

## Freedom of Information Act

### Requesting Information

Under Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140/1-17), records in possession of all government agencies may be obtained or accessed by the public upon written request. A public record may be any minutes, report, form, letter, memoranda, map, photograph, recording, and all other documentary material received, possessed or under control of a public body.

Requests for information should be directed to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) officer(s) of the District. The current designated FOIA officer(s) are:

- Brian Romes Executive Director [bromes@pdhp.org](mailto:bromes@pdhp.org)
- Roxanne Hejnowski Executive Coordinator [rhejnowski@pdhp.org](mailto:rhejnowski@pdhp.org)
- Laurel Hall Director of HR & Workforce Development [lhall@pdhp.org](mailto:lhall@pdhp.org)

All FOIA officers can be reached at:

**Park District of Highland Park**  
636 Ridge Road  
Highland Park, IL 60035  
(847) 831-3810

When making a FOIA request, be as specific as possible. The request should include the specific information needed for your inquiry. A focused, specific request will aid in avoiding any delays or receipt of excess or unuseful information. It might be necessary for the FOIA Officer to contact you to clarify your request. Please provide the following in your request:

- The requestor's full name, address and phone number
- A description of records sought, being as specific as possible and
- Whether the request is for copies of records or inspection of records

The District will disclose the public records requested within five (5) working days after the receipt of the Request (or 21 days for a Commercial Purpose Request), unless the time period is extended as provided by law or the request is denied. All extensions and denials will be in writing and will state the reasons therefore.

### Established Fees

Copies (8.5x11" or 8.5x14", B&W)  
- First 50 pages Free  
- Additional pages \$0.15/side

Other Types of Records with Set Fees  
- Actual Cost

Certification  
- \$1.00/record plus copy cost

Mailing  
- Cost of Postage

If the requested records are of a type not listed above, then the fees charged for copying the records will be the actual charges incurred by the District, and the above fees will not apply. The above fees will also not apply if the fee for the requested records is otherwise fixed by statute. If the requested records are produced on an electronic medium, then the Requestor must pay the actual cost of the medium.

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636 Ridge Road  
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[www.pdhp.org](http://www.pdhp.org)



## Park District Profile

### Summary of Purpose

The Park District of Highland Park is a special district and separate unit of local government, with its own financial and legal responsibilities, established in 1909 pursuant to state statutes, for the purpose of providing park and recreational opportunities to residents of the community and public at large. The Park District of Highland Park serves 30,528 residents of Highland Park and small portions of development known as the Town of Fort Sheridan and the Village of Deerfield, providing 3,500 recreation programs and special events annually. Overseen by a Board of five elected officials, the District owns 12 facilities, over 800 acres of natural areas, 4 lakefront properties, 39 playgrounds, 15 miles of walking and biking paths, 32 indoor/outdoor tennis courts, 28 indoor/outdoor pickleball courts, 4 indoor padel courts, 16 basketball courts, 2 disc golf courses, 3 off leash dog parks, 29 sports fields, and a skate park.

**Our Mission:** "To enrich community life through healthy leisure pursuits and an appreciation of the natural world."

#### Our Values:

**Welcoming:** We welcome everyone, fostering supportive relationships through positive interactions that appreciate the best in others and create a sense of belonging.

**Extraordinary:** We aspire to provide extraordinary experiences by thinking, creatively, creating personal interactions, and delivering unique services that positively impacts lives.

**Caring:** we care about our relationships with others, as well as sustaining and improving our material, financial, and natural resources, through best practices that foster trust and ensure long-term health, safety, and wellbeing.

### Inclusion & ADA

#### Inclusion

The Park District of Highland Park strives to serve as the center of the community providing a safe and inclusive environment where community members, visitors, and participants can be honest and open about who they are. Our goal is to ensure everyone is comfortable using our facilities, participating in programs, attending events, volunteering, or working for the District. Our adopted policies, procedures, programs, and project initiatives are committed to creating an inclusive environment for work and play.

#### Services to Residents with Disabilities

The Park District of Highland Park is a partner with Northern Suburban Special Recreation Association (NSSRA). Formed in 1970, NSSRA is an extension of ten park districts, two cities and one village in the northern suburbs of Chicago and provides and facilitates year-round recreation programs and services for children, teens and adults with disabilities. NSSRA offers recreation, sport, cultural, social, programs and events available throughout the year, creating new experiences, opportunities for skill development, leisure time, and perhaps most importantly, friendship.

Brian Romes, Executive Director, serves as the ADA Coordinator [bromes@pdhp.org](mailto:bromes@pdhp.org)

Julie Nichols, Recreation Program Manager, serves as the NSSRA Liaison [jnichols@pdhp.org](mailto:jnichols@pdhp.org)

Amalia Schwartz, Planning Manager, manages our ADA Accessibility Audit and Transition Plan [aschwartz@pdhp.org](mailto:aschwartz@pdhp.org)

## Park District Profile

### Master and Strategic Plans

The District utilizes various mechanisms to stay on course, including the GreenPrint Comprehensive Master Plan, the Five-Year Capital Plan, and the Values Driven Strategic Plan. The plans work together to ensure the District has a road map designed to exceed resident and customers' expectations by delivering extraordinary experiences within its parks and facilities, as well as through its programs and services.

