

# Oak Lawn Park District Comprehensive Plan

## History of the Park District

## ***HISTORY OF OAK LAWN PARK DISTRICT***

A petition and referendum to form the Oak Lawn Park District was an outgrowth of a project sponsored by the Cook Avenue PTA led by Lucille Gaddis.

On September 26, 1944 a petition was filed in County Court, Cook County, Illinois to organize the Oak Lawn Park District. Petition #108623 was filed in accordance with an act to provide for the Organization of a Park District, and the transfer of submerged lands to those bordering on navigable bodies of water" (approved June 24, 1895, L1895, p. 272).

An election was held on November 28, 1944 with 144 votes cast for the formation of a park district and 53 votes opposing it. Roland j. Beckley, Lucille C. Gaddis, Harvey Bergeson, Albert Vex Schave and John C. Utz were elected as the first Oak Lawn Park District Commissioners. The results of the election were filed with the County Court, Cook County, Illinois on December 8, 1944. An order was filed October 1, 1945 declaring the park district as officially organized retroactive to December 8, 1944. At the first meeting John Utz was elected President, and Albert Vex Schave, Vice President with the other commissioners, Roland Beckley, Lucille Gaddis and Harvey Bergeson in attendance. Meetings were held in the Village Hall until a park building could be erected, Lake Shore Park being the only park in the district's possession at the time.

The Oak Lawn Park District was supported by the Oak Lawn Community Chest and by solicited funds; with the Oak Lawn Lions contributed \$987.00 by June 6, 1945.

The Oak Lawn Park District is a separate taxing government body and the facilities include owned and leased parks. The Oak Lawn Park District and the Village have the same boundaries, with the exception of 12.83 acres known as Chicago Ridge Prairie located in Chicago Ridge, Illinois, which is located at 115<sup>th</sup> and Central Avenue. This subdivision is located in the boundaries of the Village of Oak Lawn but is part of the Worth Park District.

The Oak Lawn Park District is administered by a Board of five commissioners, each serving a six-year term without pay. The Board of Commissioners selects their President and Vice President yearly. It also appoints the positions of Treasurer, Secretary, Attorney and Director to assist the Board in their functions. The Board of Commissioners is directly responsible to the General Assembly of Illinois and to the citizens of their District.

**MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE  
OAK LAWN PARK DISTRICT**

**1990**

**OAK LAWN, COUNTY OF COOK  
STATE OF ILLINOIS**

**AN ORDINANCE**

**BE IT ORDAINED** by the Board of Commissioners of the Oak Lawn Park District:

That the Code of general ordinances originally passed by the Board of Commissioners of the Oak Lawn Park District on August 9, 1955, February 14, 1972, and April 4, 1981, and known as the "Municipal Code of the Oak Lawn Park District, 1955" and all amendments or additions thereto, be and the same are hereby repealed, subject to the saving clause.

That following ordinance be and the same hereby is adopted to provide for the conduct of the business of, and to regulate the use of the park system of, the Oak Lawn Park District; this ordinance to be known and cited as the -Municipal Code of Oak Lawn Park District, 1990."

All ordinances or parts thereof in conflict or inconsistent with any of the provisions of this ordinance are hereby repealed, subject to the saving clause set forth herein. This ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and approval.

## ***STATUTORY AUTHORITY OF THE OAK LAWN PARK DISTRICT***

Park Districts are a form of municipal government almost unique of Illinois. In other states, parks, other than state parks, are usually maintained and operated by the city. While under the laws of Illinois, cities and villages are authorized to maintain parks and levy a tax, therefore, the greater number of municipal parks are maintained and operated by park districts. There are several reasons for this. First, under the Illinois constitution, the bonding power of all municipal corporations is limited and as a practical matter because of other bonds, which most cities have, outstanding, bonds cannot be issued for the acquisition and improvement of parks. Second, a park district does not have to be continuous with a city or village and additional territory outside of the city or village may be included in the park district, which permits both better community service and increases the revenue which may be raised by taxation. Third, by making the park board completely independent of the city, it is not involved in village politics.

A park district is a municipal corporation, created for the purpose of acquiring, and maintaining parks, and is separate and distinct from the city, county, or any other body politic. It is an agency through which in part the people of the State carry on government. It is not purely local in function for the Courts have held that the park property is held in trust for the use of the people of the state at large and not for the exclusive use of the people of the district. (Quinn V. Irving Park District, 207 Ilk App. 449)

A park district is purely a creation of the legislature, and has no inherent powers, but only such powers as have been granted it by the legislature, or as are necessarily implied to give effect to the powers specifically granted.

The Oak Lawn Park District was organized December 1944 under the 'Submerged Land Act.' This act, which was passed in 1895 by the legislature, had the full file of "An Act to provide for the organization of park district and the transfer of submerged lands to those bordering on navigable bodies of water." Park districts formed under this act were known as Submerged Land Park Districts.

In 1947, the legislature enacted "The General Park District Code." This was the first step in codifying the laws pertaining to park districts of less than 500,000 and it incorporated all of the basic laws of the three different types of park districts, which existed. The 1895 act under which the Oak Lawn Park District was organized was repealed and our park district became a "General Park District."

***OAK LAWN TAX BASE***

The Village of Oak Lawn derives most of its income to provide services to its residents (police, fire, emergency and infrastructure construction and maintenance) from taxes. The three most identifiable are property taxes; commercial and residential, sales taxes from retail sales within the Village and income taxes.

***SALE TAXES***

Oak Lawn has a large amount of retail space primarily located in commercial, strip and corridor retail malls and centers. The strength of Oak Lawn’s retail market is reflected in the amount of local retail sales tax collected.

The Illinois Department of Revenue reports that local sales tax returned to the Village of Oak Lawn in 2016 totaled over 15.7 million dollars.

The Illinois Department of Revenue figures released for 2016 give the following breakdown:

Automotive and Filling Stations	35%
Drugs and Misc. Retail	15%
Food	14%
General Merchandise	9%
Restaurant and Taverns	15%
Lumber, Building & Hardware	6%
Manufactures	1%
Agriculture and all Other	3%
Apparel	1%
Furniture & H.H. & Radio	1%

***PROPERTY TAXES***

Cook County assesses property as a percentage of market value. Residential property is assessed at the lowest rate.

Property Type	Percentage of Market Value
Residential	16%
Apartment Buildings (6+ units)	33%
Commercial	38%
Industrial	36%
Vacant Lots	22%

Real estate taxes paid by Oak Lawn residents and businesses go to several taxing bodies. Below is the approximately percentage distributed to the governmental bodies.

Property Tax Distribution	Approximate Percentage of Bill
School Districts	72%
Village of Oak Lawn	6%
Oak Lawn Park District	4%
Oak Lawn Library	4%
Metropolitan Water Reclamation District	3%

***REPLACEMENT TAXES***

Replacement taxes are levied on some corporations and partnerships by the state. On average the park district receives \$160,000 annually.

## ***OAK LAWN PARK DISTRICT: 2018 AGENCY INFORMATION***

<b>Organized:</b>	1944
<b>Governing Body:</b>	Board of Park Commissioners, Five elected officials
<b>Assessed Valuation:</b>	\$1,019,749,035
<b>Location:</b>	The Village of Oak Lawn is located 25 minutes southwest of Chicago
<b>Population:</b>	56,257
<b>Parks:</b>	20, largest = 45.7 acres, smallest = .3 acres Total acreage = 209.3
<b>Facilities:</b>	2 swimming pools 1 indoor Ice Arena 2 splash pads 1 Pavilion 4 indoor basketball courts 4 volleyball courts 1 Racquet Center 1 18-hole Golf Course Golf Course Clubhouse 1 mini-golf 1 driving range Oak View Recreation Administrative Center David Johnston Center Menard Activity Center Little White Schoolhouse Maintenance Business Office and Garage
<b>Employees:</b>	54 Full-Time, 606 Part-Time/Seasonal

### **Recreation Services Division**

**Childcare Services:** Oak View Preschool, Play School, Prep School, Preschool Sports and Games, Rug Rats Sports, Mini Spore Camp, Sports Camp, Day Camp, Extended Camp

**Cultural Arts:** Creative Drama, Dramatics, Summer Theater Camp, Dance Camp, Ballet, Jazz, Tap, Ballroom, Hip Hop, Salsa, Pre-Teen/Teen Broadway Dance Troupe for Adults, Private Voice Lessons, Piano Lessons, Group Piano Lessons, Creative Drama

**Children's Programming:** Early Childhood/Youth Instructional Classes, Camps, Counselor in Training, Birthday Parties, Children's Special Events, Youth Instructional and Athletic Leagues (Soccer, Volleyball, Basketball, Baseball), Martial Arts, Summer Camps

**Teen Programming:** Ski Trips, Co-Ed Sand Volleyball

**Adult/Senior Adult Programming:** Dance Classes, Special/Events, Trips, Extended Travel, Adult/Senior Instructional Classes, Adult/Senior Exercise Classes, Informational Seminars

**Outdoor Recreation and Environmental Education:** Special Interest Classes, Workshops and Trips

**Special Events:** Holiday/Seasonal Events, 4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebration, Halloween Spook View, Concerts on the Village Green, Movies on the Village Green, Woofstock, Earth Day, Easter Egg Hunt, Breakfast with Santa Claus, Volleyball for Charity

**Development:** Fundraising, Donations, Tree and Bench Donations, Grants

**Community Centers:** Permits, Registrations, Building Rentals, and Picnic

### **Communications Division**

**Public Relations / Marketing:** Promotion of the District's positive public image, Marketing strategies, Corporate Sponsorships

**Computer Services / Technology:** Maintenance of Electronic Infrastructure and Computer Related Hardware and Software, Internet Connectivity, Telephone Services, Web Site Maintenance,

### **Special Facilities Division**

**Skating Operations:** Maintenance Service, Rink Surfaces, Building Rentals, Public Skating, Concession Services, Instructional Classes (Figure Skating, Hockey, Golf) and Special Programs

**Swimming Pool Operations:** Staffing, Maintenance, Scheduling, Rules and Regulations, Rentals, Swimming Lessons, Health Department Regulations, Supplies and Equipment, Concession Services

**Athletics:** Leagues, Tournaments, Tennis Sports Camps, Fitness, Informal Gyms, Instructional Classes, and Athletic Permits

### **Golf Services Division**

**Golf Course Operations:** Maintenance Service, Rink, Public Golf Leagues, and Concessions

**Banquet Operations:** Food Service, Catering, Special Events

### **Park Services Division**

**Park and Recreation Areas:** Site and Equipment Upkeep, Ball fields, Turf Maintenance, Construction, Motorized Equipment, Tennis and Basketball Courts.

**Landscape Services:** Trees and Shrubs, Park Development, Adopt-A-Flower Bed Program

**Buildings and Facilities:** Recreation Centers, Restroom Shelters, Swimming Pool Maintenance, Parking Lots, Signs

### **Business Services Division**

**Human Resources:** Insurance Coverage, Retirement Benefits, Workman's Compensation

**Accounting Services:** Budgeting Procedures, Auditing Procedures, Bonding Procedures, Balance Sheets, General Ledger, Monthly Financial Statements.

**Office Procedures:** Records, Systems, Inventory Control, Registration and Deposits

**Accounts Payable and Receivable**

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**Affiliate Organizations:** Oak Lawn Baseball, Westside Baseball, Oak Lawn Outlaws

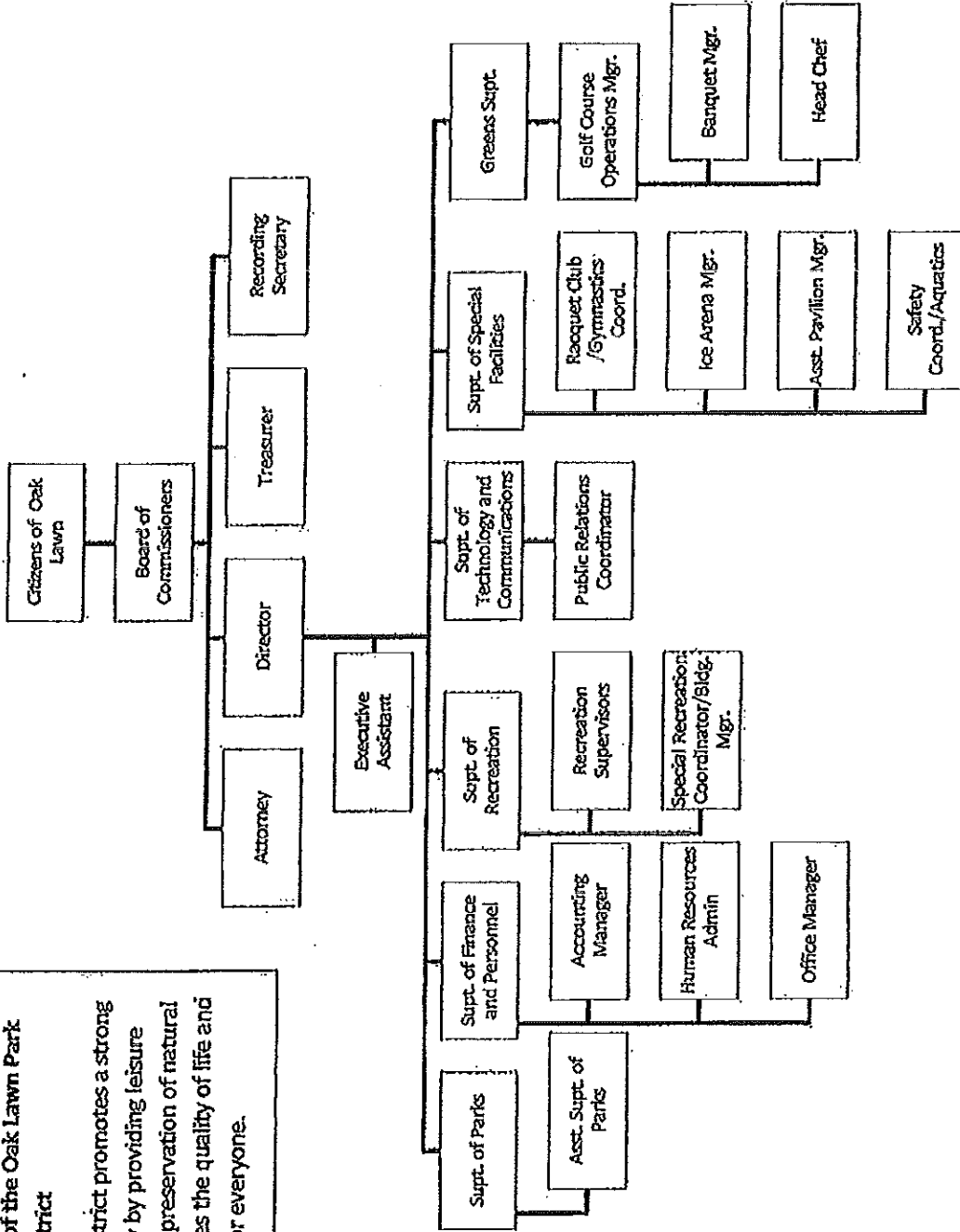
**Intergovernmental Agreements:** West Side Baseball, Oak Lawn Baseball, Village of Hometown, Village of Oak Lawn



# Oak Lawn Park District Organizational Chart

## Mission Statement of the Oak Lawn Park District

The Oak Lawn Park District promotes a strong sense of community by providing leisure opportunities and the preservation of natural resources that enhances the quality of life and wellness for everyone.



Approved SMH

Date 12-8-16