IAPD has developed exclusively for member use, including a [model code of ordinances](#), sample policies and procedures such as a model Remote Attendance Policy, Identity Protection Policy and Soccer Goal Safety and Education Policy, and other useful tools. The [Practice Tools Section](#) contains educational resources and other materials to help members comply with their legal requirements under laws such as the [Open Meetings Act](#), the [Local Records Act](#) and the [Prevailing Wage Act](#), to name just a few.

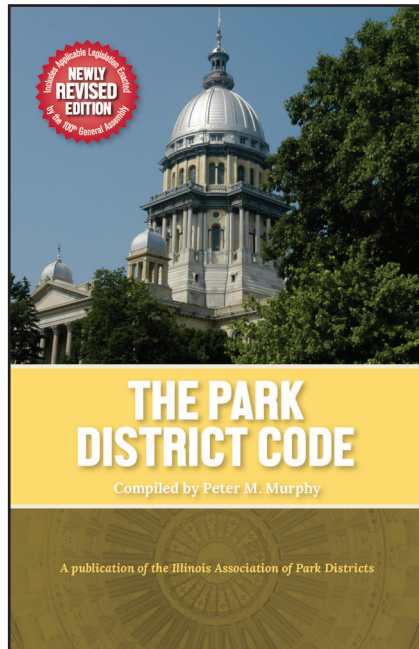
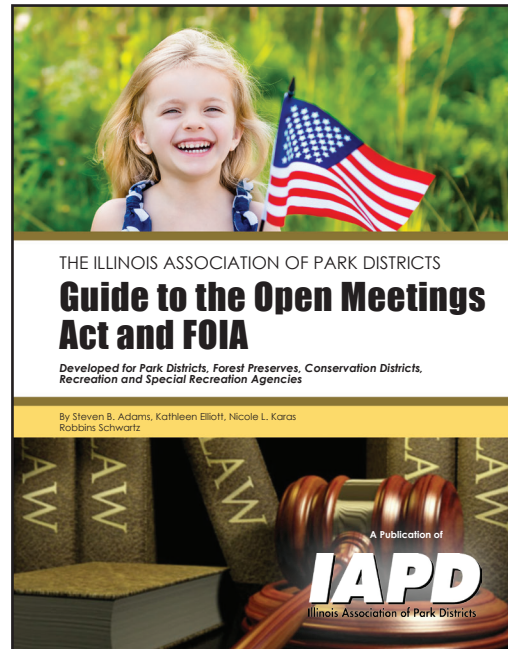
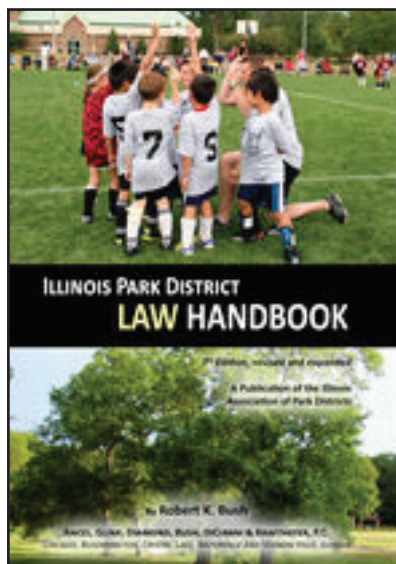
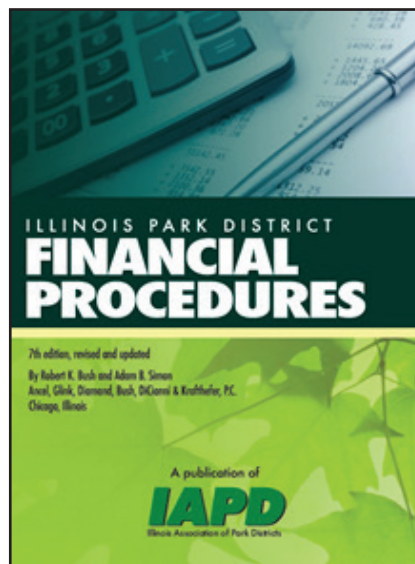
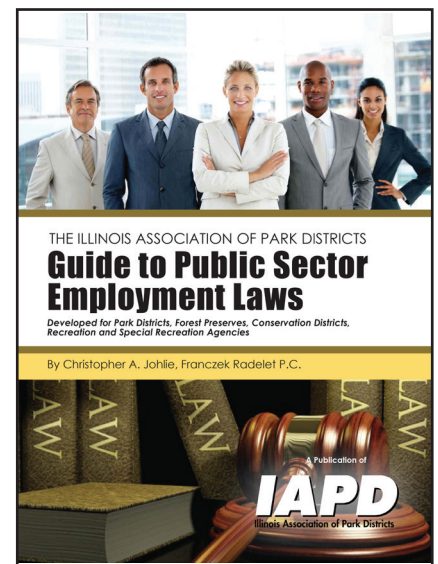
The annual [legal calendar](#) lists deadlines by which agencies must perform legal obligations including referendum filings, budget and appropriation filings, Truth in Taxation hearings, tax levy filings and other compliance issues.

The [election calendar](#) contains key dates associated with the consolidated and general elections. This publication includes information and dates deemed most important to members.



Publications

IAPD is continually creating and updating publications covering legal issues, such as [The Park District Code](#), the [Guide to Illinois Open Meetings Act and FOIA](#), [The Illinois Park District Law Handbook](#), [Illinois Park District Financial Procedures](#) and [Guide to Public Sector Employment Laws](#).



Education

IAPD strives to offer members cutting edge and innovative programs at the grassroots and statewide level.

We are dedicated to improving educational programming while finding new ways to educate our members.



The association has an [annual state conference](#), a [legislative conference](#), legal symposium and commissioner seminars. It also offers a variety of seminars, workshops and webinars pertaining to issues affecting park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation and special recreation agencies.

IAPD Legislative Conference - May 1, 2019

The [IAPD Legislative Conference](#) is designed to provide commissioners, directors and professionals with firsthand, up-to-date information on the association's Legislative Advocacy Program and all pending legislation affecting IAPD's membership. State legislators, state administrative officials and other recognized authorities present the latest techniques and materials to assist commissioners and directors with the tools they need to successfully meet and talk with legislators and be more effective in the legislative arena.



The evening prior to the [Legislative Conference](#), IAPD offers a valuable legislative networking opportunity at its Legislative Reception. This provides board members and professionals a chance to speak one-on-one with legislators in a casual atmosphere.

IAPD Legal Symposium - November 14, 2019

The IAPD Legal Symposium, held annually in the fall, offers information and key strategies to effectively deal with legal and legislative issues that agencies face in their local operation. Legal professionals associated with the field present topics and solutions.



The IAPD Boot Camps

The IAPD Boot Camps are valuable training programs conducted by IAPD. Seminars are offered in odd-numbered years to benefit the newly-elected board members who are beginning to learn their roles and responsibilities.

These seminars focus on hot topics that are designed to assist board members in their roles as locally elected officials. These seminars meet the [Open Meetings Act](#) training requirements for local officials.



Wednesday, May 29, 2019 | IAPD Boot Camp #1

Deerfield Park District - Patty Turner Center

Thursday, May 30, 2019 | IAPD Boot Camp #2

Hoffman Estates Park District - Bridges of Poplar Creek Country Club

Tuesday, June 4, 2019 | IAPD Boot Camp #3

Lockport Township Park District - Dellwood Park Community Center

Wednesday, June 5, 2019 | IAPD Boot Camp #4

Wheaton Park District - Arrowhead Golf Club

Thursday, June 6, 2019 | IAPD Boot Camp #5

Oregon Park District - Nash Recreation Center

Saturday, June 8, 2019 | IAPD Boot Camp #6

Washington Park District - Recreational Facility

IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference - January 23-25, 2020

The [annual conference](#) is an excellent opportunity to network, visit the expansive exhibit hall and participate in a number of educational sessions. The Illinois Association of Park Districts and the Illinois Park and Recreation Association host the state conference every January, attracting more than 4,000 board members, professionals, students and vendors. The [IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference](#) is designed to help staff and board members meet the challenges they face every day back in their communities.



Workshops and Webinars

Educational workshops and webinars are often organized by the IAPD throughout the year to address current issues and trends.

IAPD Knowledge Center

[The Knowledge Center](#), located on [IAPD's website](#), contains information from current and past IAPD publications, position papers, meetings, seminars and conferences. This members-only area of our website will enhance the decision-making skills of elected board members and

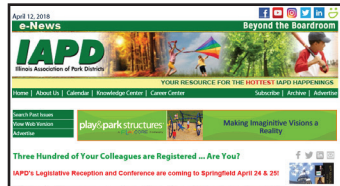
Resources



[Illinois Parks & Recreation magazine](#)

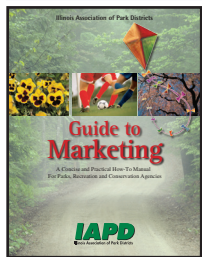
Published bi-monthly, this magazine is the leading state magazine for parks and recreation, edited specifically for board members and professionals in the field. Articles address trends, issues, legislation and boardmanship and offer practical information and reports on model programs, all designed to help board members and professionals succeed in their roles as leaders and visionaries for their agencies.

[IAPD e-News](#)



This online newsletter is a weekly update on IAPD news, services, educational programs and events of interest to our membership.

[Guide to Marketing](#)



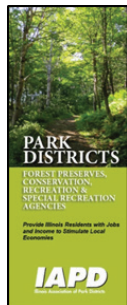
This FREE guide is a concise and practical “how to” manual addressing such topics as current trends in marketing, informal research methods, research analysis, marketing goals and strategies, establishing a marketing budget and evaluating marketing efforts. Whether your agency has a fully staffed marketing department or is just beginning to focus on a comprehensive marketing strategy, you’ll find valuable information in this guide.

[IAPD Research](#)



With guidance from the IAPD Research Advisory Council, IAPD conducts research that can be used by member agencies in their public relations and legislative advocacy efforts. Completed research project reports are available in the [Research Section](#) of IAPD’s website at ILparks.org.

[W-2 Agency Employment Brochure](#)



Read about the findings of our latest research study, conducted by aQity Research & Insights, Inc. The overall findings demonstrate how valuable the role local park districts, forest preserves, conservation districts and special recreation agencies play in our local economies. This insightful brochure outlines revenue sources for these agencies and presents data on payroll and employee spending. This is a great tool to share with others that shows just how valuable these agencies are to their communities.



[Download printable posters with key findings from an IAPD research study at \[ILparks.org\]\(http://ILparks.org\).](#)

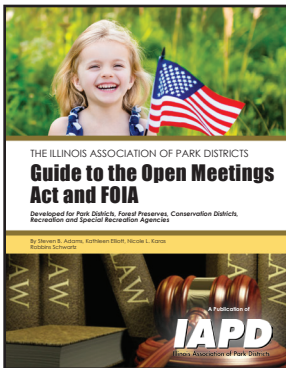


Parks & Forest Preserves Bring Value to Our Communities

Read all about the highlights of our research study conducted by Market Probe. The overall message is clear: the citizens of Illinois know that park districts and forest preserves have significant impact on the well-being of a community and on the state of Illinois.

IAPD Books and DVDs

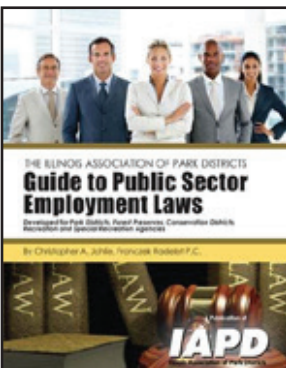
Order practical books, webinars and DVDs that will enhance your boardmanship skills and keep you current on park district legal matters and finances. IAPD publications are available for purchase at ILparks.org under Member Services in the IAPD Store.



Guide to the Open Meetings Act and FOIA

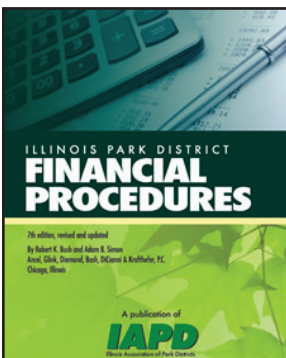
Understanding the [Open Meetings Act \(OMA\)](#) and the [Freedom of Information Act \(FOIA\)](#) as they apply to park districts and other local governments can be challenging, especially because these two statutes are frequently the subject of legislative changes and judicial decisions. This handbook is designed to help Illinois park commissioners, executive directors, FOIA and OMA officers and other staff members navigate the increasingly complex laws related to public meetings and record disclosures. It does so by summarizing procedures and providing practical guidance and tips to reduce the risk of error. This guide covers a range of topics including Public Notices and Meeting Agenda

Requirements, Conduct of Meetings, Open Meetings Exceptions, Exempt and Non-Exempt Records, Inspection and Copying Requirements and Commissioner Remote Attendance.



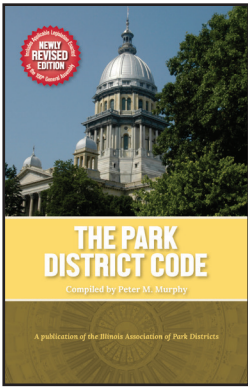
Guide to Public Sector Employment Laws – Second edition, expanded and revised

Understanding employment laws as they apply to park districts and other agencies is not always an easy task, especially when there are new legislative trends. This guide is designed for park districts, forest preserves, conservation districts, recreation and special recreation agencies to provide guidance on the employment laws and their daily application. The guide contains updates to numerous employer laws and regulations relating to Equal Employment Opportunity, Affordable Care Act, Employee Privacy, Worker Classification Issues, Wage and Hour Requirements, Leaves of Absence, Employee Background Investigations and much more. This latest version includes several practical suggestions, checklists and sample policies to help diminish risk and achieve employer goals.



