



Naperville  
Park District™

2006

# ANNUAL REPORT



Backyard Birthday Bash at Ashbury Park



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Park District™

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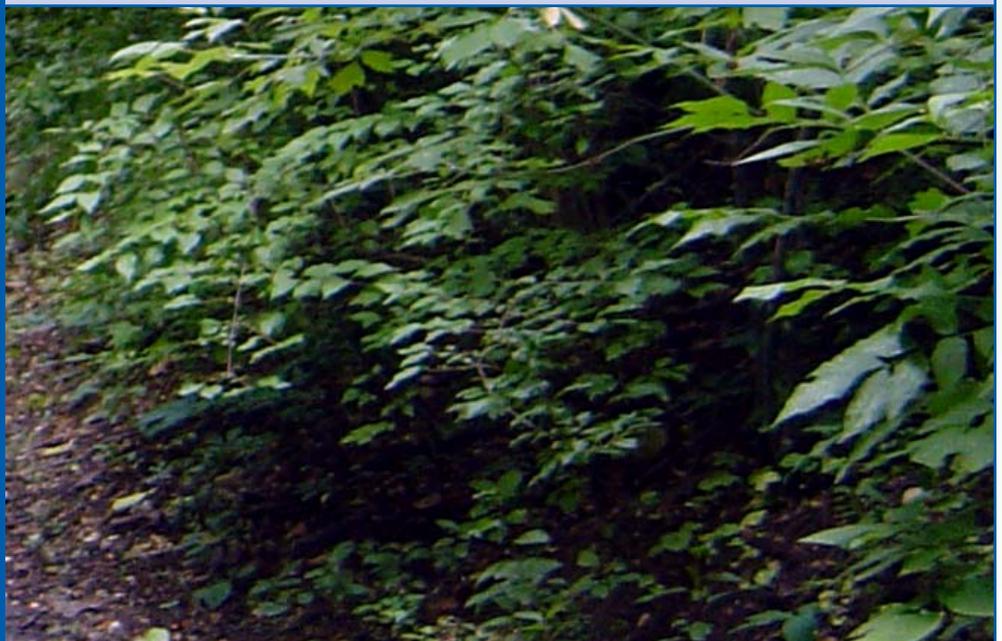


## **Mission Statement:**

The Naperville Park District provides leisure experiences that enhance the quality of life for our community.

## **Vision Statement:**

To be a best in class parks and recreation service provider creating unity and focus in the community.



## Celebrations

It was a year of celebrations for the Naperville Park District, which celebrated its 40th anniversary and the 75th anniversary of Centennial Beach. To honor these milestones, several community events were hosted, beginning with the Bottom-feeder Ball in April – a black-tie/casual wear event that raised funds for a new Beach slide. In July, the Park District hosted a weekend-long bonanza of celebratory activities. Hundreds of families came to Ashbury Park for the Backyard Birthday Bash and enjoyed games, activities, entertainment, and free birthday cake ice cream! The following day, the Aquathon – an historic event that has been a part of past Beach milestones – brought out many curious observers to witness the eclectic event comprised of competitions, exhibitions and entertainment, and to celebrate the facility's 75 birthday. Further adding to the community's excitement was the City of Naperville's 175th birthday, which coincided nicely with the Park District's celebrations.



## Recreation

A primary initiative for the Park District involved the planning, designing and developing of a recreation facility on the Frontier Sports Complex property in south Naperville. The Recreation Department was instrumental in the development of a Feasibility Study in 2006 to support this endeavor. The study identified recreation priorities and core service areas, and involved working through design iterations and realigning the responsibilities department-wide to reflect these newly defined areas.

Additionally, in order to better “delight the customer” – one of the Park District's strategic initiatives – a team from the Recreation Department reviewed the District's program evaluation process with the goal of improving it. This review process included a department-wide survey to assess the existing process and to help generate ideas for future evaluation tools. Initial suggestions from this evaluation review were then applied beginning with the fall 2006 programs. Another step was taken toward improving our program offerings when the core program criteria recommendations, initially described within the Recreation Master Plan, were confirmed by the Recreation Department. These criteria used to evaluate current program offerings and determine whether programs that fell below recommended standards could be either improved or eliminated.

Along with reviewing program criteria and programs, the Recreation Department also reviewed participation and revenue trends within Naperville Park District program areas and examined responses from the 2005 Community Interest and Opinion Survey. Through this examination, staff identified the need to modify several program offerings to include shorter times at lower prices, and these changes were made during the development of the fall 2006 Program Guide.

To address the strategic theme of “financial sustainability,” the Recreation Department drafted a Fees and Charges Policy Manual based on research conducted by staff of other parks and recreation agencies. The purpose of this information is to address cost recovery goals.

New field allocation and use policies and procedures were developed to address the third strategic theme: Operational Excellence. With input from several Naperville athletic organizations, a draft of the document has been completed, and components of the new field use policies and procedures are being applied to 2007 field requests.

Finally, in order to facilitate “continuous employee development,” the Recreation staff toured several local recreation centers with the ultimate goal of improving facility design and operations. Staff members also attended the CLUB Industry conference in Chicago in

October of 2006 to view the latest trends in fitness equipment and the Athletic Business Conference in November to gain additional information and perspective regarding the District's own recreation center that is planned for the future.