#### GreenPrint Master Plan

Is the District's comprehensive master plan representing a vision for the District. It guides future facility and program development. GreenPrint recommends ongoing Park Board evaluation of the identified priority projects, including capital development initiatives, recognizing that fiscal and economic conditions may require adjustment to the suggested priorities and associated timelines.

#### Capital Plan (Annual and Five-Year)

Is approved annually, and reviewed throughout the year, to ensure critical repair and replacement projects, facility, and park improvements, and GreenPrint Projects are identified and funded. The Plan is prioritized into 6 tiers. Staff and Board work to maintain funding models that ensure resources exist to maintain current facilities through an annual replacement plan, continuing its progress with GreenPrint while identifying essential resources that provide life enriching facilities and programs to the community.

#### Values Driven Strategic Plan

The Park District's Values Driven Strategic Plan provides direction on what operational Goals and Objectives we want to achieve to align our operational perspectives with our Mission, Values, and Vision.

#### Operational Perspectives

**Customer:** Individuals and Groups that our Park District provides Mission Critical Services to

**Team Member:** Individuals and Teams who deliver Mission Critical Services to Customers

**Resources:** Assets that enable Team Members to deliver our Mission to Customers

### Budget

The fiscal year begins on January 1 and concludes on December 31. The total operating budget for 2024 is \$22.7 million. Additionally, capital improvement and repair budget is \$11.8 million, the debt retirement budget is \$3.4 million and the budget for inter-fund transfers is \$5.3 million. Since 1990, the District has consistently been awarded the Government Finance Officers Association's Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting for its comprehensive annual financial report. A copy of the current budget can be found online at [www.pdhp.org](http://www.pdhp.org)

### Taxes

While the District continues to develop alternative non-tax revenue sources, such as grants, donations and sponsorships, property tax is one of the major sources of revenue for general operations. A combination of user fees, sale of merchandise, interest income and taxes provide funds for services. For 2024, the budgeted property tax revenue is \$15,186,446. Property taxes comprise about 53% of District revenue.



## Board of Park Commissioners

### Board of Park Commissioners

The Park District of Highland Park is governed by a five-member elected Board of Park Commissioners. Members serve without compensation and are directly responsible to the electorate. Commissioners serve staggered terms of six years with elections every two years. The duty of the Board is to approve policy for the operation, efficiency, improvement, and future planning of park and recreation facilities, programs and services within the district, consistent with its stated mission, values and goals. Board Commissioners, collectively and individually, act as representatives of all residents of the district in maintaining, planning, and promoting the use of park and recreation facility use. This is accomplished by the development of policies and ordinances which govern the operation of the Park District and the adoption of an operating budget.

#### Officers of the Board

- Calvin Bernstein, President
- Jennifer Freeman, Vice President
- Terry Grossberg, Commissioner
- Barnett Ruttenberg, Commissioner
- Rafael Labrador, Commissioner

#### Appointed Officers of the Board

- Brian Romes, Secretary and Executive Director, [bromes@pdhp.org](mailto:bromes@pdhp.org)
- Roxanne Hejnowski, Assistant Secretary, [rhejnowski@pdhp.org](mailto:rhejnowski@pdhp.org)
- Mari-Lynn Peters, Treasurer, [mlpeters@pdhp.org](mailto:mlpeters@pdhp.org)

### Meetings

The Park Board typically meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month and holds a workshop on the second Wednesday of each month. Committee Meetings are scheduled as needed. The goal of Board Committees is to increase engagement between board and staff, allowing early input on Park District priorities, and prepare recommendations for approval at the Park Board Meeting. Board Committees may include, but are not limited to the following:

**Finance Committee** reviews District-wide finances related to operations, capital, investments, and debt.

**Facility and Recreation Committee** reviews Facility construction and renovation projects, facility infrastructure, recreation services, community engagement, marketing and sponsorship.

**Lakefront, Parks and Natural Areas Committee** reviews Lakefront, Parks and Natural Areas construction and renovation projects and facility infrastructure.

**Policy Committee** reviews district-wide policy and ordinance, intergovernmental agreements, and strategic planning.

## Organizational Structure

### Organizational Structure

The Park District has an appointed Executive Director responsible to the Park Board of Commissioners for the administration of the District along with 118 full-time staff members at full employment. The District employs several hundred part-time, seasonal, and temporary employees. Staffing is organized into three areas: Administration (which includes the Executive Director's support staff, Planning and Information Technology, Finance, Human Resources and Risk Management, and Communications and Marketing); Parks and Natural Areas and Recreational Services.