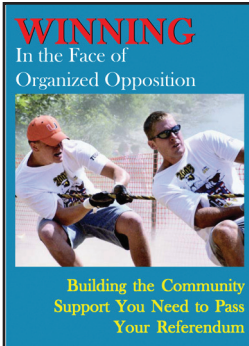
Illinois Park District Financial Procedures

This comprehensive manual is intended to provide readers with a thorough understanding of park district finance and serve as a reference tool for information on budget preparation and presentation, tax levies, audits, bonds and much more.



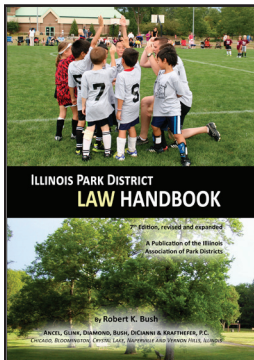
The Park District Code

It's all here in one volume – the latest, most complete compilation of laws governing park and recreation agencies in Illinois. It includes the entire Park District Code and reference to more than 51 additional relevant statutes. *The Park District Code* is now available digitally, including search-able content.



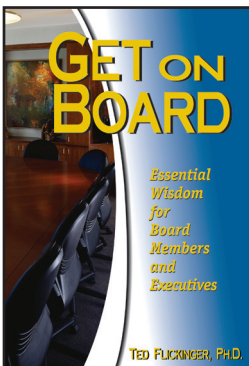
Winning In the Face of Organized Opposition

The Illinois Association of Park Districts wants you to win your next referendum. *Winning in the Face of Organized Opposition* is a guide to building the community support you need. This publication can help agencies develop action plans for successful campaigns and offers valuable strategies to counter the messages and tactics that anti-tax groups may use against your efforts.



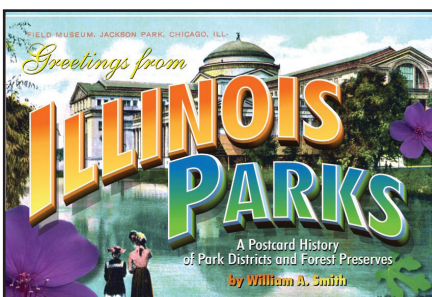
Illinois Park District Law Handbook, 7th edition

This book consolidates the body of park district law into a single user-friendly volume. This publication comes with access to [25 sample legal forms](#) to download and customize for your agency.



Get On Board – Essential Wisdom for Board Members and Executives

Whether you're a board member or an agency administrator, *Get on Board* is your leadership guide to becoming an effective steward of the public's trust. While you learn the principles of board service, you'll also be reminded why parks, recreation and conservation are vital to our well-being.



Greetings from Illinois Parks

A Postcard History of Illinois Park Districts features 98 postcard views of 55 Illinois park districts and forest preserves.



[PowerPlay! Grant Guide](#)

The *PowerPlay! Grant Guide* is designed to provide agencies with ideas and resources to help create a successful beyond-school program that emphasizes health, fitness and nutrition. Guides may be [downloaded](#) at ILparks.org under Member Services.

DVDs

[Are you on Board? The Dynamics of Boardmanship](#)

This 110-minute board training tool teaches boards how to function in a highly productive way. Each of the 12 segments covers a specific aspect of boardmanship and is designed to facilitate discussion at the end of a board meeting, a board retreat or long-range planning session.

[The Park District Advantage](#)

A Benefits DVD on Illinois Parks and Recreation

This 10-minute DVD is an effective public relations tool. Prominent Illinois citizens, state representatives, physicians and a realtor discuss the personal, social, economic and environmental benefits that park districts provide.

[Will Order Please Come to the Meeting?](#)

Boardmanship Training DVD

This 70-minute training DVD covers the Open Meetings Act, competitive bidding, board member interests in park district contracts and many other board issues.

[IAPD – A Proud Past ... A Promising Future](#)



This DVD offers an introduction to IAPD's past, a view of its present and a glimpse into its future. Learn about how the association was formed and how major legislative milestones were overcome. This DVD outlines IAPD's core service areas, providing a brief review of the numerous programs and services offered to assist board members and agencies in providing the best services to the citizens they serve. Call (217) 523-4554 or e-mail iapd@ILparks.org for a copy of this informative DVD.

ILparks.org

The IAPD website is uniquely designed for you – our most important audience. ILparks.org is the one-stop shop to learn all you need to know about Illinois parks, recreation and conservation. Our website provides access to association resources, news, events, educational opportunities, links to grant information and legislative updates.



Our website includes exciting, interactive features for board members and staff.

- Learn about the [legislative process](#), [track bills](#) and access tools to assist in [communicating with legislators](#).
- Watch the [Illinois Park & Conservation Legends Series](#) through the IAPD website, which records and memorializes the experience and dedication of citizen volunteers and park board members throughout Illinois.
- Access [Member Resources](#) in the Legal Section of the IAPD website that contains valuable resources that IAPD has developed exclusively for member use, including a model code of ordinances, sample policies and procedures and other useful tools. The [Practice Tools](#) page in the Legal Section contains educational resources and other materials to help members comply with their legal requirements.
- Learn about [networking opportunities](#) for board members and staff at park, recreation and conservation agencies throughout the state.
- Utilize a [searchable IAPD membership database](#).
- Enjoy a convenient registration process for IAPD educational programs and events.
- [Share ideas, post questions and receive advice](#) from board members and professionals throughout the state.
- Access the [Knowledge Center](#) for information from current and past IAPD publications, position papers, meetings, seminars and conferences.
- Obtain health and wellness information in the [Healthy Lifestyles Section](#). Healthy Lifestyles contains a wealth of articles, links and tips about health, fitness and nutrition.

IAPD encourages member agencies to pull information from [Healthy Lifestyles](#) to supplement health and wellness classes, use as content in program brochures or post throughout facilities.



[IAPD App](#) / [Facebook](#) / [Twitter](#) / [YouTube](#) / [Photo Sharing](#) / QR Codes

IAPD connects our membership to the latest news, grant information and educational opportunities through several popular social media outlets. The IAPD App and QR codes enable our membership to access the IAPD website or register for events at the touch of a button.



YouTube



Instagram



Additional Information

Members searching for information related to Illinois park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation and special recreation agencies can contact IAPD for assistance at 217-523-4554. This service is FREE to our members.

Order your resources online today at

ILparks.org

Click on [IAPD Store](#) under
Member Services

Technical Assistance

[IAPD's staff](#) answers hundreds of questions and provides information or assistance to address a wide variety of issues or concerns from our members, citizens, legislators and the media. [IAPD's staff](#) has a combined total of more than 133 years of experience working with park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation and special recreation agencies. This expertise has been an invaluable asset to IAPD members.

IAPD also offers various types of premium level technical assistance to member agencies, upon demand and under contract, based on the specific needs of an agency in the following areas:

- **[Legal/Legislative Counsel](#)** - The association assists board members and directors on legal issues. In addition, the legal counsel provides free consultation services to attorneys throughout the state who serve park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation and special recreation agencies.
- **Strategic Planning** - IAPD works with an agency's board and staff to identify organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and guides them in the development of goals and strategies for a 3- to 5-year action plan. These planning workshops have been from 3 hours' duration to several sessions spanning more than 6 months, depending on the requested level of IAPD involvement.
- **Resource Management** - IAPD can provide suggestions and recommendations on the wise use of resources including staff, open-space, facilities and partnerships. The association can also assist with unique conservation or natural resource issues, including those that may require permits from a state and/or federal agency.
- **Grant Writing** - In cooperation with the member agency staff, IAPD can guide an agency through the grant seeking process for [funds available from IDNR](#), specifically through the [Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development grant program](#), [Bicycle Path Grant](#), [Boat Access Area Development](#), [Land and Water Conservation Fund](#), [Local Government Snowmobile grant program](#), [Recreational Trails program](#), and [Urban and Community Forestry grants](#).
- **Foundation Development** - More than 65 nonprofit, 501(c)3 foundations are affiliated with, or in support of, park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation and special recreation agencies in Illinois. IAPD maintains a registry of those foundations and supplies information or guidance on governance issues, board development, legal requirements, fundraising ideas, bylaws, policies and procedures. IAPD also offers workshops on this topic.
- **Tax and Bond Referendum** - IAPD has considerable experience working with districts on referendum issues. Many resources are available from the IAPD Knowledge Center.



- **Park District Formation** - IAPD has created an excellent educational source on [how to form a park district](#). This [step-by-step guide](#) is available on the [IAPD website](#).
- **News Release Development and Distribution** - IAPD will write and distribute news releases for members regarding awards, attendance at educational sessions, appointment to IAPD committees and other pertinent endeavors.



Public Awareness

IAPD provides member agencies with public relations tools to enhance their communication of services, missions and goals. Building public awareness of park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation and special recreation agencies is an important function of IAPD.

Flying 4 Kids Statewide Kite Fly

April & May, 2019 & 2020

This event attracts thousands of families, kite enthusiasts and media to park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation and special recreation agencies throughout the state. The goal of the kite fly is to promote a fun, family-oriented recreational event and raise awareness of the [Park District Youth License Plate](#), which features a four-color kite. IAPD can assist agencies in planning a Kite Fly with a FREE Event Planner's Guide.



Parks Day at the State Capitol

Tuesday, April 30, 2019

[Parks Day](#) is an opportunity to educate legislators, legislative staff, government employees and State Capitol visitors about the wonderful parks and recreational programs available in Illinois.

Agencies display exhibits in the Rotunda of the [State Capitol](#) to showcase the programs, services and facilities they offer to the citizens of Illinois. Members are encouraged to meet with their legislators and personally show them their exhibits and thank them for their ongoing support of funding initiatives for park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation and special recreation agencies.



Park District Conservation Day at the Illinois State Fair

Saturday, August 17, 2019

[Park District Conservation Day](#) began in 1994 as a special recognition day for Illinois park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation and special recreation agencies. Agencies send dance groups, bands, chorales, zoos and more to perform or exhibit at various locations throughout the fairgrounds. Agency board members and staff can volunteer to distribute giveaways, work the Park District Conservation Day booth and coordinate activities throughout the day.

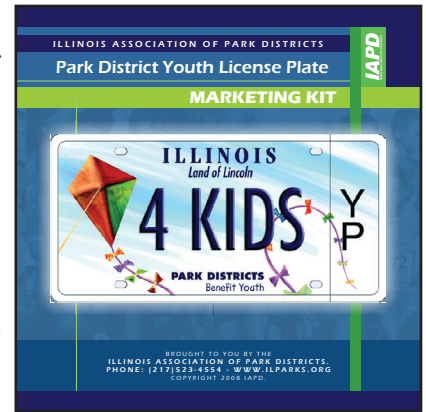


[Park District Conservation Day](#) brings an awareness of the variety of wonderful activities our agencies bring to the citizens of Illinois. The [Illinois Association of Park Districts](#) and Illinois Park and Recreation Association co-sponsor this event in partnership with the [Illinois State Fair](#) for more than 100,000 fairgoers.

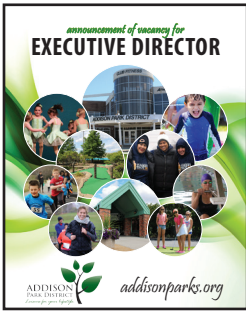
Park District Youth License Plate Marketing Kit

The Illinois Association of Park Districts offers this [free kit](#) to promote our member agencies and the Park District Youth License Plate Program.

Print ads, flyers, posters, web ads, audio public service announcements and visual PSAs can be customized with park district, forest preserve, conservation, recreation and special recreation agency logos. Share them with your local media for use as filler space in their publications or use them in your agency's program guides.



Programs / Events



[Director Search Service](#)

One of the most important challenges board members will face is hiring the executive director. [IAPD's Director Search Service](#) is confidential, professional and affordable and has a track record for finding the best candidates. For more information, go to ILparks.org and hover over Member Services, or contact IAPD at 217-523-4554 or iapd@ILparks.org for a consultation with the [President/CEO](#).



Friends of Illinois Parks Foundation

The IAPD [Friends of Illinois Parks](#) foundation raises funds for IAPD [research](#) and the [PowerPlay! Beyond-School Program](#). The [Friends of Illinois Parks](#)' mission is to involve more citizens statewide in support of the important programs conducted by park, recreation and conservation agencies.



Eagle Eye Neighborhood Park Watch Program

The IAPD [Eagle Eye Neighborhood Park Watch Program](#) is a cooperative effort among park districts, forest preserves, recreation agencies, schools, police and community residents. The program encourages residents to assume more responsibility for the activities taking place in their own neighborhoods. Residents keep watch over neighborhood parks to help make them a safe haven for youth. Implementation of this program effectively reduces crime, vandalism and gang activity in parks. One agency saved more than \$80,000 in maintenance costs and equipment repairs throughout a two-year period.



