



Shaping the Future of Our Parks

For more information on any of the projects listed below, please visit oakparkparks.com and select Future Plans and Current Projects. Park master plans, community meeting and focus group meeting notes, park concepts, future playground apparatus and more are just a mouse click away.



Conservatory West Growing House

As the Oak Park Conservatory continues to age, the need for facility renovation and equipment replacement becomes necessary. The Park District, with the help of the Friends of the Oak Park Conservatory, continues to make improvements. In the last seven years, lead abatement projects have taken place in the Fern and Desert Rooms and in the East Growing House. An emergency back-up generator was installed in spring 2007. The next Conservatory project is lead abatement and upgrades to the West Growing House. Improvements tentatively planned for 2009 include upgraded mechanical vent controls, heating system, environmental controls and new rolling benches for more efficient use of growing space. A retractable shade device will also be installed which will aid in maintaining an appropriate growing climate for the plant life.

Longfellow and Fox Renovation Projects

The Longfellow Park and Center and the Fox Park Improvement Projects which began in August 2008 were originally scheduled for substantial completion in late November. However, these projects became more challenging during prep work to fill the sunken areas. With the arrival of cold temperatures, the installation of the playground equipment and pouring of the resilient surfacing had to be postponed until the spring. Look for new playground areas and water play areas at both parks coming soon. Also, restrooms are being made accessible from the exterior at both locations. Additionally, look for a new elevator at Longfellow Center and a new full court basketball court, new pathways and redeveloped athletic fields at Longfellow Park. The tentative final completion date for both improvement projects is May 2009. A Grand Opening Celebration for Longfellow Park is scheduled for May 30. Look in your summer brochure, to be delivered in early May, for more details.

Rehm Park Site Plan & Phase 1 Renovation

After a five month planning process which included the collection of community input through focus groups, community meetings and online questionnaires, a site plan for Rehm Park was accepted by the Park Board at the Regular Park Board Meeting on Thursday, December 18, 2008.

Phase one of the Rehm Park Site Plan is tentatively scheduled to begin in April 2009 with the construction of two lighted sand volleyball courts and the addition of landscaping with a new garden area west of the Rehm Pool diving well. Project completion is estimated by the end of May.

Planned park improvements in future years include a new path on the northern end of the meadow just south of Rehm Pool and improved playground surfacing, train system and landscaping. The plan calls for the eventual elimination of one tennis court, the single court north of the other two courts. Currently all three courts are undersized and do not meet current USTA Safety Standards. The north court will eventually be eliminated when the asphalt sub-base of the tennis courts needs to be replaced, likely in the next 7 to 10 years. At that time, the Park District will construct two new courts which will be standard size and meet proper safety standards.

Oak Park Conservatory Site Plan & Phase 1 Renovation

A site plan for the exterior of the Oak Park Conservatory, accepted by the Park Board in November 2008, features a retaining wall, new entrance plaza and additional landscaping along Garfield Street, an expanded garden area on the southwest corner of the property, a rain garden and native gardens on the east side of the building, and improved exterior staff work areas. Phase 1 of this project is tentatively slated to begin in 2010, one year earlier than planned, with the development of the west garden area. Project funding assistance will be provided by the Friends of the Oak Park Conservatory and a private donor pending final agreement.

Mills Park Site Plan

The Mills Park site plan was accepted by the Park Board at the Regular Park Board Meeting on Thursday, December 18. New features will include new park entrances from the east, west, and north perimeters, a woodland discovery area and labyrinth, a daisy meadow, new pathways including a soft surface trail to create a walking path loop in the northeast area of the park, as well as new trees and benches. This newly accepted plan was also reviewed by the Village of Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission. In the Park District's 2009-2013 Capital Improvement Plan, phase one improvements for Mills Park are scheduled to start in 2011. To learn more about Mills Park, see the facility feature on page 73.

2009 Site Planning Projects

Three site plans are scheduled for development in 2009 including Euclid Square Park (spring), Randolph Tot Lot (summer) and the grounds of Cheney Mansion (fall). A site plan is a blueprint for future park renewal. Community input is a vital part of all planning processes. Please look for information regarding the Euclid Square planning process in the Park District e-newsletter, on the marquee at Lake Street and Ridgeland Avenue, on Channel 6, and through posters and flyers at all Park District facilities. Information will also be posted at Euclid Square Park. For information, please contact Diane Stanke at dianes@oakparkparks.com.

SAVE THE DATE Grand Re-Opening of Longfellow Park

Saturday, May 30, 2009

Look for more information on this exciting family-friendly celebration in the Summer 2009 Brochure, due out in early May.