#### To request a copy of the organizational chart contact:

Laurel Hall, Director of HR & Workforce Development, [lhall@pdhp.org](mailto:lhall@pdhp.org)

#### Administrative Staff

|                   |   |  |                |
|-------------------|---|--|----------------|
| Brian Romes       | Executive Director                                | <a href="mailto:bromes@pdhp.org">bromes@pdhp.org</a>         | (847) 579-3119 |
| Mitch Carr        | Deputy Director                                   | <a href="mailto:mcarr@pdhp.org">mcarr@pdhp.org</a>           | (847) 579-3105 |
| Jeff Smith        | Director of Planning, Projects, IT                | <a href="mailto:jsmith@pdhp.org">jsmith@pdhp.org</a>         | (847) 579-3109 |
| Dan Voss          | Director of Parks                                 | <a href="mailto:dvoss@pdhp.org">dvoss@pdhp.org</a>           | (847) 579-3130 |
| Mari-Lynn Peters  | Director of Finance                               | <a href="mailto:mlpeters@pdhp.org">mlpeters@pdhp.org</a>     | (847) 579-3138 |
| Liz Gogola        | Director of Communications and Marketing          | <a href="mailto:lgogola@pdhp.org">lgogola@pdhp.org</a>       | (847) 579-3136 |
| Laurel Hall       | Director of HR & Workforce Development            | <a href="mailto:lhall@pdhp.org">lhall@pdhp.org</a>           | (847) 579-3107 |
| Nick Baird        | Director of Recreation                            | <a href="mailto:nbaird@pdhp.org">nbaird@pdhp.org</a>         | (847) 579-3111 |
| Kari Acevedo      | Assistant Director of Recreation                  | <a href="mailto:kacevedo@pdhp.org">kacevedo@pdhp.org</a>     | (847) 579-4051 |
| Jessica Soto      | Assistant Director of Recreation                  | <a href="mailto:jsoto@pdhp.org">jsoto@pdhp.org</a>           | (847) 579-3118 |
| Ryan Ochs         | Superintendent/General Manager of Golf Operations | <a href="mailto:rochs@pdhp.org">rochs@pdhp.org</a>           | (847) 579-4158 |
| Roxanne Hejnowski | Executive Coordinator                             | <a href="mailto:rhejnowski@pdhp.org">rhejnowski@pdhp.org</a> | (847) 579-3190 |

## Parks and Facilities

### Parks and Facilities

The Park District manages over 800 acres of land and operates eleven facilities. Each year, the Board of Commissioners approves reviews and approves the Annual and Five-Year Capital Plan, which maps out critical repair and replacement projects, facility, and park improvements, and GreenPrint Projects.

#### Facilities

|   |                       |                |
|---|-----------------------|----------------|
| Centennial Ice Arena                                | 3100 Trail Way        | (847) 432-4790 |
| Club Pickle and Padel                               | 2205 Skokie Valley RD | (847) 433-5450 |
| Deer Creek Racquet Club                             | 701 Deer Creek PKWY   | (847) 433-5450 |
| Fitness Club and Recreation Center of Highland Park | 1207 Park Ave. West   | (847) 579-4554 |
| General Admin Office West Ridge Center              | 636 Ridge RD          | (847) 831-3810 |
| Heller Nature Center                                | 2821 Ridge RD         | (847) 433-6901 |
| Hidden Creek AquaPark                               | 1220 Frederickson PL  | (847) 433-3170 |
| Highland Park Golf Learning Center                  | 2205 Skokie Valley RD | (847) 433-3422 |
| Parks Operations & Golf Operations                  | 1240 Frederickson PL  | (847) 579-3130 |
| River's Edge Mini Golf                              | 2205 Skokie Valley RD | (847) 433-3422 |
| Sunset Valley Golf Club                             | 1390 Sunset RD        | (847) 432-7140 |

#### Parks and Playgrounds

The Park District provides 44 park areas that offer a variety of amenities including playgrounds (39), walking and biking paths (15 miles), indoor/outdoor tennis courts (32), pickleball courts (18), basketball courts (16), disc golf courses (2), off-leash dog parks (3), sports fields (29) skate park, sled hill, ice skating rink, park pavilions, and more.

#### Natural Areas

The Park District maintains approximately 350 acres of natural area including The Preserve of Highland Park, a one-of-a-kind natural area for passive recreation including green lawns, nature-based play areas, specialized native gardens, restored woodlands, and walking and biking trails that connect neighborhoods, downtown Highland Park, and regional biking trails.

#### Lakefront

|  |                  |                |
|--|------------------|----------------|
| Rosewood Beach and Interpretive Center | 883 Sheridan RD  | (847) 579-3166 |
| Park Avenue Beach and Boating Facility | 8 Park AVE       | (847) 432-0970 |
| Moraine Park and Dog Beach             | 2501 Sheridan RD |                |
| Millard Park and Beach                 | 35 Ravine DR     |                |