[PowerPlay! Beyond School Grant Program](#)

IAPD has developed a grant program designed to initiate and support beyond-school programs that focus on health, nutrition and fitness in park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation and special recreation agencies in Illinois. The program is funded by proceeds from the [Park District Youth License Plate program](#) and [Friends of Illinois Parks](#). Agencies can apply for seed money to conduct a model beyond-school program or to enhance an existing program.

The Park District Youth License Plate

[The Park District Youth License Plate](#) acts as a "moving billboard" carrying the message that Illinois park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation and special recreation agencies benefit youth. Twenty-five dollars from the sale and subsequent renewal of each plate is placed into IAPD's [PowerPlay! Grant Program](#).



[Summer Golf Tour](#)

[2019 Schedule](#)

[Monday, May 20](#), Park District of Highland Park

[Monday, June 17](#), Mundelein Park & Recreation District

[Monday, August 26](#), Settler's Hill Golf Course / GolfVisions Management, Inc.

[Wednesday, September 18](#), Glenview Park District

These outings provide great opportunities to learn about other agencies' golf operations, network and enjoy a day with old friends and new acquaintances.



IAPD Leadership Classic

Thursday, July 11, 2019 at Lake County Forest Preserves

ThunderHawk Golf Club

This special golf outing is for all park, recreation and conservation agency commissioners, directors and professional staff. Golfers are encouraged to invite local community leaders, representatives from area businesses and/or legislators for a day of networking. The [IAPD Leadership Classic](#) is an excellent opportunity to meet with those who contribute to the success of your agency in a recreational setting. The outing includes 18-holes of golf, lunch, dinner and opportunities to win prizes throughout the day.

Illinois Association of Park Districts' Awards and Recognition Program

IAPD offers many opportunities for commissioners, agencies and professionals to be recognized for contributions they make to Illinois park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation and special recreation agencies. We also offer opportunities to recognize those outside the field of parks, recreation and conservation for their assistance.



The IAPD [Best of the Best Awards Gala](#)

Friday, November 1, 2019

This prestigious event takes place annually in the fall. It is an excellent opportunity for member agencies to recognize businesses, media, citizen volunteers and other units of government for the support they give to furthering park, recreation and conservation initiatives. Awards include: [Illinois Parks' Top Journalist](#); [Best Friend of Illinois Parks – Small, Mid-Sized and Large Business Categories](#); [Intergovernmental Cooperation](#); [Partnership](#); [Helen Doria Arts in the Park](#); [Best Green Practices](#); [Good Sportsmanship](#) and [Outstanding Citizen Volunteer of the Year](#).

Members can recognize outstanding board members who have given generously of their time and talents to their community and their state association with the following awards:

Board Member Service Anniversary Awards

Agencies may honor board members who have served [10](#), [15](#), [20](#), [25](#), [30](#), [35](#), [40](#) and more years with this award from IAPD. Awards are presented at the IAPD [Best of the Best Awards Gala](#) in the fall; however, other arrangements can be made for board members unable to attend the gala.

Note: Board Member Service Anniversary Awards can be created for any number of years of service.

Outgoing Board Member Awards

Agencies may recognize board members who will be stepping down from their local board after any number of years of service with the [IAPD Outgoing Board Member Award](#). Each award is personalized with the board member and agency name, along with the board member's number of years of service and is shipped to the agency for presentation on the local level.



2018 Rising Star, George Bridges Jr., commissioner of the [Waukegan Park District](#), accepts his award from IAPD President/CEO Peter Murphy and 2018 IAPD Chairman John Hoscheit.

Rising Star Award

This annual award is presented to a commissioner who has completed a minimum of one year, but not more than six years of service as a board member. The recipient of the [Rising Star Award](#) has demonstrated exemplary performance in duties and responsibilities as a board member, while making a positive impact in the field of parks, recreation and conservation including involvement in IAPD activities. This award is presented during the awards luncheon at the annual [IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference](#) in January.

Mike Cassidy Commissioner Community Service Award

This annual award is presented to a commissioner whose volunteer service to his or her community emulates the vision and dedicated efforts shown by long-time commissioner Mike Cassidy to improve the quality of life for those in his or her community. Recipients of this award have demonstrated the highest example of community service, personal integrity and ingenuity. This award is presented during the awards luncheon at the annual [IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference](#) in January.



Ian Linnabary (center), [Rockford Park District](#) board president, receives the [2018 Mike Cassidy Commissioner Community Service Award](#) at the [Soaring to New Heights Conference Awards Luncheon](#), presented by IAPD President/CEO Peter Murphy and 2018 IAPD Chairman John Hoscheit.

Commissioner of the Year Award

The recipient of this award has displayed an outstanding passion for supporting and promoting parks, recreation and conservation in his or her community, as well as throughout the state. Recipients must have served a minimum of six years as a member of a local board, demonstrated skills in dealing with people, and have helped to carry out the IAPD mission. This award is presented during the awards luncheon at the annual [IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference](#) in January.



Lester Long Sr. (center), [Dolton Park District](#) commissioner, receives the 2018 [Commissioner of the Year Award](#) at the [Soaring to New Heights Conference Awards Luncheon](#), presented by IAPD President/CEO Peter Murphy and 2018 IAPD Chairman John Hoscheit.

Recognize the longevity of your park district, forest preserve, conservation, recreation or special recreation agency with the following:



The [Waukegan Park District](#) accepts a 50-Year Agency Anniversary Award at the [Best of the Best Awards Gala](#).

Agency Anniversary Awards

This award recognizes a park district, forest preserve, conservation, recreation or special recreation agency celebrating its 25th, 50th, 75th, 100th, or more years of providing park, recreation and conservation services to their communities. Other anniversary years are available upon request. Awards are presented at the IAPD [Best of the Best Awards Gala](#) in the fall; however, other arrangements can be made for agencies unable to attend the gala.

Recognize an outstanding promotional effort for the Park District Youth License Plate with this award:

Youth License Plate Award – Best Promotional Practices

Any park district, forest preserve, conservation, recreation or special recreation agency that has shown innovative, creative ways to promote the [Park District Youth License Plate](#) through events, programs, etc., may apply for this award. (Example: [Flying 4 KIDS kite fly](#).)

This award is presented at the IAPD Business Meeting during the annual [IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference](#) in January.



Mary Liz Jayne and Kari Altpeter with the [Lisle Park District](#), accept the 2018 [Youth License Plate Award for Best Promotional Practices](#) from 2018 IAPD Chairman John Hoscheit.

Recognize the support your agency has received from volunteers, elected officials, community groups, local churches, businesses or school districts with the following award from the [Illinois Association of Park Districts](#) and the Illinois Park and Recreation Association:

Community Service Award

Community Service Awards are given by your agency to an individual, business, etc., for recognition of ongoing support, outstanding contributions of time, money, services and volunteer work for the advancement of parks, recreation and conservation. The Community Service Award may also be presented as a memorial to those who have served their community in an exemplary manner.

This award is presented by your agency on the local level to the individual or business of your choice. Agencies may pick up their awards during the annual [IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference](#) in January.

Recognize a professional in the field of parks and recreation with the following award:

IAPD Honored Professional Award

The **IAPD Honored Professional Award** is presented to a park, recreation, forest preserve or conservation professional who has worked closely with citizens and the **Illinois Association of Park Districts** to improve the quality of life for all people in Illinois.

Recipients of the Honored Professional Award have demonstrated remarkable talents in encouraging local board members to excel as citizen advocates in advancing the field of parks and recreation. Recipients also believe in the **IAPD mission** and have a history of supporting its endeavors. This award is presented during the awards luncheon at the annual **IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference** in January.



Carrie Fullerton (center), Bloomingdale Park District executive director, receives the 2018 Mike Cassidy Commissioner Community Service Award at the **Soaring to New Heights Conference Awards Luncheon**, presented by IAPD President/CEO Peter Murphy and 2018 IAPD Chairman John Hoscheit.

Bring recognition to your agency while improving the delivery of recreation services to your residents through the voluntary, comprehensive evaluation process of the **Illinois Distinguished Accredited Agency Award** program.



IAPD/IPRA Distinguished Accredited Agency Award

Any Illinois park district, forest preserve, conservation, recreation or special recreation agency that is a member of the **IAPD** may apply for the **IAPD/IPRA Distinguished Accredited Agency Award**. The purpose of this award is to establish a voluntary program of standards for recognizing park and recreation agencies that provide superior services to their constituents.

Agencies that apply will undergo a rigorous evaluation process, which serves as an excellent self-evaluation. There are a number of benefits in applying for and receiving this prestigious award, including increasing operational efficiency and effectiveness, solidifying internal and external agency standards, and being recognized as a leader in the state of Illinois in the field of parks and recreation. This award is presented at the awards luncheon during the annual **IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference** in January.



The **Decatur Park District** accepts the 2018 **Distinguished Accredited Agency Award**.

Track your commitment and gain recognition as a park district, forest preserve, conservation, recreation or special recreation agency board member by participating in the [IAPD Board Member Development Program](#).

Board Member Development Program

The [IAPD Board Member Development Program](#) gives recognition to local board members who consistently go above and beyond the call of duty through committee involvement, attendance at continuing educational opportunities, and achievements at the local, state and national levels.

Participation in the [Board Member Development Program](#) can garner numerous benefits including recognition from fellow colleagues, legislators, media and the public. The program tracks accomplishments obtained during terms on your local board, useful during re-election. Participants receive Board Development Units (BDUs) for activities they do to better themselves as board members.



Roy Sansone, board vice-president of the [Park District of Forest Park](#), accepts a Master Board Member award from 2018 IAPD Chairman John Hoscheit.

Levels of Achievement in the IAPD Board Member Development Program

One hundred units gains participants recognition as Notable Board Members, 400 units as Distinctive Board Members and 750 units gains participants recognition as Master Board Members, the highest level in the program.

Affinity Programs

IAPD has joined with several entities to provide more resources for our members. IAPD's goal is to offer programs and services that will not only improve the bottom line, but will also increase profitability and operating efficiency. For detailed information on these affinity programs, contact IAPD at (217) 523-4554 or iapd@ilparks.org.

Illinois Parks Association Risk Services (IPARKS)

Take advantage of the risk management expertise and stable, predictable pricing and coverage offered by the [IPARKS](#) self-insurance pool. With more than 170 participating IAPD members, [IPARKS](#) is tailored to meet the specific property and liability coverage needs of Illinois park districts and recreation agencies. [IPARKS](#)

earned a **Demotech**, Inc. Financial Stability Rating® of AAA (Excellent), the highest rating, for 15 consecutive years. **Contact Ryan Pnakovich at (773) 414-4238 / rpnakovich@bfgroup.com.**



Illinois Park District Liquid Asset Fund Plus Class

[IPDLAF+ Class](#) offers its participants a professionally managed portfolio with a competitive money market rate and unlimited check writing privileges. The fund stresses "safety of principal" as the number one objective and has earned an AAAM* rating by Standard and Poor's. Additional fixed income investment products are available through an investment adviser to assist IPDLAF+ Class participants in seeking to maximize results. **Contact Michelle Binns at (312) 523-2428 or <mailto:binns@pfm.com> for more information.**



*The AAAM rating is given when safety is excellent. There is superior capacity to maintain principal value and limit exposure to loss.

Purchasing Card

[PFM Asset Management LLC](#) offers the [Purchasing Card](#), which is a specialized credit card that empowers agency employees to purchase goods and services directly. This not only eliminates the typical requisition, purchasing, receiving and accounts payable process, but it also enables agencies to streamline the buying process, control maverick purchases, reduce acquisition expenses, maintain an audit trail and obtain cash rebates. Cards look and operate similar to credit cards, but they do not carry a revolving line of credit. Individual card limits can be established per transaction, per month and by vendor. **Contact Michelle Binns at (312) 523-2428 or binns@pfm.com for more information.**



Call One

IAPD's member benefit program with [Call One](#), a single-source telecommunications provider and the nation's largest reseller of AT&T products and services, simplifies telecommunication and provides high-quality customer service with an emphasis on personal relationships and service. The level of attention you receive from [Call One](#) is rare to the industry and exclusive to members of the IAPD. Some of our members are being overcharged for their telecom needs. IAPD's lower pricing is accompanied by [Call One's](#):



- Outstanding personalized customer care
- Simplified, consolidated billing
- Management assistance and network support
- Utilization of the most efficient and reliable technology
- Equipment upgrades and replacement systems

IAPD encourages its members to take advantage of [Call One's](#) experience and knowledge by affording a Call One representative the opportunity to view your current telecommunication status. **To obtain a FREE analysis of rates, services and billing from Call One, please contact Larry Widmer at (312) 252-4955 or lwidmer@callone.com.**

Credit Card Processing

Membership in the Illinois Association of Park Districts has its privileges, including a specially negotiated program of card processing services. [Bank of America Merchant Services](#) has teamed up with the IAPD to provide our members with specially negotiated rates, online access to critical reporting information, a comprehensive suite of innovative payment solutions and more. **For more information, call Bank of America Merchant Services at (888) 317-5402 or tellmemore@bankofamericamerchant.com.**



IAPD Energy Program

IAPD's agreement with [Seven Utility Management Consultants, Ltd. \(Seven\)](#) offers a professional consulting service for the purchase of electricity and natural gas for our membership. The goal of this agreement is to save money for all our member agencies on utility expenses. We anticipate savings up to 20% by having the utilities professionally negotiated and managed on a full-time basis by [Seven](#).