## Awards

In 2006, Naperville Park District employees were busy working to achieve Distinguished Agency status, a designation that the organization received in fall of 2006. The Naperville Park District became one of the 35 park districts in Illinois named Distinguished Agencies out of a total of 350 total park districts in Illinois. The agency-wide effort required to earn this distinction involved the compiling of documentation and implementing required processes and procedures. An evaluation team comprised of representatives from other Illinois park districts followed, which focused on general management practices, finance and business operations, facilities and parks, personnel, recreation services, and legal aspects.

In addition to the Distinguished Agency status, the Naperville Park District also received the Illinois Parks and Recreation Association (IPRA) Outstanding Program Award for Halloween Happening.

## Park Development and Improvements

The South Maintenance Facility at Frontier Park was one of the larger projects underway in 2006. With construction scheduled to be completed by summer 2007 and an estimated cost of about \$4.5 million, the new facility will provide office space, maintenance garages, material bins, and a cold storage building. Most of all, having a dedicated parks maintenance facility in south Naperville will reduce the labor and material costs to maintain the parks and facilities in that area.



South Maintenance Facility

Commissioners Park, also located in south Naperville, received some new amenities in 2006. A park support building, basketball courts, a community playground, a class "A" skate facility, fitness stations, a fishing pier and shelter, sand volleyball courts, a multi-use trail extension, parking lot extension, site furnishings, and landscaping all were added. A new water well to allow the retention pond to be used for field irrigation also was a part of this newest phase of land development.



The playground at Centennial Park also underwent some renovations resulting in an enlargement of the playground, new play equipment, and an ADA-accessible poured-in-place rubber surface and walk connecting the park to the Riverwalk. New furnishings and landscaping completed the project.

### Additional completed capital projects included:

- Park support building at DuPage River Sports Complex
- Playgrounds at Kingshill, Brighton Ridge, and Brush Hill
- Redevelopment of the Netzley House to become the Millennium Carillon Visitor Center
- Over \$10 million in capital funds for park and facility improvements were invoiced for 2006 projects

Finally, a Park & Facility inventory was completed. The project involved a cross-functional team of staff members touring all of the Park District's 138 sites and compiling data for a digital database. This database will minimize staff time in gathering planning related information while improving customer service by effectively tracking Park District inventory.

## District Operations

Recognizing the need to be mindful of internal District operations, staff focused on improving the operations District-wide in 2006. The Futures Committee, a group

of residents representing various geographic areas and interests came together to better gain a resident perspective in Park District planning and decision-making; the 2006-2008 Strategic Plan was implemented; work began on a three-year technology plan including the building of a technology foundation; and development and implementation of the first 3-year strategic marketing plan. Other District accomplishments included improving the volunteer program, creating a Master Plan for golf operations, enhancing the performance appraisal process, and developing a 10-year capital plan. Additionally, the Voice of the Customer (VOC) team will continue to work toward improving the evaluation of current and potential programs and is in the process of developing a "Customer Satisfaction Measurement System." This system will better determine customer satisfaction, identify areas for improvement, and gauge loyalty among program participants.

### Park Rules and Standards Changes

In 2006, the District's Ordinance #133 was repealed and replaced with Conduct Ordinance #641, which is the first full-scale review and overhaul of park rules in the District's history. Originally passed in 1980, Ordinance #133 went through several revisions over the years, but the District recognized the need for more significant changes. The main purpose of Ordinance #641 is to better clarify Ordinance #133 and its revisions while bringing it up-to-date. With the adoption of the new ordinance, park penalties, suspensions, and fines were increased, which are more clearly defined in Chapter 7 of Ordinance #641.

Additionally, the maintenance standards for parks and facilities also were reviewed and modified in 2006. These new standards more clearly define pond and shoreline practices as well as trail maintenance and natural area management. These updated practices will be highlighted in future years as an environmental stewardship link is added to the Naperville Park District web page.

### Grants and Donations

As a taxing body with a declining tax rate, the Naperville Park District relies on its ability to obtain grants and donations. In 2006, donations came from several local businesses, organizations, and individuals totaling \$14,840 in cash and \$4,284 in budget-relieving goods and services. Along with grants totaling \$585,665, these

donations supported the completion of several projects, aided in the progress of others, and helped to fund events.

#### Completed projects include:

- The development of Frontier Park's east side funded by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources' Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) grant. This third phase of expansion at Frontier Sports Complex involved adding a picnic shelter, a playground, and basketball courts among other amenities
- The Pioneer Park Trail Plaza and Canoe Launch funded by Illinois First/Opportunity Returns and a donation from a Naperville resident
- The Jaycee Playground at the Riverwalk funded by the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG), the Naperville Jaycees, and the Alumni Club of Pi Beta Phi



#### Projects in progress in 2006 include:

- Commissioners Park Phase II Development funded in park by the OSLAD grant
- The South Maintenance Facility at Frontier Park funded by the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation

#### Events funded by grants and donations included:

- The 75th anniversary celebration for Centennial Beach
- Shakespeare in the Park at the Central Park Concert Center supported by the Naperville Sunrise Rotary Club with a grant from the Fund for the Arts

#### Purchases and upgrades included:

- Additional protective vests for park police funded by a grant through the U.S. Department of Justice
- Upgraded lighting at Springbrook and Naperbrook golf courses funded by a grant from the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation