



PARK DISTRICT OF OAK PARK

218 W. Madison Street • Oak Park, IL 60302 • P: (708) 383-0002 • F: (708) 383-5702 • www.oakparkparks.com

For Immediate Release
April 25, 2008

Park District of Oak Park to Receive OSLAD Grant

The Park District of Oak Park was notified today by the Office of Governor Blagojevich that our community will receive a \$400,000 matching grant for the development of Longfellow Park. This grant is part of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Open Space and Land Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) Grant Program which provides matching dollars for outdoor recreation space projects throughout Illinois.

Improved park amenities at Longfellow Park will include separate pre-school and school-age playgrounds, an expanded water play area, a full-court basketball court with spectator seating, and renovated interior pathways, sports fields and restrooms. New park landscaping and educational signage will also be added. Construction is slated to begin in early August with substantial completion by late November.

The Park District was eligible for this grant program due to the successful passing of the “Renew Our Parks” referendum by Oak Park voters in April 2005. The local matching amount of \$400,000.00 will be funded out of the Park District of Oak Parks Capital Improvement Fund. A site plan for Longfellow Park was completed in February 2007 which is a requirement for an OSLAD grant application.

A significant portion of the Longfellow Park Renovation Project is being funded through grant monies. Earlier in 2008 the Park District was notified that it would be the recipient of a \$235,000 grant from the Good Heart Work Smart Foundation of which \$200,000 will be used towards the installation cost of a new elevator and lobby area at Longfellow Center and the balance has already been used to plan more accessible features for the playground areas. The Park District, in

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partnership with the Oak Park River Forest Community Foundation, secured a \$220,000 Access to Recreation grant sponsored by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. Over \$100,000 of these grant monies will be used for the Longfellow Park Renovation Project. Another \$67,000 of the Access to Recreation grant funds will be used to establish an endowment which will provide ongoing support for future accessibility projects in the Oak Park and River Forest communities.

For further information regarding the Longfellow Park Renovation Project, please call Gary Balling at (708) 725-2020. For further information about the Access to Recreation Endowment, please contact David Weindling at (708) 848-1560.

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