[Seven](#) will negotiate with the top electricity and natural gas providers in the state by having them all bid on your utility business. [Seven](#) will share all of its pricing analysis (including all bids) and prepare an individualized summary bid offer sheet for each park district. **Contact Dale Snyder, National Account Manager, at (501) 835-3142 to get your FREE price quote.**

Colonial Life

As a leader in the voluntary benefits industry for more than 70 years, [Colonial Life](#) has an award-winning reputation for hassle-free service, innovation and products. [Colonial Life](#) can help your agency put together a suite of cost-management solutions to help manage the rising cost of employee benefits – and still provide employees the quality benefits and services they deserve. [Colonial Life](#) benefit services and strategies can assist with today's budgetary and benefit challenges. Their offerings include benefit plan designs, flexible spending account, communications, voluntary benefits insurance options, dependent verification services, wellness program implementation and promotion, enrollment planning and benefits communication. **Contact David Weinstein at (630)-935-7282 or at dave.weinstein@coloniallife.com to learn more about how [Colonial Life](#) can serve your agency.**



NCSI/SSCI

SSCI's national background check program has become the gold standard for many park districts seeking a comprehensive and affordable background screening program for their volunteers and employees. NCSI/SSCI has helped agencies nationwide

define the specific components used for a comprehensive national criminal background check system. NCSI/SSCI is an NAPBS-accredited company that validates clients' trust as a market leader and reinforces its promise to minimize liability. Less than two percent of background screening companies have earned this recognition. IAPD encourages its members to take advantage of NCSI/SSCI's experience and knowledge by affording them the opportunity to discuss your background check needs and responsibilities. Contact Chris Goodman at cgoodman@SSCI2000.com or 866-996-7412 for more information.



TIPS – The Interlocal Purchasing System

Purchasing is a necessary activity for any business or organization. TIPS can provide a proven process to eliminate purchasing related stress for governmental entities. Contact Randy Ramey at randy.ramey@tips-usa.com and let TIPS simplify your life. TIPS can also be found on the web at tips-usa.com.



Position Papers from the Illinois Association of Park Districts

Helping Illinois' park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation and special recreation agencies address the challenges of today and tomorrow.

Position Papers Enclosed

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POSITION OF THE ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF PARK DISTRICTS

Beyond school programs – the role of park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation and special recreation agencies

The issue

The demand for beyond-school programming is overwhelming. Twenty-five percent of the country's kindergarten through twelfth-grade youth is responsible for taking care of themselves. These children spend an average of nearly seven hours per week unsupervised after school.¹ The Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD) recognizes that children and adolescents who are unsupervised need recreation programs to keep them physically, socially and mentally healthy.

Background

Nearly two-thirds of school-aged children and adolescents are living with a single employed parent or two parents who are both employed.² These families are more likely to have unsupervised care after school. When asked, 30 percent of the children who were not in a beyond school program said that they would like to participate if a program were available in the community. Research shows that participation in beyond school programs is positively associated with better school attendance, a more positive attitude toward school work, higher aspirations for college, finer work habits, better interpersonal skills, reduced dropout rates, higher quality homework, less time spent in unhealthy behaviors and improved grades.³ Children and adolescents need this type of programming so that they don't fall victim to crime, gangs, substance abuse, teen pregnancy, obesity and other problems that can affect them for a lifetime.⁴

Crime and drugs

Police officers know that in the hour after school lets out, violent juvenile crime suddenly triples.⁵ In a random survey of 1,178 police chiefs, sheriffs and prosecutors, respondents were asked to rank the impact of several strategies to reduce youth violence and crime. By more than a four to one margin, respondents chose providing beyond-school programs for school-aged children rather than hiring more police officers as having the greater impact in reducing youth violence and crime.⁶

Children, especially adolescents, are at a greater risk of using drugs and alcohol if left unsupervised. Results from the 2002 Monitoring the Future study of 44,000 eighth, tenth and twelfth graders showed that more than half of twelfth graders have used an illicit drug, 30 percent have used some drug other than marijuana and 11 percent have used ecstasy.⁷ Students who spend no time in extracurricular activities are 49 percent more likely to use drugs and 37 percent more likely to become teen parents than those who spend one to four hours per week in extracurricular activities.⁸

Television

On average, U.S. children watch four hours of television per day. It is recommended that they watch no more than one to two hours per day of educational, nonviolent programming.⁹ More than half of teens (54 percent) say they wouldn't watch so much TV or play video games if they had other things to do after school.¹⁰

Obesity

If children are left unsupervised, they tend to be less active and eat unhealthy foods causing weight gain. Overweight children and adolescents are at an increased risk of developing type II diabetes, cardiovascular problems, orthopedic abnormalities, gout, arthritis and skin problems. Also, being overweight is likely to negatively affect children's social and psychological

1 [Afterschool Alliance, *America After 3pm Executive Summary*, 2005.](#)

2 [National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, *After-School Care Programs*, 2000.](#)

3 [U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, *National Center for Education Statistics*](#). (1998). *National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988: A profile of the American eighth grader*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

4 [Afterschool Alliance, *Working Families and Afterschool*](#), 2001.

5 [Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, *After School Programs Will Slash School and Youth Violence*](#), 2000.

6 Mason-Dixon Polling and Research. (2002). *National law enforcement leadership survey*. Columbia, MD. Retrieved from: <http://www.fightcrime.org/>.

7 [National Institute on Drug Abuse \(NIDA\) & National Institute of Health \(NIH\). \(2002\). *Monitoring the Future* study.](#) Ann Arbor, MI: [University of Michigan, Institute for Social Research](#).

8 [U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, *National Center for Education Statistics*](#). (1998). [National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988: A profile of the American eighth grader](#). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

9 [Start Early: Learning Begins At Birth, *Special Conference Report What Impacts A Child's Development*](#), 2003.

10 Penn, Schoen & Berland Associates. (2001). *Telephone interviews with a national sample of 500 teens, 14 to 17 years of age*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from: <http://www.ymca.net/resrm/research/surveySummary.html>.

development and has been linked to the premature onset of puberty.¹¹ Children who are involved in beyond school programs are encouraged to be active, are provided with healthier food options and are less likely to become overweight.

Conclusion

Youth participating in beyond-school programs are involved in physical and educational activities that create a basis for a lifetime of healthy choices.

Actions

The [Illinois Association of Park Districts](#) will make financial assistance available to our agencies for the creation of beyond school programs. IAPD will do this through our [PowerPlay! grant program](#), which was initially funded by the office of the Illinois Attorney General. The [PowerPlay! grant](#) is currently funded from the proceeds of sales and subsequent renewals of the [Park District Youth License Plate](#).

Not only do beyond-school programs need financial incentives, but they also require guidelines, training and technical assistance to help provide physical activities and educational materials.¹² [IAPD's PowerPlay! program](#) includes an implementation manual complete with the steps necessary to create a health-oriented beyond-school program. The [Illinois Association of Park Districts](#) will provide Illinois park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation and special recreation agencies with a template for a beyond-school program that focuses on health, fitness and nutrition for children.

11 [Child Trends Data Bank](http://www.childtrendsdata-bank.org/health/status/15OverweightChildrenYouth.htm). (2002). Health status and disability, Overweight children and youth. Retrieved from: <http://www.childtrendsdata-bank.org/health/status/15OverweightChildrenYouth.htm>.

12 [National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion](#), *After-School Care Programs*, 2000.

POSITION OF THE ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF PARK DISTRICTS

The economic impact of park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies in Illinois

The issue

The [Illinois Association of Park Districts \(IAPD\)](#) contracted with Economics Research Associates (ERA) of Chicago to measure the economic impact generated by park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies in Illinois.

ERA's research revealed that public parks and recreation is a \$3 billion industry in Illinois. There are more than 380 park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies that provide the people of Illinois with publicly funded parks, nature preserves, trails, greenways, recreational programs, facilities and a host of other places for healthy recreation.

Background

Economic Research Associates' findings revealed that IAPD members had the following direct economic impacts:

- Park districts, forest preserves, recreation and conservation agencies employ approximately 62,900 persons annually.
- The 54,000 part-time employees at these agencies include many seasonal positions. Employed between May and August each year, many of these employees are high school and college-aged persons, which makes park and recreation agencies a major employer of young people in Illinois.
- Agency employees earn a total of \$621.8 million in wages and full-time benefits, including health insurance and retirement contributions, per year.
- These agencies generate a demand for about \$475.5 million in operational spending per annum for services and products such as wholesale and retail supplies; phone services; utilities; legal, auditing, architectural, engineering and planning services, as well as other contractual services.
- About 73 percent, or \$347 million, of their operational spending is spent with Illinois businesses, suppliers and contractors.
- Agencies generate a total of \$371 million in capital investments for development and construction of new parks and recreational facilities, of which in-state suppliers of construction material and related equipment garner more than \$337 million.
- Agencies' capital spending supports about 4,000 construction jobs, many of which are union labor, with associated earnings of about \$185 million.
- These units of local government account for \$16.7 million in state income taxes on direct earnings annually.
- Agencies' cumulative spending, earnings and other related economic activity contribute \$3 billion to the state economy each year.

Conclusion

In addition to the undeniable benefits that park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies provide to improving the quality of life, they also wield a tremendous impact as an industry on Illinois' economy. IAPD members represent a significant segment of business activity within the state of Illinois. Park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation and special recreation agencies are good investments for Illinois residents.

Actions

The [Illinois Association of Park Districts](#) will conduct ongoing [research](#) that shows the impact Illinois' park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies have on the state's economy.

In addition, the results of the [research](#) will be available to our membership. The IAPD membership will pay a portion of the research costs augmented by [Friends of Illinois Parks](#) donations. An example is [The Economic Impact of Local Park and Recreation Agencies in Illinois](#), a study conducted in 2005 by Economic Research Associates (ERA) for the [Illinois Association of Park Districts](#). The results of this study were compiled into a brochure titled Parks and Recreation Employs Illinois.

NOTE: The above position is based on findings presented in [The Economic Impact of Local Park and Recreation Agencies in Illinois](#), a research project conducted by Economic Research Associates for the [Illinois Association of Park Districts](#). The data in that study are derived from information spanning 2002 to 2004.

POSITION OF THE ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF PARK DISTRICTS

Ethical conduct of park, recreation and conservation agency boards

The issue

The officials who serve on the elected boards of park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies must conduct themselves and their business in a manner that complies with all applicable state laws. Beyond that, park, recreation and conservation agency boards should commit themselves to developing their own ethical standards that encourage civil conduct, respectful and thoughtful debate and consensus building for effective public policymaking.

Understanding and adhering to the letter of the law

Members who serve on the elected and appointed boards of park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies must understand and act in accordance with such applicable state laws as the [Park District Code](#) (70ILCS Par 1-1 et seq.), the [Open Meetings Act](#) (5 ILCS par 120/1), the [Freedom of Information Act](#) (5 ILCS, Par. 140/1) and a host of other laws that prescribe the proper way for local governments to conduct public business.

Although the [State Officials and Employees Act](#) (P.A. 93-615) ostensibly addresses the ethical conduct of officers and employees of the executive and legislative branches of state government, [Public Act 93-617](#) amended the State Officials and Employees Act to require that, by the spring of 2004, all units of local government adopt ethics ordinances or resolutions “in a manner no less restrictive” than those that govern the conduct of state officials.

Ordinances and resolutions in keeping with the Act typically include prohibitions upon political activities by agency employees during work time and prohibitions upon soliciting or accepting gifts from people who have – or who may have – a business relationship (or some other stake) in the operation of the agency. Local ordinances and resolutions may also designate an agency ethics advisor, create an ethics commission or set out penalties for violating the ethics resolution or ordinance.

Board members can learn about their legally prescribed ethical responsibilities by consulting their agency counsel or the [Illinois Association of Park Districts' general counsel](#). They should also take advantage of the educational opportunities offered by the [Illinois Association of Park Districts](#). These include books on legal topics, seminars, workshops and individualized board trainings offered by the association.

Acting within the spirit of the law

Many park, recreation and conservation agencies have adopted or modified The Board Member Code of Conduct and The Board Member's Creed, both developed by the Illinois Association of Park Districts. These two statements speak to the principles underlying ethics legislation by providing a framework for civil discourse, fair dealings and open government.

The Board Member Code of Conduct is a statement meant to remind the public – and the board – that the board is committed to performing the public's work with the highest integrity. It is a 22-point pledge to ethical, business-like and lawful conduct, including the proper use of authority and appropriate decorum when acting as a board member. It includes prohibitions on such things as: nepotism, using privileged information for personal gain and holding board meetings in the absence of the executive director. It prescribes such positive practices as: making decisions involving the welfare of the agency based only on study and evidence; respecting the board's commitment to work with the executive; participating in community activities; responding to the needs of the entire community; and respecting and listening to the opinions of other board members.

The Board Member's Creed is a more personal instrument: a quick set of ethical reminders to put commissioners and trustees in the right frame of mind for effective board service. The Creed is a list divided into five parts that reinforce the principles of The Board Member Code of Conduct.

[The Illinois Association of Park Districts](#) makes copies of The Board Member Code of Conduct and the Creed available to the boards of all Illinois' park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies to adopt or modify to suit their own needs.

Conclusion

Park district, forest preserve, conservation and recreation agency board members must understand and abide by all state laws that apply to them. Board members, as part of their fiduciary duty, must take it upon themselves to understand and practice the ethical standards as codified by state laws. Beyond this, all park district, forest preserve, conservation and recreation agency boards should embrace the spirit of state and local ethics laws by making honest, civil, open and accountable public service the cornerstones of terms of service.

Actions

[The Illinois Association of Park Districts \(IAPD\)](#) created The Board Member's Creed as a guide to individual board member responsibilities for performing proper functions as a board member, maintaining desirable relations with other members of the board, meeting responsibilities to the community and working with the executive.

[The Illinois Association of Park Districts](#) supports board member commitment to ethical public service by encouraging board members to follow the tenants of The Board Member's Creed.

IAPD created The Board Member Code of Conduct as an instrument that provides a framework so discussions regarding whether a particular action is ethical or unethical can go beyond an airing of individual opinions.

[The Illinois Association of Park Districts](#) encourages boards to adopt a resolution such as The Board Member Code of Conduct as a pledge to work in harmony to best represent the citizens served.

POSITION OF THE ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF PARK DISTRICTS

Protection of natural resources

The issue

Illinois' park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies are stewards of more than 350,000 acres of public land and open space. These public lands include neighborhood and community parks, forest preserves, conservation areas, dedicated nature preserves, open space, grasslands, prairies, golf courses, trails, greenways, ponds, riparian habitat, streams, lakes, wetlands and significant fish and wildlife habitat. These sites serve the local recreational needs of a demanding public in a heavily populated state. Some of the areas contain pristine, ecologically rich, unique natural features, as well as diverse flora and fauna.

These acres require considerable care and attention to ensure their preservation and long-term protection. The agencies responsible for the stewardship of these lands are held to the highest standards by the public and are expected to set the example for the protection of the natural resources within their purview and political jurisdictions.

[The Illinois Association of Park Districts \(IAPD\)](#) affirms that all people, regardless of age, gender, race or socioeconomic status, should expect that all necessary steps and prudent measures will be taken by all Illinois park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies to ensure the protection of the natural resources entrusted to their care.

Background

Regulatory functions associated with the protection of natural resources are the statutory responsibility and domain expressly assigned to select federal agencies, e.g., the [U.S. EPA](#), the [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers](#), the [U.S. Department of the Interior](#) (National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service), the [U.S. Department of Agriculture](#) (Forest Service), the [U.S. Department of Homeland Security](#) and the [U.S. Coast Guard](#); and/or state agencies that include, but are not necessarily limited to, the [Illinois Environmental Protection Agency](#), the [Illinois Department of Natural Resources](#), the [Illinois Department of Agriculture](#), the [Illinois Department of Public Health](#), the [Illinois Department of Labor](#) and the [Illinois Department of Human Services](#).

Therefore, the [IAPD](#) is not directing this assessment toward those federal or state agencies and their regulatory functions or legislative mandates. Instead, the focus of this position paper is on the statutory powers and duties assigned expressly to Illinois park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies relative to the protection of natural resources along with the inherent responsibilities associated with stewardship for public lands.

The role of park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies

[IAPD](#) recognizes that park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies must adhere to the applicable federal and state laws related to protecting the environment. We expect our members are aware of all relevant environmental laws and administrative regulations, and, as required, are in full compliance. Members are duty bound to use best practices to satisfy the intent and letter of the law, especially related to environmental protection issues. Taxpayers expect agency boards and staffs to discharge their duties appropriately and perform necessary operational procedures to ensure compliance.

Beyond the obvious responsibility for compliance with environmental laws and regulations, IAPD member agencies should be model government units in demonstrating care and attention toward the protection of natural resources within their jurisdiction. Those agencies possessing unique natural resources must take extraordinary measures to protect fragile resource areas for their community.

To sustain these natural resource assets, we must continually educate and inform the public in order to secure support and needed financial resources. In order to conserve and preserve some ecosystems, extraordinary effort along with diligence and commitment are required in perpetuity. Decisions that may affect the long-term future of local natural resources must also be based on the best available information and science. Agencies not sufficiently informed or aware of how to best manage or care for some of their natural resources need to seek guidance from federal or state agency experts. Making a mistake in the management and protection of natural resources may be damaging and occasionally irreparable. Some decisions or actions can be irreversible and may forever alter the character and sustainability of a natural resource.

In most cases, the primary responsibility of local park and recreation agencies is to maintain the current parklands and open space to ensure public access today, as well as in the future. Agency staff must be properly trained and equipped to address this challenging task. We urge that park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies budget for the continuing education and training of staff, particularly related to environmental and natural resource matters. A commitment to the use of the latest technology will, in the long-term, benefit the management of the natural resources, as well as overall agency operations.

Conclusion

Preservation of the natural environment is essential to maintaining community sustainability. Illinois park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies are recognized as the responsible stewards of significant natural resources and will be held accountable for ensuring these public assets are protected and preserved for current and future generations.

Park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies remain dedicated to their duty toward the environment and act responsibly as the caretakers of some of Illinois' most precious natural resources.

Actions

[The Illinois Association of Park Districts](#) will:

- Educate legislators about the need to secure financial support for preservation of natural resources.
- Educate the public about the importance of supporting preservation of natural resources in Illinois.
- Disseminate to our members information and technical assistance for the best management of our natural resources.

POSITION OF THE ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF PARK DISTRICTS

Funding Illinois park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies

The issue

Illinois park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies are local government units with a wide variety of statutory authorities, including the power to levy taxes for park and recreation purposes. Even so, today, 47 percent of these agency revenues comes from sources other than taxes. Many income-generating facilities are operating at a profit to support future development and improvements. [Illinois Association of Park District \(IAPD\)](#) members aggressively pursue other varied means to address funding needs through grants, establishing foundations, forming partnerships, offering sponsorship opportunities, promoting land cash donation ordinances with their municipalities, conducting fund raisers, securing gifts and bequests and passing referenda, as well as issuing capital development bonds.

Background

Park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies can no longer rely exclusively on tax dollars for annual operating expenses. Fees and charges for programs and activities have become the standard practice. This combination of tax dollars coupled with fees, charges and other funding sources is essential to keep program costs and tax levies at acceptable levels. Resident taxpayers and program users alike find the use of fees for specific programs and activities to be a reasonable and fair approach to offering quality programs. In many cases, nonresidents can also participate in programs and activities by paying an increased fee.

IAPD members are familiar with the wide array of federal and state grants currently available and aggressively pursue these funds for such purposes as: land acquisitions, park developments, facility improvements, trail and greenway developments, ecosystem restoration, museum upgrades, historic restoration, cultural events, water resource improvements, youth-at-risk and beyond-school programs, fish and wildlife habitat restoration, programs and activities for young and old, as well as recreation programs and facilities for those with special needs and challenges.

Some of the grants that advance park and recreation purposes include:

- **Federal:** [Land & Water Conservation Fund](#), [Rivers and Trails Conservation Act \(RTCA\)](#), [Urban Park and Recreation Recovery](#), [Inter-Surface Modal Transportation Enhancement Act](#), [Transportation Enhancement Act 21](#), [Conservation and Reinvestment Act](#) (CARA)
- **State:** [Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development](#), [Bikeways](#), [Recreational Trails program](#), [Urban and Community Forest grants](#), [C2000](#), [Museum Grants](#), [Wildlife Preservation Funds](#), [Illinois Conservation Foundation Grants](#), [Illinois Arts Council Grants](#), [DOA-Sustainable Agriculture Grants](#), [IEPA-Clean Waters Grants](#), [IDOT Trail Enhancement Program](#).

Many member agencies are also pursuing other sources for grants from private foundations interested in supporting community development programs and activities. While matching local needs with a private foundation is often challenging, IAPD members continue to research and pursue these opportunities.

Some IAPD members are encouraging planned gifts and bequests from residents as a means of demonstrating support for needed community improvements while also providing opportunities to establish family legacies or to remember loved ones. More than 65 agencies have an affiliated non-profit friends group or foundation in support of their mission, and these agencies realize many successes in advancing parks and recreation at the local level.

Partnerships with other units of government, such as school districts and library districts, as well as with the private sector provide unique opportunities that benefit the public. There are countless examples of success stories from across Illinois where park and recreation needs have been markedly improved as a result of community leaders and business partners joining together for the common good.

Conclusion

The ability to secure adequate and reliable funding for current and future needs remains a significant challenge for Illinois' park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies.

[The Illinois Association of Park Districts](#) recognizes the role and importance of federal and state grant programs that enable our members to provide open space, parks and recreation and protect natural resources.

Actions

[The Illinois Association of Park Districts](#) supports its members by aggressively pursuing all available revenue sources, both public and private. The Association assists its members in providing quality parks, recreation facilities and programs.

We will:

- Work to preserve dedicated funding for the [Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development program \(OSLAD\)](#), the [Natural Areas Acquisition Fund \(NAAF\)](#) and the [Land and Water Conservation Fund \(LWCF\)](#).
- Work with our members to ensure that legislators and the general public understand the benefits of parks and recreation and the importance of providing sufficient and reliable funds, including grant funds, for current and future needs.
- Educate legislators about the need to secure financial support for the preservation of natural resources.
- Present our members with fact-based [research](#) highlighting the proven benefits of Illinois park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies.

POSITION OF THE ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF PARK DISTRICTS

Partnerships: Leveraging the resources of park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies

The issue

Park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies – perhaps more than any other forms of local government – have been able to seize upon their considerable goodwill to attract partners or sponsors from the public, private and nonprofit sectors in ways that not only help the agencies, but also the communities they serve. Oftentimes the motive for partnering is to pool resources with like-minded government or civic organizations to serve an unmet community need. But even when an agency enters into a partnership in hopes of deriving a new revenue stream, the result is not profit, but a de facto reduction in user fees or taxes. Every dollar earned from a partnership is one less dollar that needs to come from tax revenues.

As particularly responsible and capable units of local government, park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies must explore all avenues for partnerships that can result in better service to their communities.

Partnership principles and objectives

Illinois park districts, forest preserves, recreation and conservation agencies partner with other organizations for a variety of locally determined motives, which typically include:

- Providing more non-tax revenue for the agency,
- Preserving natural resources or historic sites,
- Creating new educational opportunities for the community,
- Building better recreation facilities for the public, and
- Working for more effective local government.

The common threads in all successful partnerships are the principles of financial responsibility, increased capacity, greater efficiency and civic responsibility.

Providing more non-tax revenue for the agency

Agency partnership agreements that are primarily designed as revenue generators generally mirror private-sector partnerships. Agencies leverage the fact that their programs attract desirable audiences. For example, the [Decatur Park District](#) lowers user fees by selling advertising space to local businesses at strategic district locations (e.g., around its indoor running track).¹

Sixty-five park and recreation agencies in Illinois partner with foundations specifically designed to raise money for the needs of the agency. And, even without their own foundations, many more agencies attract charitable contributions. Between 1979 and 2004, \$3,185,000 of donations, local foundation grants and estate endowments poured into the [Geneseo Park District](#). The district put these charitable contributions toward the construction of a new community center and four other new facilities, along with four renovation projects at existing sites. Clearly, people trust that park districts will use their contributions wisely.²

Preserving resources

While some groups partner out of a sense of philanthropy or a desire for profit, others partner with park, recreation and conservation agencies because they sense a “mission meld” exists between them and the agency. The [East St. Louis Park District](#)’s partnership with the [University of Illinois](#) to devise a [plan to reinvigorate Jones-Hall Park](#) is a prime example of this kind of relationship.³

Creating new educational opportunities for the community

School districts and park districts often share common goals and concerns, especially when it comes to providing high quality sports and recreation venues. Time and again, these two units of local government have worked through political and legal impediments in order to serve the public by ensuring that park and school programs are getting the most use out of public facilities and aren’t duplicating each other’s efforts. For example, the [Morton Grove Park District](#) partners with five area school districts. The park district uses one school’s music room for community jazz band practices; another school uses a nearby park every day for recess; the schools’ swim teams all practice at the park district’s aquatic facilities; and the park district runs basketball programs in the schools. When a local school referendum failed, the [Morton Grove Park District](#)

1 [Illinois Parks & Recreation magazine, September/October 2005](#), p. 61.

2 [Illinois Parks & Recreation magazine, July/August 2005](#), pp. 20-21.

3 [Illinois Parks & Recreation magazine, November/December 2001](#), pp 10-11.

stepped up to save after-school activities for 400 children.⁴

Building better recreation facilities for the public

Park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies are often the sole units of local government charged with the responsibility for building recreation facilities for the public. But, even in the pursuit of that mandate, these agencies take advantage of local opportunities to share both the risks and the rewards of creating state-of-the art facilities. For example, when the [Decatur Park District](#) and [Millikin University](#) both realized they were in the process of planning separate recreation centers, the two organizations worked through a two-year process to plan for a larger, more versatile facility. The result is the 87,000 square foot [Decatur Indoor Sports Center](#) (DISC), housed on the [Millikin](#) campus. The park district owns and operates the center for the university and the community. University students' activity fees pay for their use of the facility, and the district and the university equally share the net income.⁵

Working for more effective local government

Communities across the state often ask park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies to partner with other units of local government so that the community will ultimately win. To do so, agencies sometimes extend themselves beyond what is traditionally thought of as a "parks and recreation function." For example, the [Buffalo Grove Park District](#) helps reduce telecommunication costs for the village and school district by housing replication centers for a shared wireless communications network.⁶ Recently, officials from the [Tinley Park Park District](#), the [Roselle Park District](#) and the [Bolingbrook Park District](#) all got news from their village boards that district parks were the only viable sites for water detention basins. For the [Tinley Park Park District](#), that could have meant losing its ball diamonds and a soccer field. But with careful, coordinated planning, the district turned its ball fields into Pottawattomie Park, a new park that accomplishes both the village and the district's goals of controlling flood damage to a nearby residential area while maintaining recreational use of the area.⁷

Conclusion

Park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies have a unique understanding of local priorities and a proven track record of finding creative ways to respond to local needs. Although these agencies already excel at building partnerships that work, the [Illinois Association of Park Districts](#) will provide models and networking resources to assist agencies as they continue to expand their innovative approaches to partnering for the public good.

Actions

The [Illinois Association of Park Districts](#) will:

- Forge alliances with environmental, economic and human service agencies, as well as nonprofit organizations, at the state and national levels to benefit our membership.
- Assist our members by sharing partnership models and research to foster cooperative efforts at the local level.

4 [Illinois Parks & Recreation magazine, September/October 2005](#), pp 57-58.

5 [Illinois Parks & Recreation magazine, September/October, 2005](#) pp. 61-62.

6 [Illinois Parks & Recreation magazine, September/October 2002](#) pp 11-13.

7 [Illinois Parks & Recreation magazine, May/June 2005](#), pp. 30-33.

POSITION OF THE [ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF PARK DISTRICTS](#)

[Inclusion and recreation access](#)

The issue

The population of Illinois is comprised of a range of people of many ages, interests, abilities and cultural backgrounds. These differences help make communities strong and vibrant. Of the nearly 12.5 million people in Illinois, 1,999,717 have special needs or challenges, which can limit their full participation in recreational programming.¹ It is important to encourage and ensure that all people of Illinois are included in the planning and development of parks and recreation facilities and programs.

The [Illinois Association of Park Districts \(IAPD\)](#) advocates the development of inclusive recreational programs and facilities for persons with disabilities. Inclusive programs are defined as recreation opportunities that promote interaction between people with and without disabilities. In advocating for the development of these programs and facilities, [the IAPD](#) supports the necessary legislative action to ensure that they are of the highest quality possible. Furthermore, [the IAPD](#) supports the commitment of monetary resources at the local, state and federal levels so that these inclusions may be completed without undue financial strain on park district, forest preserve, recreation and conservation agency budgets.

Background

Many Illinois park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies directly provide services and facilities to persons with disabilities. Park districts in 175 Illinois communities provide this programming through intergovernmental cooperatives called Special Recreation Associations (SRAs). SRA policies invite inclusion, support choice, offer preferred service for residents, invite reciprocal agreements and provide specialized training to their staff.²

Park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies in Illinois have developed accessible parks, playgrounds, water parks, ice rinks, sports complexes and beachfronts. In one Illinois community, an accessible tree house, complete with ramps and nature lookouts, gives persons with disabilities an enriched outdoor experience.

Benefits of inclusion

Access to parks and recreation programs is undeniably a quality-of-life issue. Recent research shows that youth with and without disabilities made significant growth in their personal development, self-reliance, social interactions, communication and self-esteem in summer camps and outdoor recreational programs.³ The study also found that social interactions with peers increased 62 percent for the campers with disabilities and 68 percent for the campers without disabilities.⁴ This underscores the importance of providing recreational programming to those with disabilities and the benefit of integrating programming with young people without disabilities. The experience is rewarding for all. This also helps children develop a greater understanding and respect for persons different than themselves.

The emotional and health benefits of recreation are irrefutable. For persons with disabilities, recreation, leisure and play have proven to raise quality of life, as well as improve and maintain physical and psychological health and well being.⁵

The [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#), enacted in 1990, clearly states the right of equal access for all persons to services such as housing, transportation, shopping and communication, as well as for all local government services, such as park district, forest preserve, conservation and recreation agency services. New facility or park development must comply with the [ADA](#) and provide accessibility, just as all new building construction must. Some agencies, faced with renovating facilities, find complying with [ADA](#) a funding challenge.

On November 18, 2003, legislation went into effect in Illinois that relieved the property tax cap and made approximately \$16 million more funding available at the local level to provide park and recreation services for persons with disabilities. This new funding has made great inroads in funding recreational services to people with disabilities. The challenge of funding facility renovation, however, remains.

Conclusion

All of the benefits of recreation, such as developing self-esteem, better physical health, mental health, fitness and social

1 [U.S. Census 2000, Fast Facts-Illinois](#)

2 ["Recreation Inclusion Today and Tomorrow: The Role of Policies and Funding," McGovern, John N. *Impact*, University of Minnesota College of Education and Human Development.](#)

3 [Camping Magazine, National Inclusionary Camp Practices \(NICP\) study, July 2000.](#)

4 [Camping Magazine, NICP study.](#)

5 Shank, J. W., Coyle, C. P., Boyde, R., & Kinney, W. B. (1996). A classification scheme for therapeutic recreation research grounded in the rehabilitative sciences. [Therapeutic Recreation Journal](#), 30, 179-196.

skills are critically important for all people. Illinois park districts, through the special recreation association model, provide these services for people with disabilities through effective, efficient and safe programs. These community-based therapeutic recreation services have changed the quality of life for Illinois residents with disabilities for more than 35 years, and, with continued support from the General Assembly, will do so for decades to come.

Actions

- The [Illinois Association of Park Districts](#) will:
- Inform members of the [General Assembly](#) about the importance of supporting community-based therapeutic recreation services.
- Create public awareness and media opportunities to recognize park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies that provide quality services and facilities to persons with disabilities.
- Offer a statewide recognition program for special recreation associations.
- Support legislation to protect existing and new funding for agencies to implement or enhance services targeted for individuals with disabilities.

POSITION OF THE ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF PARK DISTRICTS

Elimination of secondhand smoke in public places

The issue

Illinois' park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies are dedicated to providing recreational opportunities for all citizens. The members of the [Illinois Association of Park Districts \(IAPD\)](#) strongly encourage people to use our public exercise facilities and programs to combat major health issues such as obesity, heart disease and respiratory abnormalities. These facilities are places where Illinoisans can improve their health, not places where they can become exposed to the health hazards associated with secondhand smoke.

Exercise and air pollution

The [Illinois Association of Park Districts](#) affirms that all people should have access to clean, healthy indoor and outdoor areas for exercise and recreation.

Poor air quality can result in negative consequences for those who exercise. Millions of Americans are living in areas where the air carries unhealthy levels of noxious pollutants such as ozone, carbon monoxide (found in cigarette smoke), fine particles, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide or lead. Exercise makes people more vulnerable to health damage from these pollutants. During exercise, people may increase their oxygen intake by as much as ten times their resting level.¹ Exercising in polluted air increases contact with pollutants and makes people vulnerable to health damage.

Steps must be taken to ensure clean air for today and for many generations to come

Approximately 53,000 nonsmoking Americans die annually from inhaling other people's tobacco smoke.² Breathing tobacco smoke can hurt anyone, but it is especially harmful to the elderly, the very young and those with existing respiratory problems. The [Environmental Protection Agency](#) ranks poor indoor air quality among the top five environmental risks to public health. Levels of indoor air pollution can be two to five times higher (and occasionally 100 times higher) than outdoor levels.³

A 2006 report from the [U.S. Surgeon General](#) concluded that there is no risk-free level of exposure to secondhand smoke. Nonsmokers exposed to secondhand smoke at home or work increase their risk of developing heart disease by 25 to 30 percent and increase their risk of developing lung cancer by 20 to 30 percent.⁴ This finding is a major public health concern because nearly half of all nonsmoking Americans are still regularly exposed to secondhand smoke.

Positive health effects of eliminating secondhand smoke in public places

Smoke free laws protect people from the dangers of secondhand smoke. The [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) recently issued an advisory that persons with heart disease should avoid indoor settings where smoking is allowed because of new evidence that even short-term exposure to secondhand smoke can trigger heart attacks. Smoke free laws protect not just those with diseases, but everyone. Air pollution levels have been found to be 82 percent lower, on average, in venues required by law to be smoke free, compared to those where smoking was permitted.⁵ Further, smoke free laws promote healthy lifestyles, encourage tobacco cessation and reduce the initiation of tobacco use by youth.

Conclusion

The members of the [Illinois Association of Park Districts](#) support initiatives to eliminate smoking in public places. One of our primary goals is to promote healthy lifestyles, and we view the elimination of smoking in public places as a step toward that goal.

Making the air cleaner is not the only benefit of smoking ban legislation. Publicity during public debates educates citizens to the health hazards of secondhand smoke. The process brings people concerned about health together. They may collaborate on other useful projects. And since many smokers sincerely wish to quit, smoking restrictions can provide an additional incentive for them to kick the addiction.

1 [American Lung Association](#), "Air Pollution and Exercise," 2000.

2 Bilofsky, Walt "Secondhand Smoke and Community Laws," 2003.

3 [American Lung Association](#), "Airing the Truth About Indoor and Outdoor Air Pollution," 2004.

4 <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/reports/>

5 [Bluegrass Action News](#), "UK Study Finds Smoke-free Law Reduces Indoor Air Pollution," 2004.

Actions

The Illinois Association of Park Districts will:

- Partner with community and statewide organizations, volunteers and health professionals to eliminate smoking in both indoor and outdoor public places.
- Assist our member agencies in developing non-smoking policies and initiatives at the local level. [IAPD](#) will accomplish this by researching our member agencies' smoking policies and sharing them with the membership to create an awareness of the unique policies that exist. [IAPD](#) has and will continue to work with the [American Lung Association of Illinois](#) and the [American Heart Association](#) on this and other health-related issues.

POSITION OF THE ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF PARK DISTRICTS

Healthy living – the role of park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies

The issue

Healthy living is fundamental in improving one's physical and emotional health and social well being. Parks and recreation services play a vital role in encouraging people to develop and maintain healthy lifestyles by providing the programs, the facilities and the protected environment that allow people to be physically and socially active.

Background

Research shows that one way to increase the population's level of physical activity is to provide easy access to nearby parks, playgrounds, greenways or trails.¹ A study by the [National Recreation and Park Association](#) found that, in terms of overall health, local park and recreation users reported fewer visits to a physician for purposes other than check-ups than did non-park users, even when controlling for the effects of age, income, education level, health status and other possible influences.²

Physical benefits

Active people have longer life spans and are at less risk of developing diseases. Active lifestyles decrease the risk of obesity and heart attacks.³ Maintaining a healthy body weight is easier on the heart and joints, which enables a more agile lifestyle as one ages. Physical activity also helps lower blood pressure and cholesterol, which can decrease the chance of heart attack and stroke.

Inactive people have a greater risk of developing some cancers, have more chance of developing diabetes, have a higher risk for osteoporosis and are more prone to injuries and accidents than physically active people.⁴

Emotional benefits

Physical activity has been shown to help people become more emotionally and mentally fit. Researchers at [Duke University](#) studied people suffering from depression for four months and found that 60 percent of the participants who exercised for 30 minutes three times a week overcame their depression without using antidepressant medication.⁵

In a study that explored the leisure behavior of 695 adults, half reported that they were in a better mood after visiting a park. Participants' negative moods decreased after leaving a park, and the park users reported lower levels of anxiety and sadness. The longer the participants stayed, the less stressed they became. Overall, results indicated that, in parks, people begin their recreation experiences in better moods and remain in better moods.⁶

Social benefits

According to the [Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology](#), people who are physically active are viewed as harder workers, as more confident and more self-controlled.⁷

Participating in sports and exercise programs at parks and recreation agencies can increase social opportunities. Friendship and companionship generated through participating in shared activities is an important need that motivates people to participate in opportunities offered at park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies.⁸ Community based physical activity programs offered at these agencies provide social interaction with peers and peer-led activities that are especially good for the elderly and children.

Illinois Association of Park Districts' member agencies provide programs that families can enjoy together. These shared activities reduce family stress and allow families to share time together in constructive and healthy ways that are conducive

1 [Parks for People](#), *A Healthier America? It's a Walk in the Park*, 2004

2 Ho, ChingHua, Laura Payne, Elizabeth Orsega-Smith and Geoffrey Godbey, "Parks, recreation and public health: parks and recreation improve the physical and mental health of our nation-research update." [Parks & Recreation](#), April 2003.

3 Overweight and Obesity: What You Can Do, [U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services](#) (<http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/calls/>).

4 NHS Health Scotland and The Scottish Executive, <http://www.healthyliving.gov.uk/physicalactivity>, 2005

5 [Mental Health Journal](#), Mental Health Benefits of Exercise, 2000

6 *Parks, recreation and public health: parks and recreation improve the physical and mental health of our nation-research update.* http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1145/is_38/ai_100960607, Copyright 2003 [NRPA](#)

7 [American Council of Exercise](#), *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 2000

8 Ho, ChingHua, Laura Payne, Elizabeth Orsega-Smith and Geoffrey Godbey, "Parks, recreation and public health: parks and recreation improve the physical and mental health of our nation-research update." [Parks & Recreation](#), April 2003.

to strengthening family bonds. In this way, agencies foster the positive emotional and social impacts that strong families engender.

Conclusion

[The Illinois Association of Park Districts](#) encourages people of all ages to be physically active in order to maintain healthy lifestyles.

[Illinois Association of Park Districts](#)' members offer outstanding programs and services for people of all ages seven days a week, 52 weeks a year. Agencies promote healthy lifestyles through fitness and recreation programs, cultural celebrations, museums, zoos and performing arts venues that improve the physical, emotional and social well being of all Illinois citizens.

Actions

[The Illinois Association of Park Districts](#) will:

- Promote our members' efforts to provide the resources that encourage people to maintain active, healthy lifestyles.
- Coordinate statewide public awareness campaigns on how to maintain healthy lifestyles through educational workshops and the Association's publications.

POSITION OF THE ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF PARK DISTRICTS

Importance of public sector fitness facilities

The issue

Illinois' park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies own and operate hundreds of fitness facilities throughout the state. Publicly operated fitness facilities play a vital role in providing access to affordable exercise opportunities for the state's residents.

In the U.S., as well as the state of Illinois, adult and childhood obesity rates are on the rise. Regular exercise is a necessary component of most doctor-recommended programs for achieving healthy lifestyles. Too often, however, the people who need them the most are unable to find affordable private-sector fitness opportunities near their homes. But many public park and recreation fitness centers serve these populations who are not historically served by private health clubs.

Public fitness facilities increase exercise rates, help fight disease and improve the economy

In the U.S., physical inactivity causes numerous physical and mental health problems, is responsible for an estimated 200,000 deaths per year and contributes to the obesity epidemic.¹ However, the [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#) have determined that creating and improving places to be active can result in a 25 percent increase in the number of people who exercise at least three times a week.²

By providing recreation and fitness centers, which are most often located in residential areas, park and recreation agencies bring fitness to the people. This proximity to fitness facilities has a direct impact on public participation in an exercise program. People with the best access to recreational facilities are 43 percent more likely to exercise 30 minutes most days than those with poor access.³ A recent report from the [American Journal of Health Promotion](#) says that people living in areas without public recreation facilities are more likely to be overweight.⁴ A recent report by the [Institute of Medicine](#) on combating childhood obesity even calls on local governments to expand the number of recreational facilities, parks and bike paths to help combat this national epidemic.⁵

In addition, public facilities make good economic sense. Park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies employ more than 62,900 people who earn more than \$621 million each year. These agencies generate a total of \$371 million in capital investments for the construction of new parks and recreational facilities. In fact, the direct economic impact generated by these agencies is \$3 billion per year.⁶

Adults who use these facilities become more valuable employees as they become healthy. One study of more than 8,000 workers at a single company found that employees who participated in a health promotion program incurred 29 percent lower health care costs than non-participants.⁷ Numerous studies show that absenteeism rates decline when employees participate in fitness programs.⁸

Public fitness facilities fulfill a community need by providing services to underserved groups

Central to the mission of park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies in Illinois is the provision of recreational choices to residents of all ages, races and income levels.

There are differences in the extent to which different demographic groups are inactive. Population studies show that risk of inactivity is higher among African-American (33 percent) and Hispanic (32 percent) adults than white adults (25 percent).⁹ Risk of inactivity is also higher among lower- and middle-income than affluent people.¹⁰ Thus, many park districts, forest

1 [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#). (1996). *Physical activity and health: A Report to the Surgeon General*.

2 [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), Guide to Community Preventive Services, 2002. *Creating or Improving Access to Places for Physical Activity is Strongly Recommended to Increase Physical Activity*.

3 Giles-Corti, B. & Donovan, R. J., 2002. *Social Science and Medicine*, 54.

4 Catlin, T.K., [American Journal of Health Promotion](#), 2003.

5 [Institute of Medicine](#). (2003). *Preventing Childhood Obesity: Health in the Balance*.

6 [Economics Research Associates](#). (2005). *Economic Impact of Local Park and Recreation Agencies in Illinois*.

7 Goetzel R.Z.; Jacobson, B.H.; Aldana, S.G.; Vardell, K.; and Yee, L. (1998). Health care costs of worksite health promotion participants and nonparticipants. *Journal of Occupational Environment Medicine* 40(4):341-346.

8 See Baun, William B. (1995). "The Impact of Worksite Health Promotion Programs on Absenteeism" in *Worksite Health Promotion Economics: Consensus and Analysis*. Robert L. Kaman, editor.

9 [National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion](#). *Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System*, 2000.

10 Sallis, J. and Owen, N., "Physical Activity & Behavioral Medicine," Sage Publications, 1999.

preserves, conservation and recreation agencies provide programming to historically underserved minority groups. And park and recreation agencies strive to develop recreational facilities in inner-city neighborhoods, where private opportunities are few. These recreational facilities, which often house health and fitness centers, are not just centrally located; they are also affordable. Dr. Manning Marable, director of the [Institute for Research in African-American Studies at Columbia University](#), cites developing public park and fitness facilities as a sociological issue and as a central factor in serving the people.¹¹

Some mistakenly believe that public recreation and fitness centers provide “unfair” competition to privately owned facilities. As a result of this competition, many private clubs claim that they lose significant revenue to the public sector. But, as [Athletic Business](#) editor Andrew Cohen writes, “The argument [of unfair competition] is shortsighted and potentially damaging to the recreation and fitness industry.”¹²

Conclusion

[The Illinois Association of Park Districts](#) affirms that all people – regardless of age, gender, race or socioeconomic status – should have access to affordable recreation and fitness opportunities, which the public sector historically provides. There is room in all communities for both public and private fitness centers and clubs to serve all people in their quest for health and fitness.

[The Illinois Association of Park Districts](#) supports the hundreds of fitness facilities under the auspices of public park and recreation agencies. These centers provide health and fitness opportunities to people of all ages and income levels.

More and more, recreation and fitness centers in Illinois are being developed as public/private partnerships between park and recreation agencies and universities, hospitals, schools and others. This trend maximizes the facility’s usefulness, allowing it to cater to underserved groups, as well as to the very specialized demographic group being served by the private-sector partner.

Public recreation facilities are in a position to foster an active lifestyle, which could lead to a population of healthier, more productive citizens. Thus, park district and recreation agency fitness facilities are vital in reaching the people of Illinois with recreation and fitness choices.

Actions

The Association will encourage public/private partnerships between our members and nonprofit organizations, universities, hospitals and schools. We will continue to promote best practices and model programs.

11 Marable, Manning, *Along Color Lines*, Columbus Free Press, 1997.

12 Cohen, Andrew. [Athletic Business](#). June 2002.

POSITION OF THE ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF PARK DISTRICTS

Reducing obesity – the role of park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies

The issue

Obesity is a national epidemic. Studies show that obesity aggravates – or may be a contributing cause of – heart disease, diabetes and many other illnesses. Other studies indicate that exercising more and eating less help control weight and provide the basis for a healthy lifestyle. Obesity and its related health issues affect the American worker and can negatively impact a corporations' bottom line. And many recent studies show specifically that childhood obesity is rising rapidly in the United States.

Background

The numbers of overweight children and adolescents in the U.S. have tripled over the last 40 years. Nationally, one in five children over the age of six is considered overweight. An estimated 65 percent of U.S. adults aged 20 years and older are either overweight or obese.¹

The statistics for Illinois are even more compelling. Illinois ranked 22nd in the U.S. in the rate of adult clinical obesity at 22.9 percent. Obese and overweight adults currently comprise 59.9 percent of the population.² Twenty-six percent of boys and girls between the ages of 11 and 16 are overweight, and another 18 percent are at risk of becoming overweight.³ A study of 3- to 7-year-old children at 25 Chicago Public Schools found that 23 percent were overweight, and 15 percent more were at risk for becoming overweight.⁴ Nearly one third of all low-income children in Illinois were found to be overweight or at risk of becoming overweight.⁵ This extra weight acquired during childhood or adolescence is associated with obesity during adulthood, and increases the risk for some chronic diseases later in life.⁶

The benefits of physical activity

The health benefits of physical activity during childhood and adolescence are undeniable. According to [the U.S. Surgeon General](#), studies indicate an association between youth physical activity and psychological health, lower levels of body fat, lower blood pressure and abstention from tobacco and alcohol use.⁷ Regular physical activity among adolescents is consistently related to higher levels of self-esteem and lower stress levels. Organized sports programs can introduce youth to such skills as teamwork, self-discipline, leadership and socialization.⁸

The [U.S. Surgeon General](#) has estimated that each year 300,000 deaths can be attributed to obesity, yet 40 percent of adults in the United States do not participate in any leisure-time physical activity. However, a sensible program that features moderate amounts of physical activity five or more times a week and a reduction in caloric intake can fight obesity, as well as heart disease, certain types of cancer, type 2 diabetes, stroke, arthritis, breathing problems and psychological disorders that are often associated with obesity.⁹

Economic impact of inactivity

Direct costs of physical inactivity in the U.S were recently estimated to be \$24 billion. The total costs of obesity were estimated to be an additional \$70 billion; together accounting for nearly 10 percent of national health care expenditures.¹⁰ Hospitalization among children and adolescents for diseases associated with obesity increased sharply over the last 20 years, accounting for more than \$127 million in health care costs.

1 [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), *National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey for 1999-2002*.

2 [Trust for America's Health](#), *F as in Fat: How Obesity Policies are Failing in America*, 2005.

3 *The Third National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHAHES III) 1988-1994*. Huntsville, Md: [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), [National Center for Health statistics](#); 1996.

4 Longjohn M. Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children Annual Report 2003. Chicago, Ill; Children's Memorial Hospital; 2003.

5 [Center for Disease Control](#), Pediatric Nutrition Surveillance System, 2002.

6 [National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute](#) (NHLBI) and [National Institutes of Health](#) (NIH), compiled statistics.

7 [Surgeon General's Report on Physical Activity and Health](#), 1996, [U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services](#) (USDHHS).

8 Promoting better health for young people through physical activity and sports, 2000 [USDHHS](#).

9 *Overweight and Obesity: What You Can Do*, [U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services](#) (<http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/calls/>).

10 "Economic Costs of Obesity and Inactivity," Graham A. Colditz, *Medicine and Science in Sport and Exercise*, November 1999.

Public park agencies as providers

Most doctors, scientific and government organizations recommend regular physical activity and exercise. Physical education was once a mandate in public schools. But, in the face of budget and space constraints, many schools have chosen to eliminate this vital component from the curriculum. Without a scheduled exercise regimen, children have become increasingly sedentary, watching TV and playing video games. Watching TV now accounts for about half the leisure time of men, women and children in the U.S.¹¹

Conclusion

Nearly all public park agencies provide recreational programming, organized sports activities and other fitness programs for children, adolescents and adults. Because it is central to the mission of public agencies to provide services to their residents at an affordable rate, these programs are tremendous resources to promote community-wide physical fitness and good health.

Everyone should engage in active recreation in order to control obesity and instill a healthy lifestyle. Members of the [Illinois Association of Park Districts](#) provide recreational opportunities in communities across Illinois at an affordable cost.

If we do not instill a commitment to exercise and regular physical activity, health issues and related health care costs will continue to climb. Workplace absenteeism will rise, causing lost productivity, wages and profits. School attendance rates will drop, resulting in lost educational opportunities for students and hardship for the schools themselves. It is the role of park districts and recreation agencies to work with parents, schools, health care providers, neighborhood groups and other community organizations to begin turning the tide and reversing the statistics on obesity.

Actions

The Association will assist our agencies through grants to create programs that specifically address the obesity epidemic. The Power Play program provides a template for healthful beyond-school programming. The Association will also include articles in its statewide magazine and offer educational workshops.

11 [U.S. Dept. of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, American Time Use Survey, 9/2005.](#)

POSITION OF THE [ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF PARK DISTRICTS](#)

The consolidation of local government in Illinois

The issue

According to [U.S. Census Bureau](#) statistics, Illinois has 2,824 general-purpose units of local government and 3,145 special districts for a total of 6,904 units of local government. Illinois leads the nation in the number of units of local government with Pennsylvania running second with 5,032 units, followed by Texas with 4,785, California with 4,410 and Kansas with 3,888.¹

There are currently 366 park districts in the state of Illinois, 13 forest preserve districts and five conservation districts.

Background

Why does Illinois have so many local governments and does this have a negative or positive impact on the delivery of local services?

There are two commonly referenced reasons why Illinois leads the country in this area. The first is based on geography and the need for specific governmental services in areas that are not coextensive with any general-purpose unit of local government. The second is that the [1870 Illinois Constitution](#) limited the ability of a local government to borrow more than five percent of the assessed valuation of that unit of local government. Therefore, the creation of many special districts acted to circumvent this limit. In all likelihood, both of these rationales worked together to create this result.

The [1970 Constitution](#) was designed to address these issues by removing tax limitations on home-rule municipalities and counties and by encouraging intergovernmental cooperation. The thinking behind these changes was to slow the growth of local government. However, the number of special purpose districts continued to grow from 2,407 in 1972 to 3,145 through 2002.²

The real key to determining whether a large number of local governments is good or bad for Illinois citizens rests primarily on three issues:

1. Accountability and transparency
2. Cost and duplication of services
3. Efficiency

Accountability and transparency

In Illinois, citizens have been empowered by the [Illinois General Assembly](#) to create special districts by referendum when they feel that specific needs are not being met or higher levels of service will enhance the quality of life in particular areas.

With the creation of a park district in Illinois comes the creation of a locally elected board of park commissioners. Commissioners serve either four- or six-year terms. They serve without compensation, and studies show that the average commissioner donates more than 400 hours a year serving in this capacity. Park commissioners in Illinois are professionals, homemakers and businesspeople whose common goal is to see their community thrive through the availability of parks, the protection and preservation of natural resources, and the benefits of recreational programming.

Studies conducted by the [University of Illinois](#) over a 25-year period have shown that park districts have a higher level of visibility within the communities they serve than almost any other form of government.

Transparency of local government, which is the ability of citizens to observe the decision-making process and have an impact in the decisions being formulated, is exemplary among park districts. State lawmakers also put a number of controls in place, including the [Freedom of Information Act](#), which allows access to all public records, and the [Open Meetings Act](#), which requires most units of local government to post notice of all public meetings both physically and on the Web. Such controls ensure that park districts and other units of local government conduct their business in full view of the public. The strategic planning processes and focus groups that park districts frequently use further involve Illinois citizens in this local governmental activity.

Finally, the [Illinois General Assembly](#) provides that any park district in the state of Illinois can be dissolved by a citizen initiated referendum, with its assets turned over to either a general-purpose unit of local government (e.g., a municipality) or a school district depending upon geographical location. To date, citizens have not exercised this authority. Rather, the opposite has occurred: A number of municipal park and recreation departments have merged with park districts.³

1 2002 Census of Governments Vol. 1 No. 1, [U.S. Census Bureau](#), December 2002.

2 2002 Census of Governments Vol. 1 No. 1, [U.S. Census Bureau](#), December 2002.

3 See, for example, Diane Stanke and David T. Kindler, "Taking the Pulse of the Community," [Illinois Parks & Recreation](#), September/October

Cost

Many times, those without sufficient information on the issue opine that more government equates with higher costs and that meaningful savings of tax dollars would occur should a consolidation of local government take place. But the key to any local government consolidation question is to explore the level of services being offered and to determine whether resources are being wasted or if there is a lack of cooperation between units of local government.

In Illinois, park districts represent only five cents of every tax dollar spent, and the park districts supplement their income from taxes by programmatic fees for services whereby the user (or individual benefiting from the services) pays for them. A recent study concluded that 47 percent of these agencies' revenue comes from sources other than taxes.⁴

When exploring the issue of intergovernmental cooperation, studies also show that, to a large extent, park districts share facilities, staff, equipment and other resources with the population served by similarly located units of local government and, in this respect, park districts may very well serve as a model for other government units.⁵

Efficiency

The previously mentioned prevalence of intergovernmental cooperation in which park districts are engaged creates a wide variety of efficiencies both in services and cost savings.

In addition, park districts are professionally staffed units of local government. This means that services have the greatest chance of being provided in an effective and thorough manner and not as an outgrowth of political cronyism. Professional staffing assures that recreation programs and facilities are run and maintained by trained professionals. Further, park districts, along with forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies are caretakers of more than 350,000 acres of public land and open space across Illinois. The experts employed by these units of local government are uniquely qualified to provide for the responsible stewardship of a community's open space, grasslands, prairies, golf courses, trails, greenways, ponds, riparian habitat, streams, lakes, wetlands or significant fish and wildlife habitat.

Conclusion

Illinois park districts have existed for more than a century. They have withstood the test of time, and Illinois citizens have accepted them as effective and efficient units of local government. Even so, Illinois' large number of units of local government invites debate about the consolidation of local governments. Compelling reasons for debate on the issue deserve further investigation.

In this light, [the Illinois Association of Park Districts \(IAPD\)](#) believes that each type of unit of local government should be evaluated independently.

The relevant test for this evaluation is not whether there is a disproportionate number of units of local government in Illinois, but:

1. Whether those units of local government can be created and dissolved by citizen-initiated referenda rather than be created by appointment as an outgrowth of a general-purpose government,
2. Whether local officials are elected and whether they serve without compensation,
3. Whether those units of local government have availed themselves of the opportunities provided by the drafters of the 1970 Illinois Constitution's emphasis on intergovernmental cooperation,
4. Whether citizens are assured a high degree of visibility and accessibility to the decision-making process of these units of local government, and
5. Whether the unit of local government effectively provides services.

The IAPD will continue to demonstrate to the [Illinois General Assembly](#) and the public that park districts meet or exceed all criteria that determine whether a unit of local government functions properly and efficiently. The [IAPD](#) will continue to aid the state's park districts as they provide outstanding services to their communities.

Actions

[The Illinois Association of Park Districts](#) will actively participate in discussions regarding the consolidation of local government in Illinois and report the outcomes of such discussions to our membership. The Association will offer research and empirical knowledge that supports the advantages of park districts remaining independent units of local government.

[ber 2005](#), 48-55.

⁴ [The Economic Impact of Local Park and Recreation Agencies in Illinois](#), a research project conducted by [Economic Research Associates](#) for the [Illinois Association of Park Districts](#), 2005.

⁵ See Robin Hall, "Partnering with Purpose," [Illinois Parks & Recreation](#), January/February 2006, 12-18.

POSITION OF THE ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF PARK DISTRICTS

Safety in park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies – implementing a park watch program

The issue

Crime and vandalism are issues in every community. Crime and violence can deny patrons of the intended recreational use of park and recreation services and facilities.

Everyone should have access to safe, clean parks. In order to keep these places safe for park patrons, park users and the people living near parks need to get involved in agency-supported programs to stop crime and vandalism.

Background

From 2003 to 2004, crime rates rose 25.7 percent in Illinois park districts.¹ Crime and vandalism cost taxpayers millions of dollars each year for cleaning up graffiti, repairing buildings, replacing vandalized equipment and paying insurance claims to injured patrons.

Getting the community involved

Citizens must organize to take back their parks. They must organize to help clean and repair parks and to report suspicious and illegal activity to law enforcement officials.

Agencies can encourage this kind of community involvement by providing interesting play equipment and organizing recreation activities that entice law-abiding children and adults to participate. A busy park is a safer park.² Involved residents will help prevent criminal mischief and will want vandalized or otherwise damaged property to be repaired immediately.

Understaffed police departments find it difficult to patrol residential areas with the frequency residents prefer. Using trained citizen volunteers as the “eyes and ears” for the police department or an agency’s security detail can help reduce crime and the potential for crime in these areas. It also helps expand communication between residents and law enforcement officials.

Creating a park watch program

A park watch program can address all types of crime. The park staff needs to encourage community residents to assume more responsibility for the activities taking place in their neighborhood. They must enlist the participation of park users and neighboring residents for the program to be effective. The users and neighbors are encouraged to report suspicious or illegal activity. A special telephone number can be provided to report criminal activity or maintenance problems that need attention. A nearby neighborhood watch group can be encouraged to adopt the park and volunteer to check periodically for litter and damage. Signs can be posted to explain that the park is protected by a park watch program.

Benefits of a park watch program

Creating a park watch program does the following:

- Decreases incidents of vandalism, crime, misuse of park properties and related costs.
- Creates awareness of activities in parks.
- Instills strong park, recreation and conservation values in children and encourages them to be responsible park patrons.
- Develops a sense of ownership for neighborhood parks, recreation areas and facilities.
- Empowers citizens who use parks and park facilities, thereby making them feel comfortable, safe and proud.
- Increases public awareness, cooperation and community among law enforcement, citizens, community organizations, park districts, forest preserves, recreation and conservation agencies.

Conclusion

The Illinois Association of Park Districts supports park watch programs and believes that implementing a program effectively reduces or prevents crime and vandalism in park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies.³

1 [Illinois State Police Web site](#),

2 [National Crime Prevention](#) Web site: “http://ncpc.org/topics/Neighborhood_Watch/Strategy_Take_Back_the_Parks.php.”

3 For more information on the [Eagle Eye Neighborhood Watch Program](#), e-mail IAPD or call 217-523-4554.

Actions

[The Illinois Association of Park Districts](#) will ensure that every Illinois park district, forest preserve, conservation and recreation agency has access to an effective, affordable park safety program by promoting the [Eagle Eye Neighborhood Park Watch program](#) to our membership. The [Eagle Eye program](#) has saved agencies thousands of dollars in equipment repair and vandalism costs.

Our commitment to park safety will continue to be demonstrated through the [IAPD](#) endorsed [IPARKS](#) local government risk sharing pool, which not only provides our member agencies with property and casualty insurance coverage, but also a library of thousands of videos, CD-ROMs, DVDs, audio cassettes, personnel manuals and loss control policies to help keep operations running safely.

POSITION OF THE ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF PARK DISTRICTS

Senior services – the role of park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies

The issue

During 2006, more than 75 million [American baby boomers](#) will turn 60.¹ Never has it been more important for park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies to enhance programming for this growing senior population. Studies have proven that fit seniors live longer, remain in their homes longer and participate more fully in community life.

The [Illinois Association of Park Districts \(IAPD\)](#) urges all seniors to engage in active recreation three or more days a week to prevent heart disease, obesity, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis and mental health challenges such as depression. Further, the [Illinois Association of Park Districts](#) urges public policymakers to provide appropriate recreational opportunities in communities across Illinois at an affordable cost. All Illinois seniors must be given equal opportunities to participate in healthy activities without economic hardship. Such local government bodies as park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies provide these opportunities and must prepare to increase their efforts.

Background

The United States is on the brink of a longevity revolution. By 2030, one in every five people in the United States will be a member of the senior population.² While a large number of seniors currently use a significant portion of parks and recreation services, the number of such consumers will skyrocket during the next 25 years.³ Currently, the mature market represents more than 23 percent of all fitness memberships and 43 percent of all hospital wellness center memberships.⁴

The benefits of physical activity to seniors

Although the risk of disease and disability has been shown to increase with age, poor health is not an inevitable consequence of aging. Nearly 40 percent of deaths in America can be attributed to controllable factors including physical inactivity.⁵ Obesity among older adults has doubled since 1980.⁶ Seniors who are obese or overweight are at risk for chronic diseases. Much of the illness, disability, and death associated with chronic diseases are avoidable through known prevention measures, such as participating in regular physical activity.

Healthy lifestyles are more influential than genetic factors in avoiding the deterioration traditionally associated with aging. Regular physical activity greatly reduces a person's risk from dying of heart disease and decreases the risk for colon cancer, diabetes and high blood pressure. Physical activity also controls weight; contributes to healthy bones, muscles and joints; relieves arthritis pain; reduces symptoms of anxiety and depression; and decreases the need for hospitalizations, physician visits and medications.⁷

Physical activity also benefits cognitive health. Cognitive health, or brain health, is an important part of healthy aging. Cognitive health refers to maintaining and improving mental skills such as learning, memory, decision-making and planning. Among Americans 65 years and older, approximately six to 10 percent have dementia, and two-thirds of people with dementia have Alzheimer's disease. Although research has not found a way to prevent dementia or Alzheimer's disease, cognitive decline may be preventable. Recent research suggests that being physically active and engaging in social activities may help maintain and improve cognitive health.⁸

Economic impact of senior inactivity

The growing number of older Americans places increasing demands on the public health system and on medical and social services. Currently, almost one-third of total U.S. health care expenditures are for older adults. These expenditures are largely due to treatment and care of chronic diseases, and the cost associated with many of these conditions could be reduced through regular physical activity.⁹

1 [American Senior Fitness Association](#)

2 *Healthy Aging for Older Adults*, [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), www.cdc.gov/aging.

3 *Active Aging 101*, Sarah Burnett-Wolle, MS, CTRS and Geoffrey Godbey.

4 *Speaking Their Language*, Colin Milner, [American Senior Fitness Association](#), www.seniorfitness.org/Speaking.htm.

5 [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), *Healthy Aging for Older Adults*, "Health-Related Behaviors."

6 [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), *Healthy Aging for Older Adults*. "Health-Related Behaviors."

7 [Healthier U.S. Gov.](#), *Physical Fitness*, "Be Physically Active Each Day."

8 [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), *Healthy Aging for Older Adults*. "Health-Related Behaviors."

9 [Healthier U.S. Gov.](#), *Physical Fitness*, "Be Physically Active Each Day."

Public park agencies as providers

Most doctors, scientific and public health organizations recommend regular physical activity and exercise for seniors. Even with these recommendations, people still tend to be less active as they age. More than 60 percent of American adults do not get enough physical activity. By age 75, about one in three men and one in two women do not engage in any physical activity.¹⁰

Illinois park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies can reverse this trend. Nearly all public park agencies provide recreational programming, organized activities and other fitness programs for seniors. And because public agencies are committed to providing services to their residents at affordable rates, these programs are tremendous resources to promote community-wide physical fitness and good health.

Conclusion

The [Illinois Association of Park Districts](#) supports senior exercise and physical activity as deterrents to chronic illness and premature death. A person's chronological age and functional age can be very different. Park districts, forest preserves, conservation districts and recreation agencies must continue to provide easily attainable health, fitness and recreational programs for the seniors in their communities at an affordable cost.

It is never too late to develop a healthy lifestyle. It is indeed true that exercise can add life to a person's years and years to a person's life. The [IAPD](#) supports park districts, forest preserves, conservation districts and recreation agencies as they work to introduce healthy lifestyles through physical activity to the growing population of Illinois seniors.

Actions

The [Illinois Association of Park Districts](#) encourages our membership to seek formalized partnerships with hospitals, senior centers and community organizations to promote structured health, recreation and fitness programs.

The Association will monitor trends and needs of the growing senior population in Illinois by maintaining a close relationship with the [Illinois Department on Aging](#) and conducting research through the [IAPD Research Advisory Council](#).

10 [Department of Health and Human Services](#), *Physical Activity and Health; A Report of the Surgeon General*, Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1996.