

Sugar Grove Park District Open Space Master Plan

April 2009

SUGAR GROVE PARK DISTRICT
61 Main Street
Sugar Grove, IL 60554

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This plan has been prepared with extensive input from the residents of the Sugar Grove Park District, the Park Board of Commissioners, and Park District Staff members.

Adopted by the Sugar Grove Park District on

Plan Preparation Coordinated by:

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Executive Summary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Sugar Grove Park District is:

"To provide residents and guests opportunities to experience the benefits of parks and recreation."

Introduction:

This document provides a guideline for park, recreation, and open space development in the Sugar Grove Park District over the next decade. The master plan was developed in accordance with the Village of Sugar Grove's Comprehensive Plan, which was adopted in 2005. The plan also has taken into consideration the resident's opinions about the community as identified in the 2007 Citizen Survey administered by the National Research Center and the International City/County Management Association. The overall planning effort extended beyond nine months and involved input from many sources including focus groups, public forums, a new independent resident survey, and staff interviews.

Purpose:

The Park Board of Commissioners wanted a comprehensive plan that was publicly driven and hired Planning Resources Inc. to oversee the development of the plan. The Sugar Grove Park Board commissioned the study for the purpose of creating a comprehensive park planning tool that will provide a guideline for future park development, acquisition, public needs assessment, and the effective mitigation of existing parks and facilities. This master park plan will provide a framework for priority setting, decision making, and budget preparation.

Background:

The Sugar Grove Park District has been providing the residents with parks and recreation services since April of 2003 when the residents passed a referendum to create a Park District. Prior to that date, the Village of Sugar Grove administered the park services in the community. Upon the creation of the Park District, the Village deeded over all fifteen of its park sites.

The Park District is currently comprised of nineteen parks, totaling 117.62 acres located throughout the community. The ratio of existing park land acreage per 1,000 population is approximately 12. Ideally the District should provide 15 acres per 1,000 persons for future populations. A detailed inventory of the facilities within the park system was conducted and the condition of the facilities evaluated, paying particular attention to handicapped accessibility standards in the older parks. Should the Park District pursue state acquisition and development grants, this will become an important factor in the approval process.

The park system is made up of three classifications of parks: community, neighborhood, and mini parks. The community contains major roads

carrying heavy volumes of traffic and a railroad line, which limits the accessibility of some of the parks by pedestrian means. Biking/walking paths are being installed with subdivision developments. However, these efforts, being tied to development, lead to a fractured system community-wide. The Park District, in partnership with the Village, will need to provide the vision for the community for the installation of future segments to ensure a comprehensive biking/walking path system. A comprehensive look at the park classifications, their locations, and proposed future park locations is also included in this open space master plan.

The Park District initiated an in-house Open Space Master Plan in 2005 to update the one prepared by the Village in 1997. The 2005 plan focused on assessing the physical and financial condition of the Park District. The vision of the Park Board of Commissioners and the Executive Director moved the district to create a new plan focusing on future development. Recognizing the projected population explosion as a result of development in the area, the Park District will be challenged to meet the needs of new residents with different expectations.

The Chicago metropolitan area has been expanding along major transportation corridors putting Sugar Grove in line to experience significant growth in the coming decades. Interstate 88 runs east/west along the northern boundary of Sugar Grove with access provided by IL Highway 56. In addition, IL Highway 47 brings people into Sugar Grove. A taste of the coming expansion occurred before the recent nationwide economic troubles have slowed, and in some cases halted, development. Between 2000 and 2007, the population increased 41% to 9,453. Estimates of future growth ranges from population of 20,000 to 63,000 by the year 2030. The data used in this report was obtained from the US Census Bureau and the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP). The most current demographic information available was used. Once the economy improves, there is every indication that these population trends will once again commence. One of the goals of the Village, expressed in their master plan, is to balance growth while retaining the small town character of Sugar Grove. While the housing densities set by them will be a driving factor in the end population numbers and therefore the character of the town, the acquisition of land for parks and open space can make an important contribution to this goal. While the economic downturn has many negative effects, it has created an opportunity for the Park District to position itself proactively to benefit from future growth by putting into place plans and systems to achieve its aims. This Open Space Master Plan will be an important piece of that process.

Although the Park District has only existed for a few years, it has accomplished much in its short history. The district provides a number of recreational programs with limited facilities. It has also done an admirable job of partnering with School District #302 and the Fox Valley Park District to serve the resident's needs. Results from the new community survey indicate that the intergovernmental agreement with the Fox Valley Park District offers

residents the facilities they desire such as swimming, fitness center, and golf. The residents, however, are not taking advantage of the benefit of these recreation programs much due to the distance and travel times.

The Sugar Grove Park District selected Leisure Vision to conduct a community-wide citizen survey. It is important to recognize that in 2007 the Village of Sugar Grove performed a community survey with a portion dedicated to recreation and park facilities. This prior survey was conducted by the National Research Centre in cooperation with the International City/County Management Association. The 2005 Village Comprehensive Master Plan also contained a portion dedicated to parks and recreation that was prepared by URS*TPAP.

The 2005 master plan by the Village recommended that at least 40% of all new residential developments be preserved as open space. These open spaces to be dedicated are to include "high-and-dry" neighborhood parks and greenway corridors in addition to wildlife habitat, wetlands, wooded areas, natural vegetation, and recreational trails.

In the 2007 survey the community rated recreational services as somewhat positive despite those services being provided below national standards. Recreation centers and facilities received the lowest rating and were also below national standards. This survey indicated 51% of the residents used recreation centers while 44% of the residents used programs or activities. Eighty-one percent (81%) of the residents visited a neighborhood park at least once in the past year. Seventy-two percent (72%) rated the parks as good or excellent yet the recreation centers or facilities were considered good or excellent by only 50% of respondents. Many identified the reason for low marks were due to the lack of physical resources to conduct the programs.

It is interesting to note the changes in public perception from the 2007 community survey by the Village and the community survey by the Park District in 2008. The 2008 survey discovered 30% of the residents are using Park District programs versus the 44% in the 2007 survey. This is a significant drop in utilization services. The number of residents using a park once during the past year also dropped from 82% in 2007 to 64% in 2008. However, the rating of park programs and activities rose during the same period from 50% in 2007 to 81% in 2008. The two surveys indicate a pattern of less utilization in a one year period but a higher approval rating of the parks and programs offered by the Park District.

Several key issues and trends emerged as a result of the focus groups, public forum, and survey. The Park Board of Commissioners, staff, and consulting teams will need to address these issues over the next ten years in order to maximize the ability of the Park District to fulfill its mission:

- Communication between the Park District and leadership groups within the community should be strengthened.

- The image and mission of the Park District should be improved through increased communication with community groups and new residents.
- Park District properties should be better identified for community awareness.
- Add more programs for teens and young adults.
- Modernize older parks through re-design and modifying or replacing outdated equipment.
- Improve and expand athletic sport field resources for youth sports.
- Create a citizen advisory committee for development of programs and facilities.
- Create an exploratory committee/citizen group for the possible development of a community swimming pool and/or recreation center.
- Work with the Village to expand and enhance the land/cash donation ordinance as new residential developments re-start with an improving economy. The Park District should be involved in the early stages of each development project for site acquisition and development under the Village ordinance. The Park District should have a "wish list" of park features and assess developer submittals according to this list.
- Continue and encourage the training and education of the staff at regional, state, and national conferences, seminars, and educational opportunities.
- Increase community awareness of intergovernmental agreements.

The success of this plan will be measured by the next generation of Park District residents as well as current users. The foresight and wisdom of the Board should be commended. In this dynamic period of economic gloom, citizen concern for municipal government, anti-spending legislation and increasing resident's service expectations, the job of the District management and the Board members has become ever more complex. Full implementation of each of the issues outlined in this plan will allow the Sugar Grove Park District to keep ahead of the pace of changing resident demands and increasing expectations while maintaining flexibility for future generations.



Chapter 1 - History

HISTORY

The Village of Sugar Grove is located in Kane County approximately 50 miles west of Chicago. The Village covers a total area of 6.5 square miles. Sugar Grove is located south of Interstate I-88, which runs east-west along its northern boundary. Route 56 connects with I-88 and enters the Village as an expressway. Illinois Route 47 and US Highway 30 also pass through the Village. (See Map 1: Location at the end of this section)

The recorded history of Sugar Grove dates back to the spring of 1834 when settlers arrived in what is now Bliss Woods Forest Preserve. Prior to this Native Americans populated the area calling it Sin-Qua-Sip. As settlers expanded westward, the U.S. Surveyors divided the land into square mile lots and sold them for \$1.25 an acre. Taking advantage of the productive soils, farmers purchased the lots and Sugar Grove became a farming-based community.

The first roads followed old Indian trails. As more settlers arrived, dirt roads connecting to Chicago and other communities were laid out. Locally owned businesses developed along these corridors. Over time these included lumber, grain, and coal businesses near the railroad tracks as well as an ice cream parlor, a pool hall, post office, and general store.

With a population of 125, the Village of Sugar Grove incorporated in 1957. The first resident developments soon followed in the 1960s. From the 1970s through the early 2000s additional developments sprung up, often with easy access to major transportation corridors such as Illinois Route 56, US Highway 30, and Illinois Route 47 which connects with Interstate I-88.

Downtown Sugar Grove is located near the intersections of US Highway 30 and Illinois Route 47, north of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad line. Residential developments have tended to be constructed farther north near Interstate I-88.

Even today, the farming roots of Sugar Grove are evident as one drives through the community. Acres of agricultural land are interspersed with residential developments.



Chapter 2 - Inventory of Existing Parks and Open Space

CLASSIFICATION OF PARKS

A recreation system is composed of parks which vary in size and function. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) created the categories of mini park, neighborhood park, community park, and specialty park as a means of standardizing the classifications. Parks are classified not only by acreage but also by function. This allows the comparison of one park district to another and serves as a foundation for decision making during acquisition and development to best meet resident needs.

Mini Parks

These mini parks, also referred to as playgrounds, are primarily designed for young children up to 10 years of age, are designed for a ¼ mile radius of service and are five acres or less in size. The average mini park is one acre or less in size. Their primary purpose is to provide recreation to the residences within walking distance in areas where major roads do not have to be crossed. Often the amenities provided are centered on play apparatus for young children; however, some include activities for adults and seniors dependent on the needs of the surrounding population. Other amenities typically include gazebos or shade structures, benches, picnic tables, and site landscaping.

Mini parks owned and leased by Sugar Grove Park District:

Brompton Park	
Chelsea Park	
Rolling Oaks Park	
Sheffield Plains Park	
Strubler Park	
Windsor Pointe Park	
McDole Park	(acquisition pending)
Prairie Glen Park	(acquisition pending)
Walnut Woods Park	(acquisition pending)

Mini parks not owned by Sugar Grove Park District:

Bliss Park	(Homeowners Association)
Cardinal Park	(Homeowners Association)
Settler's Ridge	(Homeowners Association)
Hankes Road Park	(Prestbury Citizen's Association)
Normandie Park	(Prestbury Citizen's Association)
Snow Park	(Community House)

Neighborhood Parks

The neighborhood park is an area for passive and active recreation for all ages and is designed for a ¼ to ½ mile radius of service. They are intended to be within walking distance or a short drive of the area they serve and provide few parking spaces, if at all. Neighborhood parks are designed to

have a clear line of sight to amenities from the site, to incorporate themes, colors, and age-appropriate equipment for neighborhood demographics, as well as safety and comfort for park patrons. These facilities can be developed by park districts in conjunction with schools for use during evenings and weekends. While ideally, all neighborhood parks would be 15 acres in size for design purposes, the reality is that most neighborhood parks throughout Illinois are between 2 and 10 acres. The land area for a neighborhood park in Sugar Grove is recommended to be 5 to 10 acres in order to accommodate activities such as picnic groups, water splash pads, small ball fields, tennis, volleyball, and open space for field games.

Neighborhood parks owned and leased by Sugar Grove Park District:

Belle Vue Park	
Black Walnut Park and Conservatory	
Dugan Park West	
Keck Park	
Mallard Park	
Dugan Park East	(acquisition pending)
Hampstead Park	(acquisition pending)
Hannaford Park	(acquisition pending)

Neighborhood parks not owned by Sugar Grove Park District:

Prestbury Park	(Homeowners Association)
Settler's Ridge	(Homeowners Association)
Windsor West Park	(Homeowners Association)

Community Parks

Community parks serve recreational needs which require more space than is generally available at neighborhood facilities and generally range in size from 15 to 100 acres. These parks are designed for a ½ to 3 mile radius of service. The Sugar Grove Park District has modified the NRPA guidelines to define the acreage of the community park to be within 10 acres or larger. This type of park focuses on meeting community-based recreation needs. Amenities often include ballfields, football fields, soccer fields, hiking trails, and play apparatus.

Community parks owned and leased by Sugar Grove Park District:

Sugar Grove Sports Complex	(leased)
Volunteer Park	(leased/owned)

Specialty Parks

The classification of specialty park refers to Park District property available to the community that has historical, cultural, or natural significance. These parks can be of any size and are geared toward passive recreation and preservation of a resource. Currently, specialty parks within the Sugar Grove Park District are all meant to preserve natural areas.

Specialty parks owned and leased by Sugar Grove Park District:

Carson Slough Park

Strafford Wetlands

P208036-00 Sugar Grove Master Plan

Park Inventory

Park Name	Acreage	Park Amenities															Address	Classification
		Playground	Basketball Court	Ballfield	Court Games	Sand Volleyball	Soccer Fields	Fishing	Wooded Pathway	Pavillions/Gazebo	Pathway	Dog Park	Natural Wetlands	Bluebird Nesting Boxes	Open Space	Restored Prairie		
Belle Vue Park	11.49	X	X					X						X	X	X	270 Belle Vue	Neighborhood Park
Black Walnut Park & Conservatory	6.12	X							X	X							904 Black Walnut Drive	Neighborhood Park
Brompton Park	0.94													X			Brompton Dr. & Galeana Blvd.	Mini Park
Carson Slough Park	5.37									X	X		X				1030 McDole Drive	Specialty Park
Chelsea Park	1.68	X															171 Arbor Avenue	Mini Park
Dugan Park East	7.83								X						X		300 Donald Lane	Mini Park
Dugan Park West	4.57	X															1944 Fays Lane	Neighborhood Park
Hampstead Park	8.45	X												X	X		Hampstead Dr. & Oxford Ave.	Neighborhood Park
Hannaford Park	2.64																Wheatfield Ave. & Redbud Cir.	Neighborhood Park
Keck Park	4.67	X		X													290 Patricia Lane	Neighborhood Park
Mallard Park	4.62	X		X													405 Mallard Lane	Neighborhood Park
McDole Park	2.18	X															Hall Street & Dorr Drive	Mini Park
Prairie Glen Park	2.02																Snow Street & Ridgeview Ln.	Mini Park
Rolling Oaks Park	4.29													X			490 Mallard Lane	Mini Park
Sheffield Plains Park	4.33													X			217 Joy Court	Mini Park
Stratford Park and Wetlands	3.42											X			X		712 Windsor Road	Specialty Park
Strubler Park	1.54	X	X														Morna Street & Terry Road	Mini Park
Sugar Grove Sports Complex	25.90	X		X				X		X							901 Wheeler Road	Community Park
Volunteer Park	12.64	X	X											X			61 Main Street	Community Park
Walnut Woods Park	1.62		X			X											Norris Road & Denny Road	Mini Park
Windsor Pointe Park	1.30	X		X		X		X	X	X				X			275 Exeter Lane	Mini Park

Total Park Acreage

117.62

(acreage from Kane GIS Technologies)

Belle Vue Park

Type: Neighborhood Park

Acreage: 11.49 acres (owned by Sugar Grove Park District)

Site Location:

Along Belle Vue Lane approximately one-half mile north of Galena Boulevard.

Site Description:

The park is located in the northern portion of the Windsor Pointe subdivision. It is a largely flat open grassy piece of land that is surrounded by retention ponds to the east and west, the Fox Metro Reclamation District Easement and Bliss Woods Forest Preserve to the north, and single family homes to the south.

Existing Conditions:

After the development of the Windsor Pointe Subdivision, the site was graded and seeded. The HOA owns and maintains the retention facilities to the east and west of the park. The HOA runs "Catch and Release" fishing out of these ponds and also maintains native landscaping along their edges. A 21 space parking lot along Belle Vue Lane was developed in 2005 adjacent to the public walk.

Physical Analysis:

- Parking Lot - One stall was striped for handicapped use but the curb and gutter prevent true accessibility.
- Site Grading - Several areas adjacent to the retention ponds are depressed and form puddles after rain events.



Black Walnut Park and Conservatory

Type: Neighborhood Park

Acreage: 6.12 acres (1.26 acre park/4.86 acre conservatory owned by Sugar Grove Park District)

Site Location:

Along Black Walnut Trails Drive approximately one-half mile east of Bliss Road.

Site Description:

The park is located centrally within the Black Walnut Trails subdivision. The park portion of the site is 1.62 acres with the remaining 4.5 acres being the wooded conservatory. The Kane County Forest Preserve District has a perpetual easement on the conservatory property. The site slopes from north to south and improvements were made in a terrace-like manner.

Existing Conditions:

The playground and basketball court were developed in 1994. The play equipment is manufactured by Miracle and designed for ages 5-12. The basketball court has two goose-neck standards with fixed rims and backboards. A wooden gazebo was also installed in approximately 1994 and re-engineered in 2005. A brick paver entry connects to an asphalt path leading into the wooded conservatory. A park sign and landscape plantings are located at the intersection of Black Walnut Trails Drive and Forest Trail.

Physical Analysis:

- Play Apparatus – The play apparatus is 15 years old and needs to be replaced within the next 2-3 years. The play equipment is designed for 5-12 year olds and an additional structure for ages 2-5 should be considered when the park is updated.
- Basketball Court – The basketball court asphalt is in need of resurfacing/restriping and the pole standards need to be repainted.
- Brick Paver Entry – The weeds erupting through the spaces between the bricks should be removed and sand reapplied.
- Gazebo – The Park District has indicated they would like to see a metal structure similar to the Poligon shelter to replace the existing wooden structure to decrease maintenance.
- Signage – The park sign should be replaced with one containing the new logo and surrounded by low maintenance landscape plantings.





Brompton Park

Type: Mini Park

Acreage: 0.94 acres (owned by Sugar Grove Park District)

Site Location:

Along Brompton Drive approximately one-eighth mile north of Galena Boulevard

Site Description:

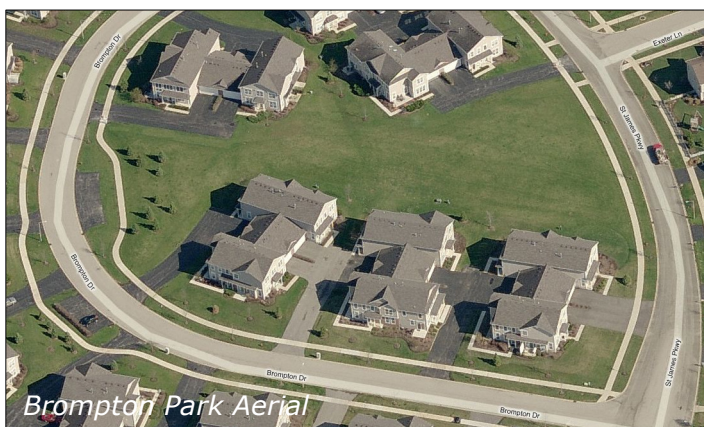
The park is located in the southwest portion of the Windsor Pointe Subdivision with town homes to the south, west, and north and single family residences to the east.

Existing Conditions:

Six parking stalls, including one accessible stall were constructed in 2005 along Brompton Drive. Presently the park is undeveloped.

Physical Analysis:

- Parking – The asphalt is in good condition.



Carson Slough Park

Type: Specialty Park

Acreage: 5.37 acres (owned by Sugar Grove Park District)

Site Location:

Near the intersection of Norris Road and McDole Drive

Site Description:

The park is located in the western portion of the Walnut Woods Subdivision adjacent to a privately owned wetland to the northwest and single family residences to the southeast.

Existing Conditions:

In 2003, two 16' metal Poligon gazebos, manufactured by W. H. Porter, were constructed near the two entrances to the park. A 10' asphalt path connects the two access points and serves to define the private residences from the adjacent prairie plantings. The path was constructed in 2004 and also acts as a fire break during controlled burns. In 2005, park signage and landscape beds were added. 2006 saw the development of a four stall parking lot (including one striped for handicapped use but not meeting accessibility requirements). The Park District has added park benches, facing the wetland, at each gazebo in 2008 as well as two-seat checkerboard tables.

Physical Analysis:

- Gazebos – Both gazebos are in good condition and meet accessibility standards.
- Asphalt Path – The path is in good condition.
- Parking – The asphalt of the 4 stall lot is in good condition and meets accessibility standards.
- Signage – Both entrances have park signs containing the current logo surrounded by ornamental landscape.
- Native Plantings – The plantings have been invaded by invasives.



Chelsea Park

Type: Mini Park

Acreage: 1.68 acres (owned by Sugar Grove Park District)

Site Location:

At the intersection of Arbor Avenue and Bristol Court

Site Description:

The park is located in the southern portion of the Chelsea Meadows subdivision adjacent to the Burlington Northern Railroad R.O.W. to the south and single family residential to the west, north, and east.

Existing Conditions:

Play apparatus structures manufactured by Game Time, serving ages 2-12 were installed in 1998 with concrete barrier curb. Transfer platforms were included as part of the structure, but ramps were not, making accessibility difficult for park users.

Physical Analysis:

- Play Apparatus – The play apparatus structures are 11 years old. Although well maintained and in good condition, they will need to be replaced within 4 to 6 years. The play apparatus is not shielded from the sun.
- Site Landscape – The existing trees appear healthy and in good condition.
- Signage – The park lacks signage at both entrances.
- Site Drainage – The east property line contains a drainage-way between two grates.
- Site Furnishings – Benches have been provided but are not shaded.



Dugan Park East

Type: Neighborhood Park

Acreage: 7.83 acres (3.12 acres owned by Sugar Grove Park District/4.71 acres owned by the Village of Sugar Grove (acquisition pending))

Site Location:

West of the intersection of Fay's Lane and Donald Court

Site Description:

The park is located in the eastern portion of the Dugan Woods subdivision. To the north of the site is the Burlington Northern Railroad R.O.W. Wooded land surrounds the site to the east and south while single family residences are to the west.

Existing Conditions:

The site currently consists of an undeveloped play space and includes wooded areas. The wood lot consists primarily of young stands of box elder and elm.

Physical Analysis:

- Wood lot – The wood lot appears to be healthy and in good condition, although trees tend to be low-quality species.



Dugan Park West

Type: Neighborhood Park

Acreage: 4.57 acres (owned by Sugar Grove Park District)

Site Location:
Along Fay's Lane

Site Description:
The park is located in the western portion of the Dugan Woods subdivision. The site is bordered by single family residences to the east and west and open space to the north and south.

Existing Conditions:
A play area with apparatus manufactured by Game Time structures serving ages 2-12 was installed in 1995. Welch Creek bisects the site diagonally. To the south of the creek one acre pond has been developed to serve as a water retention facility for the subdivision.

Physical Analysis:

- Play Apparatus – The apparatus, 14 years old. Regular maintenance has kept the structures in good condition but they will need to be replaced within the next 5 years. The structures include an accessible transfer platform but lacks ramps.
- Pond/Water Retention – The pond was designed for a 20' depth but sediment displaced the water so currently the depth is approximately 4'. The shoreline is eroded in some areas.
- Signage – The sign contains the old logo and should be replaced. The landscape associated with the sign is healthy, full, and in good condition.



- Site Landscape – The site is well landscaped and all plant material appears to be in good condition.
- Site Grading – During storm events, Welch Creek floods and overflows onto its banks and into the retention pond. This flooding has worn away patches of lawn and the streambank.

Hampstead Park

Type: Neighborhood Park

Acreage: 8.45 acres (acquisition pending)

Site Location:

Near the intersection of Hampstead Drive and Wheeler Road

Site Description:

The park is located centrally within the Windsor West subdivision. Single family residences surround the park.

Existing Conditions:

There are three pedestrian access points to a loop path system that circles the perimeter of the park, winding through upland prairie plantings. Near the northeast access are two parking areas and play apparatus area.

Physical Analysis:

- Play Apparatus – There are two modular structures within the apparatus area. One is designed for 2-5 age group and the other for 5-12 year olds.
- Parking Spaces and Path – The asphalt is in good condition.
- Prairie Plantings – These plantings appear to be in good condition.

Hannaford Park

Type: Neighborhood Park

Acreage: 2.64 acres (acquisition pending)

Site Location:

Near the intersection of Wheatfield Avenue and Redbud Lane

Site Description:

Single family residences will surround the park once constructed.

Existing Conditions:

A barn-themed play apparatus structure, designed for ages 5-12, was installed in 2008. Two horse-themed spring toys and swings are also provided within the play area. A shelter is available nearby for caregivers.

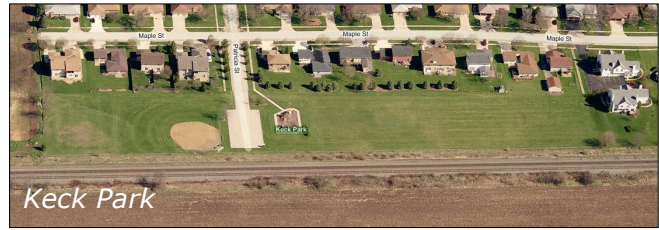
Physical Analysis:

- Play Apparatus – All play apparatus is in excellent condition.
- Shelter – The shelter is in excellent condition.

Keck Park

Type: Neighborhood Park

Acreage: 4.67 acres (owned by Sugar Grove Park District)



Site Location:

At the intersection of Maple Street and Patricia Lane

Site Description:

The park is located in the southwestern portion of the Sugar Creek subdivision. Single family residences line the north property line of this linear park. To the south is the Burlington Northern Railroad R.O.W. The park is bisected by the parking lot which extends from the dead end of Patricia Lane.

Existing Conditions:

A small play area is located to the east of the 24 stall parking lot, including one handicapped accessible stall. It contains play apparatus manufactured by Game Time that was installed in 1996 by volunteers and was designed for ages 2-12. To the west of the parking lot is a t-ball infield with backstop used as the Park District's playing field for ages 5-8. An open lawn area is used for football practice.

Physical Analysis:

- Play Apparatus – The play apparatus is 13 years old and will need to be replaced within the next five years, though it has been well maintained and is in good condition. The design of the apparatus contains an accessible transfer platform but ramps were not installed. The play area is visible from the parking lot and is easily policed for safety.
- Parking Lot – The parking lot asphalt is in good condition.
- Ballfield – The infield is of sand/clay blend and is in good condition as are the backstop and bleachers.
- Signage – The park sign contains the previous logo. The landscape associated with the sign is healthy and full.
- Site Grading – Depressed areas which puddle after rain events are located along the eastern most and northwest property lines.
- Site Landscape – There are few trees on-site but the ones present are in good condition.



Mallard Park

Type: Neighborhood Park

Acreage: 4.62 acres (owned by Sugar Grove Park District)

Site Location:

At the intersection of Mallard Lane and Brookhaven Circle

Site Description:

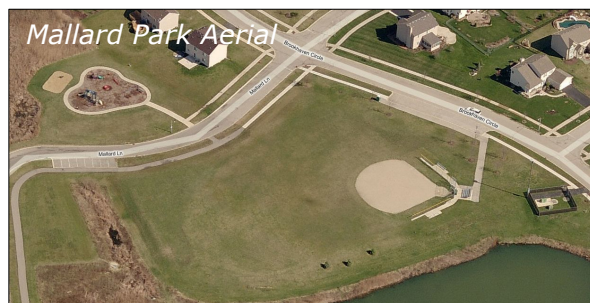
The park is located in the southwestern portion of the Mallard Pointe Subdivision. Single family residences are situated to the north and east. The west and south borders are adjacent to Mallard Wetland and Woodlot. The park is bisected by the Mallard Lane with the creative play area north of Mallard Lane and the ballfield to the south.

Existing Conditions:

The creative play area to the north of Mallard Lane contains play apparatus manufactured by Game Time that is designed for ages 2-12. The portion of the park located south of Mallard Lane contains a 12 stall parking lot along Brookhaven Circle associated with the ballfield infield and backstop. The ballfield serves as the Park District's playing field for ages 7-8. A second parking lot along Mallard Lane has 6 stalls. Each parking lot contains one handicapped striped stall and were developed in the early 2000s.

Physical Analysis:

- Play Apparatus – The apparatus is 8 years old and is in good condition. The design of the apparatus includes an accessibility transfer platform but not ramps.
- Parking Lot – The asphalt is in good condition. However, the 6 stall lot along Mallard Lane does not meet accessibility requirements.
- Ballfield – Ag-lime blended in field is in good condition and the outfield is well maintained.
- Site Furnishings – The apparatus area lacks amenities for caregivers.
- Signage – Park signage is not present.
- Site Landscape – Existing plant material is in good condition.



McDole Park

Type: Mini Park

Acreage: 2.18 acres (acquisition pending)

Site Location:

Between Hall Street and Dorr Drive

Site Description:

The park is located centrally within the Walnut Woods subdivision. Hall Street and Dorr Drive define two of the park boundaries with the other sides adjacent to single family residential.

Existing Conditions:

McDole Park has play structures manufactured by Miracle designed for ages 2-12. Adjacent to the play area is a 20' metal gazebo with accessible concrete pad. A 4 stall parking lot, which includes 1 accessible stall, is located along Dorr Drive. A 10' wide asphalt path connects Dorr Drive to Hall Street.

Physical Analysis:

- Play Apparatus – The apparatus is 4 years old and in very good condition. The area meets accessibility requirements.
- Parking – The stalls are not striped and do not meet accessibility standards.
- Site Landscape – The existing trees appear to be healthy and in good condition.
- Gazebo – The gazebo is in good condition.
- Asphalt Path – The path is in good condition.
- Signage – The park sign has the current logo and is surrounded by landscaping that appears healthy.



Prairie Glen Park

Type: Mini Park

Acreage: 2.02 acres (acquisition pending)

Site Location:

Along Snow Street near the intersection of Ridgeview Lane

Site Description:

The site is currently undeveloped.

Rolling Oaks Park

Type: Mini Park

Acreage: 4.29 acres (owned by Sugar Grove Park District)

Site Location:

Along Mallard Lane adjacent to the Mallard Wetland

Site Description:

The site is flat and vacant with the exception of an 8' asphalt walk connecting the Rolling Oaks and Mallard Pointe Subdivisions. It is within one quarter mile of the play area and ballfield at Mallard Park.

Existing Conditions:

The site is currently undeveloped.

Physical Analysis:

- Site Grading – Several low areas puddle after rain events.
- Site Features – A fire hydrant is centrally located within the lawn.



Sheffield Plains Park

Type: Mini Park

Acreage: 4.33 acres (owned by Sugar Grove Park District)

Site Location:

Behind residences at the dead end of Joy Street

Site Description:

The site's predominant use is as a stormwater detention facility for the Village of Sugar Grove.

Existing Conditions:

The site is currently undeveloped.

Physical Analysis:

- Site Grading – The water flows from west to east along the north property line during heavy storms and has eroded some of the turf along this channel.



Stafford Park and Wetlands

Type: Specialty Park

Acreage: 3.42 acres (3.17 acre wetlands/0.25 acre park owned by Sugar Grove Park District)

Site Location:

Wetland: Behind residences south of Courtney Circle

Park: Along Windsor Road south of Courtney Circle

Site Description:

The park is a triangular piece of land adjacent to a residence. The wetland is adjacent to the Hannaford Forest Preserve.

Existing Conditions:

The park is undeveloped

Physical Analysis:

- Native Plantings – The plantings appear to be in good condition.



Strubler Park

Type: Mini Park

Acreage: 1.54 acres (owned by Sugar Grove Park District)

Site Location:

At the intersection of Terry Drive and Monna Street.

Site Description:

The park is located in an older subdivision called the Richards Tollway Subdivision. The site is relatively flat and is surrounded by single-family residential. A pull off for school buses is located along Monna Street.

Existing Conditions:

An apparatus area is located near Terry Drive. The play area features a two bay swing-set, merry-go-round, and a play structure manufactured by GameTime. The structure was designed for ages 5-12. A park sign is located at the intersection of Terry Drive and Monna Street.

Physical Analysis:

- Play Apparatus – The apparatus was installed in 1998 and is 11 years old. Although well maintained, the apparatus will need to be replaced within 4-6 years. The apparatus is not shielded from the afternoon sun.
- Signage – Contains the previous administration logo. The landscape plantings associated with the sign consists of low maintenance plant material and appear well maintained.
- Basketball Court – The basketball court is in need of re-surfacing and new color coat.
- Site Drainage – Low spots east of the basketball court puddle after rain events.
- Site Furnishings – Benches, bike racks and other user amenities are not provided.
- Site Landscape – The existing trees appear healthy and in good condition.



Basketball Court



Play Area

Sugar Grove Sports Complex

Type: Community Park

Acreage: 25.90 acres (leased from the City of Aurora through 2018)

Site Location:

Located on Aurora Municipal Airport Property north of Wheeler Road and east of Dugan Road

Site Description:

The Sports Complex is surrounded by airport and agricultural land.

Existing Conditions:

An access road off Wheeler Road leads to a 222 stall parking lot, including 7 handicapped accessible stalls. The parking lot was constructed in 2001 and the pavement is in good condition. An 8' wide asphalt pathway connects the parking lot to the ballfield core. Between the parking lot and ballfield core is a 20x40 shelter. The core development includes a concession building, four ballfields in a wagon-wheel cluster configuration, and a playground. The structures at the play apparatus area were designed to accommodate ages 2-5 and 5-12 and meet handicapped accessibility requirements.

Physical Analysis:

- Parking Lot – The asphalt is in good condition.
- Asphalt Path – The path itself was engineered for pedestrian use and maintenance vehicle use has degraded the surface. The path is also too narrow for vehicles and some damage has been done to the turf along the path.
- Ballfields – The ballfields are in good condition.
- Shelter – The building is in good condition.
- Concession Building – The building is in good condition.
- Play Apparatus – The play apparatus is in good condition but users are not shielded from the sun.



Play Area



Ballfield Backstop



Parking Lot



Sports Complex Aerial

Volunteer Park

Type: Community Park

Acreage: 12.64 acres (5.58 acres owned by Sugar Grove Park District/7.06 acres leased from Johns Shields Elementary School)

Site Location:

Situated between Main Street to the east and McCannon Street to the west adjacent to John Shields Elementary School to the south with residential to the north.

Site Description:

Existing Conditions:

Volunteer Park is located in downtown Sugar Grove adjacent to the Park District building. Although lower in acreage than a typical community park, Sugar Grove Park District has classified it as such due to its function as a setting for community events.

A large number of trees are found within Volunteer Park. The Park District has developed this site with an overall passive nature and intends it to have an arboretum like character. The active recreation at the nearby school site is leased and used in exchange for maintenance by the Park District. The topography is undulating in areas where dry basins exist. A ballfield has been developed adjacent to the school property. The ballfields serves as the playing fields for ages 3 to 10.

Also on-site is the Prairie Building with a 60' x 40' floor used by dance and yoga classes. It was built in 1986 by volunteers and later upgraded with restrooms, kitchen, floors and walls. Adjacent to the building is a 50 stall parking lot with 4 accessible spaces.

The park is used for community events such as the "Annual Corn Boil".

Physical Analysis:

- Site Landscape – Existing trees appear to be healthy and in good condition.
- Signage – The park lacks signage at each of the entrances.
- Parking Lot – The asphalt is in good condition.
- Site Drainage – The residences off McCannon Street adjacent to the site walk have drainage problems due to the house's property being at a lower elevation than the park.
- Ballfield – The sand/clay infields are in good condition. Part of the outfield is in the depressed dry basin.
- Asphalt Path – The ¼ mile loop is in good condition.

- Natural Plantings – The prairie plantings appear healthy and in good condition.



Volunteer Park plantings



*Volunteer Park
gathering space*

Walnut Woods Park

Type: Mini Park

Acreage: 1.62 acres (acquisition pending)

Site Location:

Adjacent to Norris Road, north of Harkinson Boulevard and south of Denny Road

Site Description:

Located in the north portion of the Walnut Woods Subdivision adjacent to agricultural land to the north, west, and south and wooded lot owned by the Walnut Woods HOA to the east.

Existing Conditions:

A parking lot extends off Norris Road and provides 6 stalls, including 1 accessible. A concrete pad adjacent to the parking lot acts as a trailhead to the 10' path leading through the wooded lot into the subdivision. A 20' metal gazebo acts as a central core for the sand volleyball court, basketball courts, and court games.

The sand volleyball court is regulation size with a concrete perimeter curb and commercial grade net and post standards. The full court basketball has gooseneck style standards with fixed rims and backboards. The half-court basketball has one adjustable rim standard. The court games consist of four square and hopscotch.

Physical Analysis:

- Parking Lot – The asphalt is in good condition but the handicapped space lacks signage.
- Sand Volleyball – The volleyball court is in good condition and well-drained.
- Basketball and Court Games – Asphalt and standards are in good condition.
- Gazebo – The gazebo is in good condition.



- Signage – The park sign contains the current logo and is surrounded by a perennial bed which is in good condition.
- Site Landscape – The landscape appears healthy and in good condition.

Windsor Pointe Park

Type: Mini Park

Acreage: 1.30 acres (acquisition pending)

Site Location:

At the intersection of Exeter Lane and Hampton Road

Site Description:

The park is located within the Windsor Pointe Subdivision and is surrounded by single family residential.

Past Improvements:

In 2003, Miracle Play apparatus structures were installed, designed for ages 2-12.

There are two small parking lots, one along each street. The Hampton Road lot contains 6 stalls, including 1 accessible, while the Exeter Lane lot contains 3 stalls, including 1 accessible.

Physical Analysis:

- Play Apparatus – The play apparatus is 6 years old and in very good condition. It is located within 100' of two roads and is not separated from them with any kind of barrier. Benches have been provided but neither these nor the apparatus has been shielded from the sun.
- Site Landscape – The few trees located on-site appear healthy and in good condition.
- Signage – The sign contains the current logo and the associated landscape appears healthy.
- Parking Lots – Both parking lots are in good condition and meet accessibility standards.





Chapter 3 - Recreation Standards and Goals

RECREATION STANDARDS AND GOALS

The Village of Sugar Grove and by extension the Park District is a growing community. Population data shows exponential growth from 1990 to 2007, as shown in the chart and table below.

Year	Population	Source
1990	2,005	1990 US Census
2000	3,909	2000 US Census
2005	7,958	Village of Sugar Grove Special Census
2007	9,453	2007 Population Estimate, US Census
2030 Forecast	62,742	Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Plan

Figure 1 – Sugar Grove Population

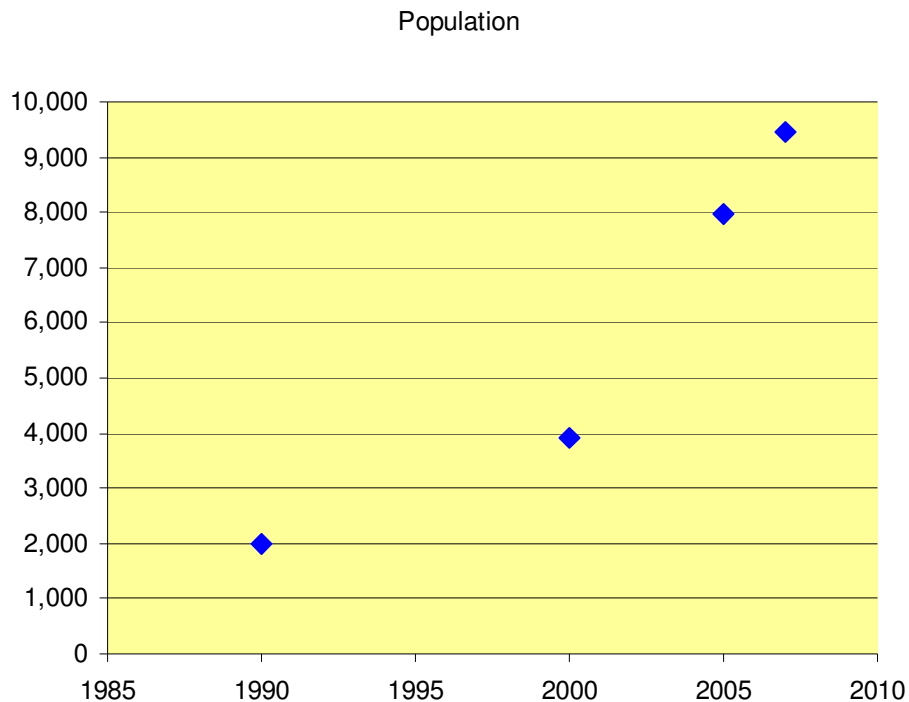


Figure 2 – Sugar Grove Population

While the economic downturn has currently slowed growth, it is probable that in the coming decade, the population will make an increase along these trends.

The estimated population within the park district for 2007 is 9,453 which is a 41% increase over the 2000 Census. The total number of households in the Park District have also increased, although at rates slightly lower than the total population. Since the 2000 Census contains the most recent

comprehensive demographic data, this report utilizes the information most frequently. As of 2000, there were an estimated 1,272 households in the Park District. Of those 1,272 households, approximately 47% had children under the age of 18 living with them with an average family size of 3.37. The following chart gives the population breakdown by age range:

Age Range	Population
0 to <5	331
5-14	762
15-19	265
20-59	2,227
>/=60	324
Total	3,909

Figure 3 – Population by Age Segment
Source: 2000 U.S. Census

The population is fairly homogenous with 96% of residents identifying themselves as white.

Race/Ethnicity	% of Population
White	95.86%
Black	1.38%
Hispanic	4.43%
Asian	0.51%
Native	0.03%
Other	1.28%

Figure 4 – Population by Race and Ethnicity
Source: 2000 U.S. Census

The Park District is the main provider of parks and recreation services for the Village of Sugar Grove.

Understanding a community's demographics is vital to the Park District's ability to providing services for the population.

The community survey recently administered by **Leisure Vision** is a valuable tool for assessing use of parks and programs. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the District is comprised of mini parks, neighborhood parks, community parks and specialty parks. The survey indicates 64% of respondents use the parks. Of those who do use the parks, Volunteer Park, the Sports Complex and Black Walnut are the most popular.

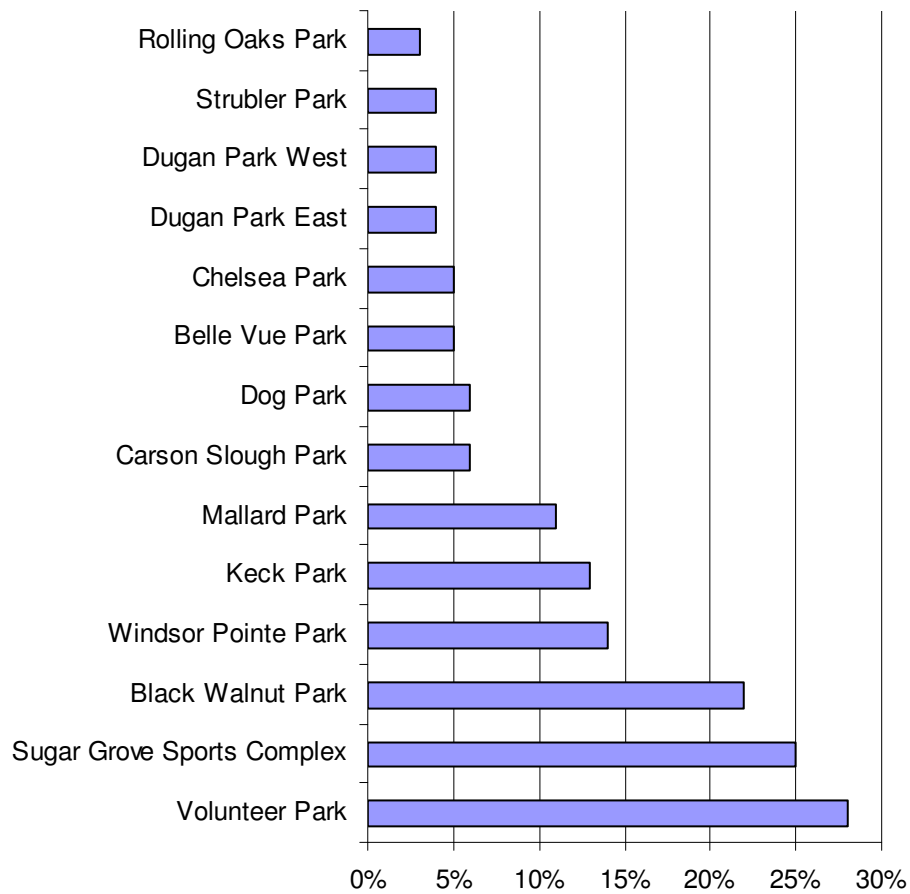


Figure 5 – Parks Visited During the Past Year
(multiple choices could be made)

Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (November 2008)

Members of the Sugar Grove Park District enjoy a wide variety of recreational activities both through park district programs and beyond, walking being the most popular across all age groups.

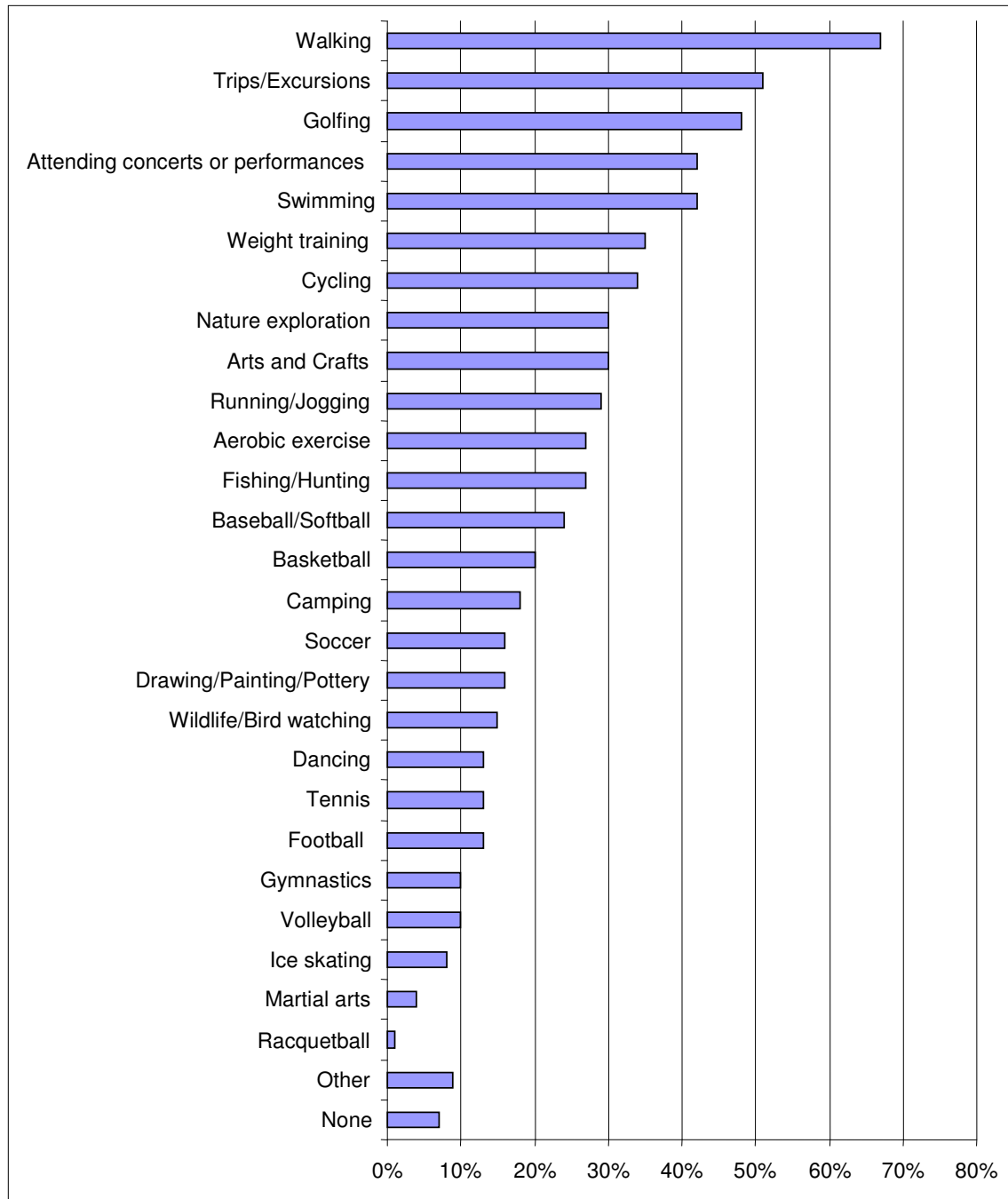


Figure 6 – Recreational Activities that Responded
Households Participate In
(multiple choices could be made)
Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (November 2008)

The results suggest that residents look for both indoor and outdoor activities as well as both programmed and natural open spaces.

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) developed open space standards and guidelines to serve as a tool to assist park districts evaluate their park and recreation offerings. In conjunction with information gathered via surveys and community meetings, the Park District can then tailor the results to local desires.

The Park District has in the past used NRPA standards to evaluate its parks and to follow NRPA guidelines for park land acreage per 1,000 populations. The Park District has set a goal of providing 10 acres per 1,000 populations. Given the current Park District land holdings of 117.62 acres and the estimated 2007 population of 9,453, the Park District currently is exceeding that recommendation by approximately 23 acres.

The Park District also strives to meet NRPA guidelines regarding activities offered throughout the park system. The NRPA set guidelines for the number of fields or courts are recommended for a community based on its population. This can be compared to fields in the system as well as user demand, to identify areas of saturation or unmet needs. The following table summarizes guidelines and park district offerings. Results will be discussed in more detail below.

Event	Guidelines*	Currently in System	Amount Recommended per Population	Over/Under
Basketball	1 per 5,000	4.5	2	+2.5
Tennis	1 per 2,000	8	5	+3
Volleyball	1 per 2,000	1	5	-4
Baseball	1 per 5,000	9	2	+7
Football	1 per 20,000	0	0	--
Soccer	1 per 10,000	2	1	+1
Running Track	1 per 20,000	0	0	--
Multi-use Court	1 per 10,000	0	1	-1

Figure 7 – Field/Court Guidelines by Population
(*Source: National Recreation and Park Association)

Basketball

The National Standard for Basketball Courts is 1 per 5,000 populations. With a population of 9,453 and 4.5 courts, the district meets this guideline. Basketball provides excellent opportunities for physical fitness and socializing. Incorporating courts can be a way to engage teens as park users. Concerns about potential crime can be reduced through lighting and siting courts in high visibility areas. It is also recommended that one or two future courts be developed as multi-use court which would allow the opportunity to provide inline hockey in the system as well.

Parks containing basketball courts:

Black Walnut Park
Strubler Park

Volunteer Park
Walnut Woods Park

Tennis

National Standards for tennis courts recommend 1 per 2,000 populations. There are currently no tennis courts within the park system, although five are recommended per the guidelines. Waubensee Community College has eight courts available for use by the public. As part of the proposed site development at the middle school, four tennis courts are to be installed. Expanding the intergovernmental agreement with the school district could make these available part-time to residents and count toward meeting this guideline. In addition, the Prestbury Subdivision contains two private tennis courts. The Park District should consider setting up an agreement with the homeowners association to have occasional open hours for community use.

Volleyball

The park system contains one sand volleyball court. For the population the NRPA guidelines recommend 1 per 2,000 leaving a deficit of 4. However, the survey results indicated that only 9% of respondents have a need for outdoor volleyball. While this translates to an estimated 251 households, it is low on the priority list of respondents. As parks are developed in the future, volleyball should be considered and incorporated where appropriate.

Parks with volleyball court:

Walnut Woods Park

Baseball/Softball

Baseball and softball are highly popular in the Sugar Grove community. Even though the park system exceeds the recommended number of fields based on 1 per 5,000 populations by seven fields, respondents to the survey and participants in the focus groups indicated a desire for more fields and better developed fields. The proposed middle school is planned to contain four new fields in a wagon wheel configuration. The school system has indicated a willingness to partner with the Park District for use agreement and encourage the installation of lights.

Parks containing baseball or softball fields:

Keck Park
Sugar Grove Sports Complex

Mallard Park
Volunteer Park

Football/Running Track

While the Park District has not yet reached the 1 per 20,000 populations threshold provided in the guidelines, the proposed middle school development is planned to include a football field. Working out an agreement with the school district for use of this field would allow the Park District to expand its offerings.

Soccer

The guidelines suggest 1 soccer field per 10,000 populations. With two soccer fields in the park system, the District exceeds this recommendation.

Parks containing soccer fields:

Sugar Grove Sports Complex

Multi-Use Court

As discussed in the basketball section above, a multi-use court would increase the range of activities the Park District offers. A multi-use court could include any combination of inline hockey, tennis, and basketball. The combining of uses is more cost effective than developing three separate courts and the Park District can evaluate the most popular activities to guide future development.

Other Park Amenities

Play apparatus – almost half of the parks within the system contain apparatus structures. The Park District inherited many of these structures when the Village turned over the facilities. Although the Park District has done an excellent job of maintaining the structures, they are designed for a 15-20 year life cycle and are nearing the beginning of that range.

Park Name	Equipment Installed	15 year life cycle	20 year life cycle
Black Walnut Park	1994	2009	2014
Dugan Park West	1995	2010	2015
Keck Park	1996	2011	2016
Chelsea Park	1998	2003	2018
Strubler Park	1998	2013	2018

Mallard Park	2001	2016	2021
Sugar Grove Sports Complex	2001	2016	2021
Windsor Pointe Park	2003	2018	2023
McDole Park	2005	2020	2025

Figure 8 – Play Apparatus Replacement Schedule

As finances become available, the Park District should replace apparatus designed to provide opportunities for motor skill development, dramatic play and social interaction for all ages and abilities. Themed apparatus would help create a park identity separate and unique to the other facilities within the system.

Parks containing play apparatus:

Black Walnut Park	Chelsea Park
Dugan Park West	Keck Park
Mallard Park	McDole Park
Strubler Park	Windsor Pointe Park
Sugar Grove Sports Complex	Hampstead Park

Signage

Although signs are located at many of the parks, they often display the previous logo and lack landscape plantings. One of the suggestions given at several focus group meetings is to delineate more clearly park district properties from HOA-owned parks. Signage would be an easy and relatively inexpensive way to work toward accomplishing this goal. As signs are replaced, attention should be paid to location to maximize visibility. Consistent and uniform signage should incorporate the park name, Park District information and be constructed of vandal-resistant materials. A smaller accompanying sign could display park rules, park hours, age appropriateness, notices for risk management, and Park District contact information.

Shelters and Site Furnishings

Within the park system, provisions for user amenities such as shelters and other site furnishing are inconsistent. As part of the effort to create a cohesive identity for Park District facilities, consistent site furnishings would further that goal. However, when themed environments are created, structures and furnishings should complement the theme. Amenities such as these enhance the user's comfort and encourage users to linger.

Site Landscape

Landscape plantings within a park enhance the user's experience. Landscaping within a park fulfills many purposes. The placement of planting beds can provide a visual base for signage, shade play structures and seating areas, create wildlife habitat, draw attention to significant site features, and screen undesirable views. Above all the selection and placement of plant material should not obstruct the recreational value of the park. Planting in beds preserves contiguous areas of open play space which enhances the user's experience. Also by grouping plantings in landscape beds, maintenance can be made easier and less costly.



Chapter 4 - Program Evaluation

SUGAR GROVE PROGRAM EVALUATION

The Sugar Grove Park District offers a variety of programs for the residents. The district program base is impressive given its limited resources and short history. The staff has done a superior job in learning techniques and management skills through regional training programs. The Executive Director is a seasoned professional with a broad range of program experience.

Adult Programs

The Sugar Grove Park District offers a variety of programs targeted for adults age, defined as age 18 and above. Adult programs range from self-help or educational classes to mini-vacation excursions. Monitoring of program lifecycles is needed to evaluate registrations in new and mature programs. This information can then be used to increase programs that are canceled or those that are in decline. Staff needs to monitor trends on adult programs and introduce new programs as appropriate. The lack of facilities is the most limiting factor in providing adult programs in the community. The intergovernmental agreement with Fox Valley Park District provides an expanded level of programming for the residents.

For many programs the park district uses "contract instructors". The use of contract instructors needs to be monitored when the district is receiving 10%-30% of the gross program proceeds while providing all the marketing support, registration and facility needs. Better performance measures and program standards need to be put in place so management and the park board can evaluate the success of the programs provided. The district might consider adding a 15% administrative fee on top of all program fees to help recover the administrative costs associated in providing the programs through marketing, registration and management supervision. This new administrative fee would increase the district's financial reach in expanding services.

The district should consider having a participant evaluation system started for the district to evaluate instructor quality, program quality, improvement ideas, and startup new programs. Individual evaluations should be distributed at the second to last class of all programs to allow participants to provide their input. Evaluations should be reviewed by management personnel and summary reports prepared for the park board.

Adult Sports

Sugar Grove Park District offers adult sports leagues. All leagues are open to individuals age 18 and above. There is a lack of space for adult sport programs in the district. The district promotes youth sports first versus adult. Revenues for the adult programs are good and indicate community interest. There is a lack of performance measures in place to monitor the

success of the programs beyond participation levels and revenues over expenditures. The sports pricing structure in place appears to be doing well and is supported by the teams and players in the district.

Youth Sports & Classes

The Sugar Grove Park District offers a variety of classes for beginners and experienced boys and girls athletic programs. The program staff should track all participants by age segment as well as the life cycle of each program for planning future program offerings. The District should also look to partner with youth sport organizations on the development of classes and sport leagues. The District is highly encouraged to survey coaches and parents for the type of programs needed. The lack of facilities is the key barrier in expanding and enhancing youth sports and leagues. The lack of lighted ball fields limits the number of games due to darkness. The District has a good working relationship with the school district regarding use of the school for after school sport programs. The district should pursue discussions with the school district for the development of an intergovernmental agreement for the creation of a formal master baseball, soccer, and football field expansion on school/park properties.

Cultural Arts Programs

The Park District offers a variety of programs targeted for pre-school ages to adults. The majority of the programs are aimed at youth versus adult. Again, the lack of daytime facilities limits art programs from being offered to youth. The district needs to expand its cultural arts programs for recreation participants who seek these services over sport programs. Expansion should be considered for drawing, writing, painting, comedy improve, arts & crafts and computer classes.

Teen Programs

The District offers a variety of programs targeted towards teenagers between 12 and 19 years old. This age group is one of the more difficult ones to successfully program events and activities. Staff should continue to seek input from youth in this age group for program suggestions through advisory groups, school discussion groups, and through face to face discussions with teens. Special events designed for teens have had a better success rate in many park districts by using Friday and Saturday nights for the programming. Teens surveying teens is another method in seeking program planning information. Discussions should be conducted with the police department to seek teen programming direction.

Early Childhood

The Park District's early childhood program is based on the philosophy that children retain more knowledge if learning is made fun. Training for staff and

instructors should be enhanced for health and safety, infant and child CPR, universal precautions, child abuse awareness, nutrition and early childhood development. Orientation should be given for youth protection and two-deep leadership should be considered for all programs dealing with early children. Although difficult, classes should be offered at a variety of times to service working parent versus continuing the traditional morning sessions. Morning sessions benefit mostly the stay-at-home parent's children. The lack of facilities during the day is a major roadblock for the park district in this area to provide programs.

Special Events

The Sugar Grove Park District offers a number of special events throughout the year for the residents. Special events allow for large group participation, low operational costs per participant, and allows for expanded public relations for the park district. The district should seek additional partners in expanding special events for a wider variety of age groups. Special events give the best return for both participants and for the district.

Program Summary Comments

The District has done a good job in developing recreation programs in its short history. It offers a variety of seasonal programs to the residents locally that are complemented by programs that are offered through intergovernmental agreements. The staff is dedicated and works hard to provide a balanced load of recreation programs while dealing with limited resources and facilities. The working relationship with the school district provides for the needed space. The park district should explore discussions with other organizations regarding using their resources for program development and expansion.

Summary Suggestions for Improvements:

- Creating and starting a formal participant evaluation process for planning improvements and new programs;
- Create a 15% administrative overhead fee for all programs to help off set costs in providing the programs;
- Attempt to provide afternoon and evening early childhood programs for working parents;
- Expand discussions with the school district for the creation of a joint athletic outdoor sports complex for both the school and park district use;
- Additional training for all staff and volunteers in dealing with youth programs. Youth protection and CPR should be part of the training series;
- A review should be conducted regarding contract employees and their percentage of gross revenue to park district programs. The park district should be getting a larger percentage of the gross fee base;

- The district should explore registration by the internet to accommodate the working parents;
- As the program registrations grow, the Park District should evaluate whether or not to charge non-resident fees;
- The district should offer more special events with additional partners;
- The district should seek greater input for teenager programs and services. Focus should be directed for the junior high age group for programs and services;
- Planning discussions should be held with school personnel in seeking new program offerings; and
- Staff training at regional and state recreation associations should continue to be encouraged and budgeted;
- Neighborhood mobile recreation & special event nights should be explored with the homeowner associations. These events would enhance public awareness of the park district services.



Chapter 5 - Financial Assessment

FINANCIAL ASSESSMENT

In order to implement the recommendations of this Open Space Master Plan, the Sugar Grove Park District will need not only vision, but funding. The district has had to do more with less each year since it was created. The financial limitation of the tax cap, low interest yields, spending down the reserve base, and additional dollar cost for supporting programs, facilities, and improvements have all taken their toll on the district dollar capabilities. The district needs expansion in maintenance personnel, recreation personnel and administrative personnel. The district-owned equipment is in need of replacement and there is also a need to improve the parks and athletic facilities as well as fund new capital projects.

Based on analysis of revenue and enrollment information provided by the Park District and focus group responses, there are several financial issues that need to be addressed:

1. The current Land Cash Donation Ordinance does not provide for the total cost of development for new park sites nor does it provide monies for operations and maintenance. However, this ordinance provides the park district's main source of land acquisition. It has also been a vital source of revenue when the developer opts to donate cash in lieu of land. However, thus far the cash received has been used to repay the mortgage on the park district building. Currently the maintenance and operations are funded through the park district's general budget. As more parks are added to the system, the maintenance costs increase, putting further strain on the park district's finances.
2. An updated pricing policy is needed for the district as well as an effective activity base costing system. The district has an aggressive approach toward charging fees for service. The majority of the recreation programs cover direct costs. In addition some programs such as special events and youth programs are supported by taxes. The district is limited in program expansion due to limited program facilities. The district needs to continue to improve facilities or build new facilities that can offset operating costs through fees and charges.
3. The district should review contract based programs to ensure that the district is getting the best percentage return possible. There are a number of recreation programs that are established on a contractual basis with the instructors earning a percentage of the fee charged. The district should also ensure that contractual employees are not dictating or promoting other programs at the cost of the district during their use of resources, administration, and marketing.
4. The district does not have the financial reach with its current tax rate levels, to meet the growing demand for operational needs. The funds are limited to a predetermined ceiling per state law. Each fund has extensions

based on the equalized assessed evaluation of the district. The only way to increase the limitation ceiling is by public consent with referendum. The corporate and recreation funds are the two main sources of income for the district. Both of these funds have been providing revenue at the same level since the district was created. The operating cost of the district is not being met by the stagnant tax rates. The district may have some flexibility in shifting fund level requests with recent tax levy law changes, but this is a short-term approach and the district needs to develop a long-term strategy.

5. The district's tax rates are declining with community growth in the tax base. This is due to the impact of the tax cap limitations imposed by state law. The district cannot extend taxes greater than the consumer price index or 5% of the previous tax extension, whichever is less. The district has never seen a consumer price index above 5% since the law was created in the 1990s. Next year's consumer price index has already been determined to be .1%. This essentially is a no growth mode in tax revenue for the park district. The tax cap process drives the tax rates lower each year as the district can not extend the higher levels of the tax assessment to capitalize on community growth.

6. Over the past three years the District has experienced a decrease in revenue for interest earnings. This is a result of the financial market and reducing the district's cash reserve base to pay for improvements and operational costs in recent years. There is no immediate fix for this issue until the economy recovers and the park district re-builds its cash reserve.

7. Residential developments produce people, who demand services, with lower cost return than other forms of development. The district is able to capture new tax dollars under what is called "annual new growth" for each tax levied. Residential developments produce the lowest level of tax base under the assessment process, yet in the recent past and short term future the major new growth in the district appears to be residential. There is need for expansion of commercial and retail opportunities inside the district boundaries. The Village of Sugar Grove's master plan calls for this; however, the current economy is delaying this development.

8. Under the tax cap provisions, the Park District has bonding capabilities without the need for waging public support by referendum. The district can issue limited bonds using non-referendum bonding authority for short term capital improvements. However, any levy enacted will be issued against existing monies. The Park District would need an additional referendum to cover the bonds above and beyond the current tax rates. There is modest support from the district's residents to support tax bonds for park and recreation improvements. This will also require the park board to ask for additional operational dollars to maintain any facility and park improvements resulting from a bond.

9. The district does not have a strong marketing plan in place to develop a culture of community donations, endowments, gifting, and foundation solicitations. The business portion of the community is limited but will grow as the economy recovers for housing and business startups. A plan needs to be in place to prepare for this.

Financial Summary

The Sugar Grove Park District finances are limited due to the restrictions placed on it. The economy and the state's tax cap limitation laws are hampering the district's ability to create revenue to meet demands for service. The district board has done a good job of trying to balance the lack of revenue with the demand for services. The staff administration is cost conservative and creative in finding alternative cost cutting solutions for offsetting limited revenue streams. Staff should be encouraged to attend regional and state educational seminars and training events to keep pace with new, better, and alternative means to increase revenue and control expenses. The park district should continue to explore the options of more advertising dollars, naming rights, and internet registration as means for increasing revenue. The district should explore developing stronger working relationships with the school districts and Waubensee Community College for expansion of programs through expanded use of their facilities. A statement obtained from an influencing stakeholder of the park district said it all, "they do a lot with what they have, and they can only do better by the economy getting better and improving their communication with the residents and other agencies with partnering resources".



Chapter 6 - Intergovernmental Agreements

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENTS

The Sugar Grove Park District, recognizing its limitations both financially and facility-wise, has entered into several intergovernmental agreements in order to fulfill their mission. These agreements allow the Park District to both expand programming and provide services not available within the community. The Park District currently has agreements in place with the Fox Valley Park District, the Fox Valley Special Recreation Association, and Kaneland Community Unit District #302. The Community House also provides meeting/activity space for Park District activities.

Village of Sugar Grove

In 2005, the Village of Sugar Grove updated their comprehensive plan. This plan includes a section dedicated to parks and open space within the village. The parks, open space and greenway plan section focuses on environmental protection. A key feature of the plan is the "Greenway Corridors" which encompasses wetlands, floodplains, destructive plant communities to be preserved and conceptual connections. The park district should request an amendment to the official comprehensive plan which would incorporate the Park District Master Plan into the village's plan. The procedure will require a formal public hearing. The park district should also request continued cooperation in the administration of the Land/Cash Donation Ordinance as well as cooperation or simultaneous annexation of lands to the park district when they are annexed into the village.

Fox Valley Park District

The Fox Valley Park District and Sugar Grove Park District have already demonstrated how well they can work together as partners. The park district is a valuable resource for the residents of Sugar Grove. With many recreation opportunities located in neighboring Aurora, this Park District is the second largest in Illinois with parks and facilities in Kane, DuPage, Kendall, and Will counties. Responding to citizen interest in facilities that the Park District currently does not have the population base to support, the District entered into an agreement where residents of Sugar Grove can receive in-district rates.

There are several challenges regarding the agreement with the Fox Valley Park District. The first is community awareness. Although notice of the agreement is posted on the website and in the program guide, a large number of focus group participants were not aware of the agreement. Respondents to the survey, however, were.

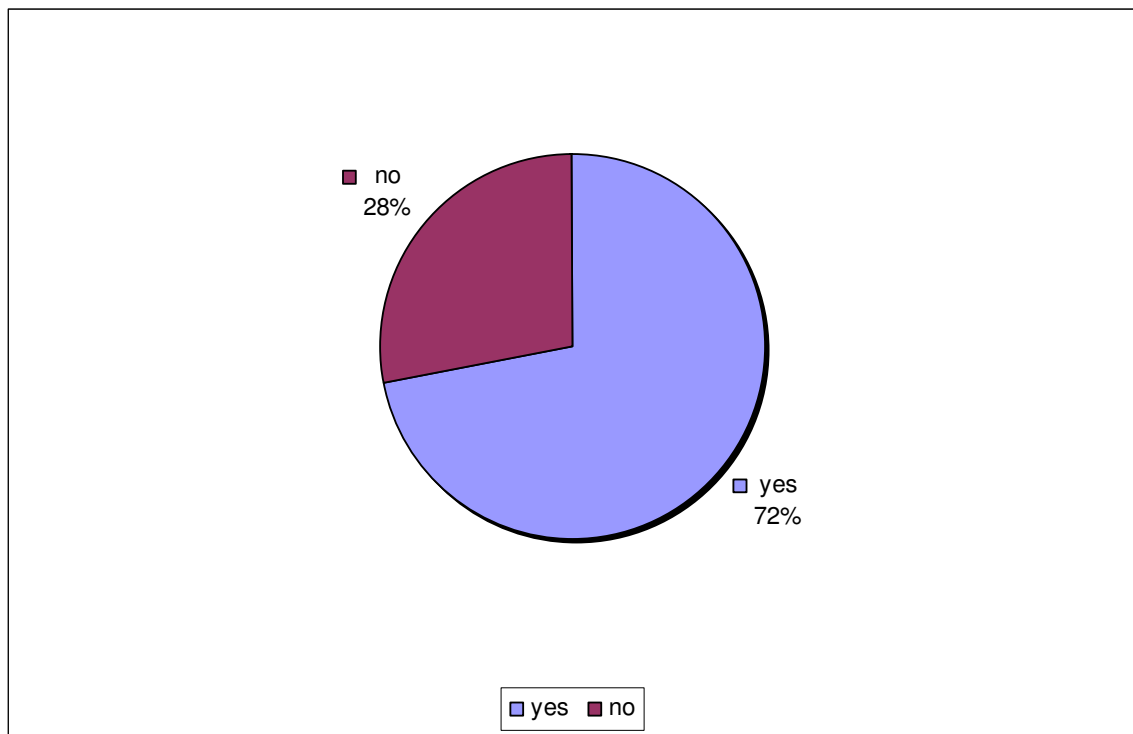


Figure 1 – Awareness of agreement with Fox Valley Park District
Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (November 2008)

This disparity is unusual since the focus groups contained members of local sport organizations. In addition, there have been reports of Fox Valley Park District staff not being aware of the agreement and of Sugar Grove residents not being able to register until Fox Valley residents have. The third most common complaint being the distance and time it takes to access the facilities.

The agreement with the Fox Valley Park District makes a number of facilities available. Fox Valley contains the Eola Fitness Center, Prisco Fitness Center, Vaughan Athletic Center, Orchard Valley Golf Course, Blackberry Farm, a skate park, and many parks.

The respondents ranked the activities they participate in with the following percentages:

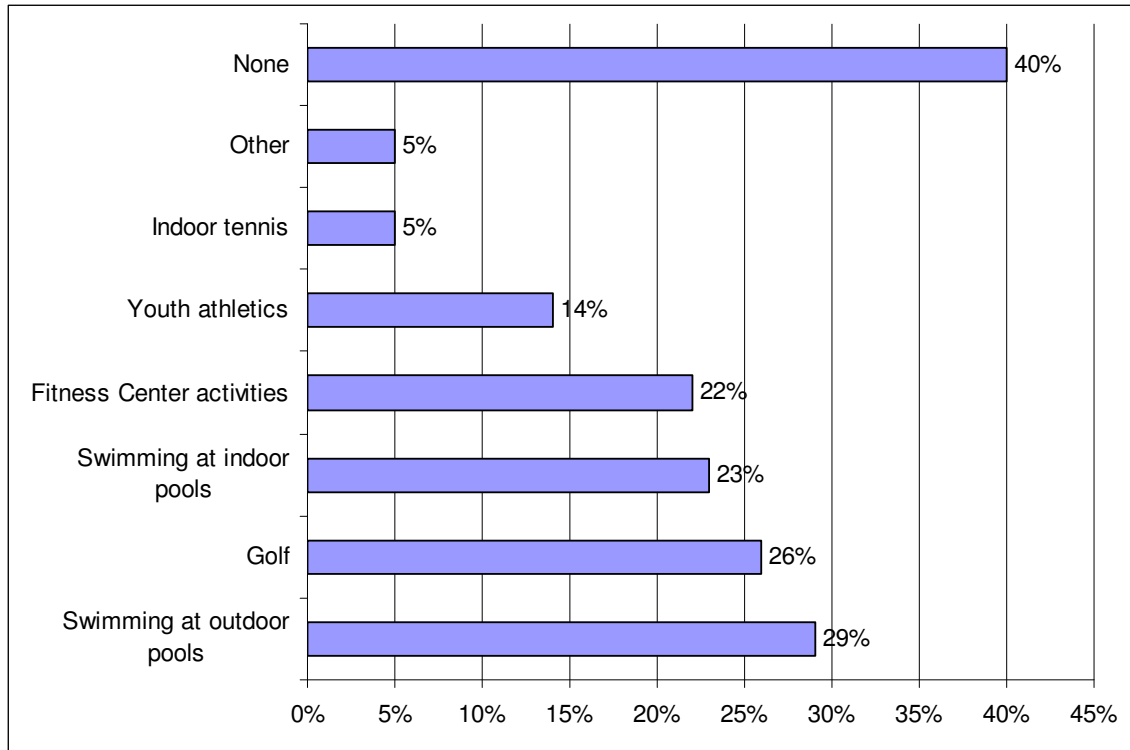


Figure 2 – Activities that Respondent Households Participate in at Fox Valley Park District Facilities
(multiple choices could be made)

Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (November 2008)

Seventy percent of survey respondents ranked the agreement with Fox Valley Park District as very important or somewhat important to their household. We encourage the Park District to continue this relationship, internally concentrating on other ways to communicate the existence of the agreement to new residents. We also encourage the Park District to work with the Fox Valley Park District to educate its staff regarding the agreement and procedures.

Fox Valley Special Recreation Association

The Sugar Grove Park District is one of seven member park agencies that form the Fox Valley Special Recreation Association (FVSRA). The FVSRA's goal is to provide a diverse range of year-round recreation activities to individuals with disabilities of all ages. The Park District should continue to support and be a member of this association to provide well-rounded recreation programs for Sugar Grove residents.

Kaneland Community Unit District #302

The Park District should continue to cooperate with the Kaneland Community School District in the current partnership program of current facilities and

advise the school district that the master plan contains an additional proposal for more partnering programs in the future.

School District 302 is an organization that operates six area schools, including John Shields Elementary in downtown Sugar Grove. District 302 has agreed to provide the Park District with facility space, although school programs have priority. Through this partnership agreement, the Park District has primarily utilized the gyms and ballfields. This limitation does adversely affect the ability of the Park District to schedule programs. However, overall this partnership agreement has been a benefit to the community. District 302 facilities have been well utilized according to survey respondents.

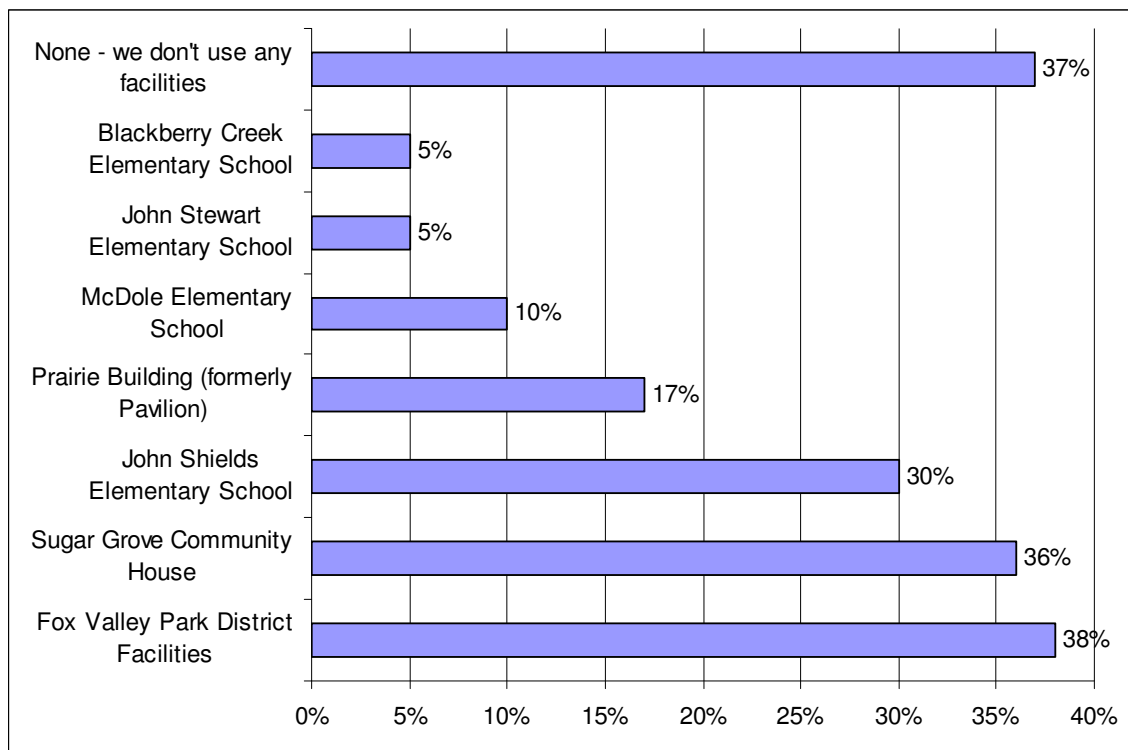


Figure 3 – Recreation Facilities that Respondent Households Have Used During the Past Year
(multiple choices could be made)

Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (November 2008)

In August of 2009, a middle school will be open within Sugar Grove's boundary along Harter Road. Eventually this complex will also contain a high school and sports complex. The Park District has the opportunity to partner with the school to install lighted ballfields. Given the popularity of baseball within the community we recommend the Park District at minimum install conduit for future lighting and take advantage of this opportunity.

Forest Preserve District of Kane County

There are six forest preserves owned by the Forest Preserve District of Kane County within the Village's boundary: Hannaford Woods, Aurora West, Culver, Bliss Woods, Prairie Kame and Big Rock Forest Preserve. Three of the four are located near the northern areas of the district and one located south and west.

Although the forest preserves are not conducive to the programming needs of the Park District, they provide many complementary services to Sugar Grove and surrounding communities. Activities offered by the forest preserves include a model airfield, hiking through forest and prairie, off leash dog park, and nature classes.

Community House and Library District

The Community House and Sugar Grove Public Library over the years have provided space to the Park District for meeting/activities. The library recently began construction on a new building. The previous library structure has been purchased by the Township for office use. Space not required by the Township has been made available to the Park District for use in developing additional senior programs in exchange for the Park District contributing toward utilities. We recommend that the Park District pursue this relationship to expand programming opportunities and build its customer base.

Intergovernmental Agreement Possibility – Waubensee Community College

Situated off Harter Road, Waubensee Community College contains a number of facilities that the Park District should consider utilizing through an intergovernmental agreement. The campus contains a fitness center, indoor batting cages, volleyball courts, a wrestling room, dance studio, and training room. Although the Park District reportedly explored a partnership several years ago but did not pursue it due to costs, we recommend that the Park District re-visit this possibility and see if an agreement can be reached. An agreement with Waubensee would provide several of the benefits of the Fox Valley Park District, while being located closer to the community, giving residents additional options.



Chapter 7 - Acquisition Strategy

ACQUISITION STRATEGY

The Sugar Grove Park District strives to follow the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) guideline for the amount of recreational land set aside for public use. The NRPA sets the goal of 10 acres of park land per 1000 population.

Land Cash Donation Ordinance

The Sugar Grove Park District has historically received land and/or cash as required by the Village of Sugar Grove's Land Cash Donation Ordinance. The Village ordinance has a chapter pertaining to the dedication of land for park and recreation purposes and school sites or a cash contribution in lieu of land as a requirement for approval of all new subdivisions. This document also sets criteria describing the physical condition of the park. The ordinance uses the original Naperville ordinance as the base for structure. The ordinance lists \$80,000 for the per acre land value in determining the formulas. This should be re-evaluated on an annual basis to determine if the amount is accurate to land development costs. The Illinois Association of Park Districts has a listing on communities and their valuations. Many are exceeding \$100,000 per acre for value.

The Park District should get more involved with the Village in the early stages of determining park site locations in the new developments and cash contributions. The Village appears to be friendly towards helping the Park District achieve its land planning goals. The Village also appears agreeable to having the developer provide turn-key park sites to the Park District. The Park District needs to establish strong standards to ensure quality park sites. The creation of a list of park features needed and desired will allow the Park District to better evaluate the plans submitted by the developers. It will also allow the expansion of recreation opportunities and facilities. Given that the Park District staff's time is taken up with the day to day operations of programming and maintenance, the Park District should consider using a park site planning firm in the design and construction of future parks.

Homeowners Association Controlled Parks

Before the creation of the Park District, Homeowners Associations for a subdivision developments would occasionally become responsible for the maintenance of the park parcels required per the annexation agreement.

The developer that installed McDole Park and Walnut Woods Park has gone bankrupt due to the economic downturn. The Park District has already assumed responsibility for the maintenance of these two parks and is pursuing their acquisition through the bankruptcy courts.

The Homeowners Association that owns Hampstead Park is currently in negotiations with the Park District to relinquish control of the park. The Park

District may be willing to acquire the park site on the condition that the Homeowners Association contributes financially to the re-location of prairie plants adjacent to several properties which require controlled burns.

Development near Airport

A planned retail development within the airport boundary along Wheeler Road is anticipated to contribute an eight acre piece of land to the Park District. Discussions of improvements have included additional soccer fields and/or football field.



Chapter 8 - Facility and Park Recommendations

Belle Vue Park

Type: Neighborhood Park

Acreage: 11.49 acres

Site Location:

Along Belle Vue Lane approximately one-half mile north of Galena Boulevard.

Future Improvements:

Windsor Pointe subdivision contains another neighborhood park, Windsor Pointe Park, which contains a playground and is located less than a mile away. Therefore, it is recommended that Belle Vue Park maintain its natural character.

The Fox Metro Reclamation District Easement contains a trail which could become part of a link to the Gilman Trail system and connection to Bliss Woods Forest Preserve. A path from the parking lot or Belle Vue Lane could connect the road to the trail. Due to the proximity of parking, the site is a potential location for a trailhead. The large lawn area could be graded for use as a soccer or football practice field. Frisbee golf is another potential use that would not require intensive development.

Since the HOA has planted the detention basins and runs a catch-and-release fishing program, the Park District could incorporate additional native plantings in some areas of the upland area, and add purple martin boxes, bluebird boxes, and other wildlife habitat. A shelter overlooking the western pond and interpretive signage would provide opportunities for gathering and education.



Black Walnut Park and Conservatory

Type: Neighborhood Park

Acreage: 6.12 acres

Site Location:

Along Black Walnut Trails Drive approximately one-half mile east of Bliss Road.

Future Improvements:

The park sign should be replaced with the one containing the current logo surrounded by low-maintenance landscape plantings.

With the topographic conditions, the park is well suited to the site as configured. During the eventual re-development, consideration should be given to developing closer to Forest Trail to make the park more visible from the road.



Brompton Park

Type: Mini Park

Acreage: 0.94 acres

Site Location:

Along Brompton Drive approximately one-eighth mile north of Galena Boulevard

Future Improvements:

Given the density of residential a small playground along St. James Parkway would be appropriate for this area. Also court games would allow the site, despite its small size, to service a range of age groups. A small plaza could be developed near the parking lot. The rest of site could be developed with native landscaping and an accessible walking path.



Carson Slough Park

Type: Specialty Park

Acreage: 5.37 acres

Site Location:

Near the intersection of Norris Road and McDole Drive

Future Improvements:

Despite its designation as a neighborhood park based on acreage, Carson Slough Park's greatest asset to the community is as a natural area. The proximity of Walnut Woods Park and McDole Park within the Walnut Woods subdivision and their active recreation features encourage this park to maintain its value as providing passive recreation. The Park District should focus on reducing invasive plants, maintaining the native landscape, and developing wildlife habitat. Interpretive signage could supplement the shelters and benches.



Chelsea Park

Type: Mini Park

Acreage: 1.68 acres

Site Location:

At the intersection of Arbor Avenue and Bristol Court

Future Improvements:

In the near term, park identification signage should be installed, with associated landscape, near the walk off of Arbor Avenue.

When the play apparatus is replaced, consideration should be given to shifting the apparatus area to either the east or west to create a larger contiguous open space. This could then be left open for unstructured play or developed with activities such as volleyball, or outdoor winter skating. With the sites proximity to the train line, railroad-themed apparatus would be appropriate. Additional landscape to shield the apparatus and amenities for caregivers, such as benches, would enhance the appeal of the park.



Dugan Park East

Type: Neighborhood Park

Acreage: 7.83 acres

Site Location:

West of the intersection of Fay's Lane and Donald Court

Future Improvements:

Should a community-wide trail system be developed, this site is well suited to be a local link with a potential trail running through the woods and along the railroad tracks to connect the neighborhood with the Gilman Trail. It could serve as a trailhead with interpretive signage, benches, bicycle parking, and drinking fountain. Active recreation is taken care of by Dugan Park West a couple blocks away.

The health of the wood lot should be monitored as should the presence of invasive species.

In addition, the wood lot should be managed to include selective thinning of low-quality species and the planting of higher quality ones, such as maple, oak and beech.



Dugan Park West

Type: Neighborhood Park

Acreage: 4.57 acres

Site Location:
Along Fay's Lane

Future Improvements:

The location of the play area is best, given the flooding of Welch Creek as it is now one of the high points of the site. When play apparatus is replaced, consideration should be given to expanding the apparatus area and incorporating structures with a boating or tree theme. Another possibility is to incorporate features such as climbing boulders, or net climbers.

The pond is in need of dredging to restore its 20' designed depth. If this depth is restored, the Park District could introduce fishing at this park. Since the dredging would take place within the Village's easement, the Park District should work with the Village to accomplish this recommendation. Shoreline stabilization and native plantings would make the creek and detention pond of the site more appealing visually as well as its technical functions. The addition of a gazebo, walking trail, and perhaps a bridge across the creek would encourage park visitors to explore the site beyond the playground while maintaining the natural character.



Hampstead Park

Type: Neighborhood Park

Acreage: 8.45 acres

Site Location:

Near the intersection of Hampstead Drive and Wheeler Road

Future Improvements:

The physical elements of the park are in fairly new, in good condition, and need only to be maintained. The prairie plantings could be modified to enhance the ease of maintenance.

Hannaford Park

Type: Neighborhood Park

Acreage: 2.64 acres

Site Location:

Near the intersection of Wheatfield Avenue and Redbud Lane

Future Improvements:

Standard park identification signage needs to be installed. Otherwise, the physical elements of the park are new, in excellent condition, and need only to be maintained.

Keck Park

Type: Neighborhood Park

Acreage: 4.67 acres

Site Location:

At the intersection of Maple Street and Patricia Lane

Future Improvements:

The public walk to the east of Patricia Lane has been extended to meet the creative play area. The walk to the west, however, dead-ends at the property line. This could be extended to the railroad tracks in the development of trail links between parks and a regional trail system.

The land to the east of the creative play area is vacant and not currently programmed. This area would be well suited to become a community garden with the installation of one to two hydrants, animal control fencing, and an access drive. Plot sizes should be between 15' x 30' and 20' x 40'. A communal mulch and compost area should be located along the easternmost property line.

When the play area is updated, consideration should be given to expanding the area to include swings and larger structures.



Mallard Park

Type: Neighborhood Park

Acreage: 4.62 acres

Site Location:

At the intersection of Mallard Lane and Brookhaven Circle

Future Improvements:

Given the size constraints of the park and its success so far, we recommend replacing the existing features in the same location when needed.

In approximately 2016, the play apparatus will reach the end of its designed life span and will need to be replaced. Until then, the Park District should continue to monitor its condition and perform maintenance as required. To comply with safety and accessibility requirements, ramps should be installed as well as age appropriate signage. In addition, deciduous trees to shade the apparatus and other landscape to screen neighboring residences would enhance the play environment.

At the time when the park is redeveloped, consideration should be given to caregivers comfort. Seating areas with benches, litter receptacles, a shelter and other similar amenities should be included in the design.

The parcel to the west is currently unincorporated and is farmed except for a portion which appears to be wetland. At the time that this parcel is incorporated and ultimately developed, the Park District should acquire the wetland and buffer to protect and enhance this natural resource. In addition, an overlook with interpretive signage could be developed on the playground side to educate park users.

The upper slope adjacent to Mallard wetland is an ideal opportunity for an overlook. The path from the ballfield could be extended along this ridge and then turn toward the parking along Mallard to avoid the swale. Along the route, an overlook including shelter, seating, and interpretive signage should be installed.



McDole Park

Type: Mini Park

Acreage: 2.18 acres

Site Location:

Between Hall Street and Dorr Drive

Future Improvements:

As one of the newer apparatus areas, there are few recommendations for improvement. Additional deciduous trees should be installed to shield park users, particularly at the apparatus area, from the sun.

Prairie Glen Park

Type: Mini Park

Acreage: 2.02 acres

Site Location:

Along Snow Street near the intersection of Ridgeview Lane

Future Recommendations:

At the time that the surrounding subdivision is completed, this site would be an ideal location for play apparatus and shelter to serve the surrounding neighborhood.

Rolling Oaks Park

Type: Mini Park

Acreage: 4.29 acres

Site Location:

Along Mallard Lane adjacent to the Mallard Wetland

Future Improvements:

The surrounding residences are buffered from this park by the wetlands and location between the two subdivisions making it well suited for active uses. Due to the proximity of Mallard Park with its playground and ballfield, both geared toward pre-teens, and the lack of other parks in the immediate vicinity, we recommend developing this park with a focus on teenager/adult activities.



The linear nature of the park would allow easy policing of the site whose amenities could include a sand volleyball court, basketball court, skate park, and/or multiuse court. Berms and landscape plantings could provide a buffer for the adjacent residences to the south. To minimize impacts to

the Mallard wetland, a path with overlook seating could be located along the upper ridge and act as a break between active and passive spaces. To the east of the path, supplemental plantings can help filter run-off before it reaches the wetland.



Sheffield Plains Park

Type: Mini Park

Acreage: 4.33 acres

Site Location:

Behind residences at the end of Joy Street

Future Improvements:

To the east is the proposed Settler's Ridge subdivision which will also require detention. By combining the two basins, a larger passive recreation area will be created. Although the basin will not be able to be developed for active uses, it could contribute practice soccer, practice football, walking trails, and through native plantings, wildlife habitat.



Strafford Park and Wetlands

Type: Specialty Park

Acreage: 3.42 acres

Site Location:

Wetland: Behind residences south of Courtney Circle

Park: Along Windsor Road south of Courtney Circle.

Future Improvements:

The wetland should be monitored for its continued health and the presence of invasives.

Given the lack of recreation value provided by the wetland and park site, the Park District should look into donating these parcels to the Forest Preserve.



Strubler Park

Type: Mini Park

Acreage: 1.54 acres

Site Location:

At the intersection of Terry Drive and Monna Street within the Richards Tollway subdivision. Surrounded by single family residential.

Future Improvements:

The park sign should be replaced with one containing the new logo.

Attractive, low-maintenance landscape plantings should also be installed to ground the sign visually.

The layout of the elements within the park is not optimizing the use of the space. By clustering the play area and basketball court more a larger contiguous space can be created for open play that will be easier to maintain.

Sugar Grove Sports Complex

Type: Community Park

Acreage: 25.90 acres

Site Location:

Located on Aurora Municipal Airport Property north of Wheeler Road and east of Dugan Road.

Future Improvements:

The Park District will need to assess its long term commitment to this site due to the lease. Currently all amenities are in good condition, and with maintenance, will remain so.

The improvements that could be made new are the widening and reinforcement of the asphalt path, adding additional trees to screen the play apparatus. The material storage bins are highly visible as a visitor enters the parking lot. A combination of fencing and landscape screening would greatly enhance the view.

Should the Park District make a long term commitment to the site, the ballfields could be further improved. Several attendees of the focus groups expressed interest in seeing the ballfield core improved with concrete walks connecting the player and spectator areas of the site walk. In addition, there were complaints of low points in the outfield grading that puddle after rain events to be addressed.

Volunteer Park

Type: Community Park

Acreage: 12.64 acres

Site Location:

Situated between Main Street to the east and McCannon Street to the west adjacent to John Shields Elementary School to the south with residential to the north.

Future Improvements:

To increase the amount of facility space, we recommend that the Prairie Building be expanded or replaced, depending on its structural capacity. The additional space could be used for programming for young children or seniors. The plaza should also be expanded.

As the Park District acquires additional property for new ballfield developments, the ballfield here should be removed. It is likely that once the

population passes a certain threshold, the site will no longer be adequately sized for community events. The site could then be developed with either active or passive amenities.

Active recreation amenities such as volleyball or a multi-use court would be appropriate given the proximity to the school. Due to the arboretum-like character that the site currently has, additional and more intricate plantings could be developed to include bird/butterfly gardens, rain gardens and ornamental gardens that could also serve as outdoor education resources for the school.

The existing prairie plantings should continue to be monitored for its health and the presence of invasives.



Walnut Woods Park

Type: Mini Park

Acreage: 1.62 acres

Site Location:

Adjacent to Norris Road, north of Harkinson Boulevard and south of Denny Road.

Future Improvements:

As one of the new parks in the system, the only improvement recommended at this time is to add additional site landscape to soften impact of the site amenities hard surfaces and provide shade for park patrons.

Windsor Pointe Park

Type: Mini Park

Acreage: 1.30 acres

Site Location:

At the intersection of Exeter Lane and Hampton Road

Future Improvements:

Given that this is the largest park for active recreation in the area, the open space should be developed in some way. Features such as a splash pad, picnic shelter, and/or a multi-use court would allow the park to serve a wider range of ages.



TRAIL SYSTEM

Among the many activities that Sugar Grove residents enjoy, walking is ranked the number one activity among ages 19 and older groups according to community survey. Sixty-seven percent of respondents engage in walking, thirty-four percent cycle, and twenty-nine percent run or jog. Biking/walking trails ranked highest among recreational facilities most important to respondent households. Given \$100 to allocate the Park District improvements, respondents would use \$21 out of every \$100 to develop walking and biking trails, second only to the development of a community center. This confirms information collected during the focus groups. Residents are interested in both community and regional trails.

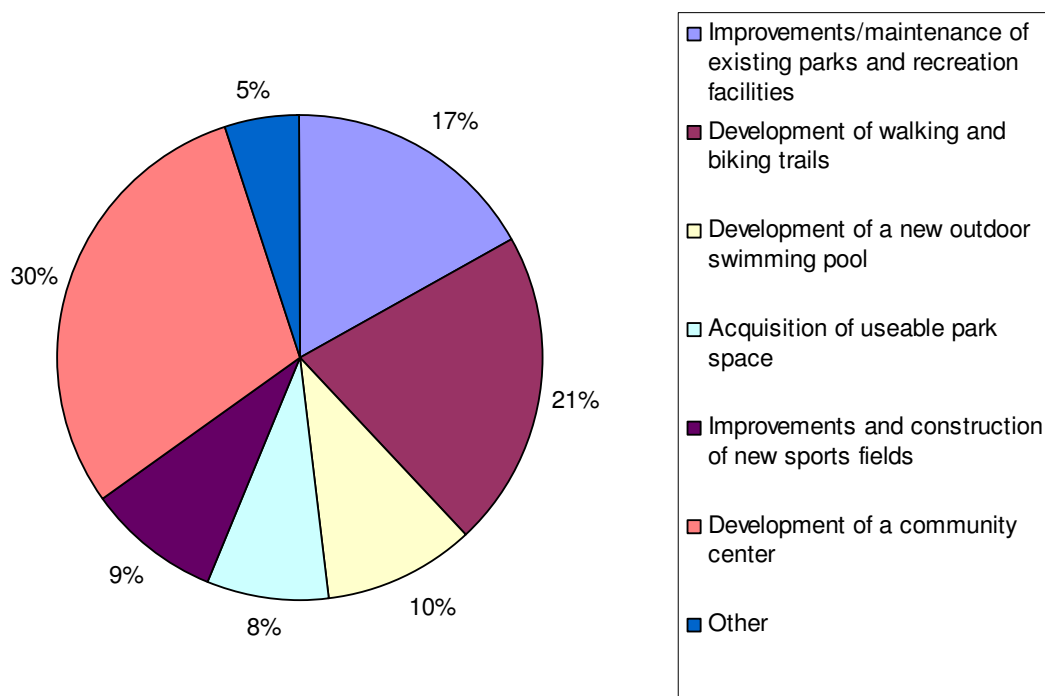


Figure 1 – How Respondents Would Allocate \$100 Among Various Parks, Trails, Sports and Recreation Facilities

Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (November 2008)

The Virgil L. Gilman Nature Trail connects Waubensee Community College near the northern boundary of Sugar Grove and stretches east. The Gilman Trail provides regional links to other communities and trail systems.

Within the community, the trail system should provide linkages between subdivisions, parks, and connecting the separate parts of the Village. Participants in the focus group expressed interest in the ability to traverse the area in a non-vehicular manner as a family outing. Also local trails could provide relief to parents who act as chauffeurs as the kids want to go to the park.

As shown on Map 6 – Potential Trail Connections, there are several trail segments within the community. As subdivisions and other developments occur, we recommend requiring developers to incorporate links to these segments. The Park District and Village should partner to ensure cohesive implementation.

Trails can take many forms dependent on the location within the community. In residential areas, sidewalks and roadways can provide linkages. In existing commercial and downtown, it is possible to develop bike lanes. Also a separate trails running parallel to the roadway could be developed. A range of these solutions will need to be employed dependent on whether the area has existing or new development. In already developed areas, the Village/Park District may need to negotiate with landowners or the State to develop a trail or bike lane.

PARK STANDARDS

As future residential subdivisions are proposed, the Park District should specify minimum standards of park site development to be required by the developer. In order to ensure the highest quality of workmanship as the park features are installed, the following lists of items should be required and submitted to the Park District prior to final approval of a park project.

These items include:

- A copy of the final plat
- A copy of the annexation agreement
- A set of construction documents
- A document containing the following:
 - Park acreage
 - Pathway acreage
 - Independent park function
 - System-wide park function
 - List of amenities and attractions
 - Individual park narrative that includes “Overview”, “Size”, and “Details”
- Individual cut sheets for all park amenities that include product manufacturer, model numbers, fabrication specifications and maintenance manuals.
- Permanent property irons and temporary wood stakes at all property corners and intersecting easements and/or abutments.
- 8-1/2” x 11” sheets containing construction details of the following:
 - Typical concrete street curb cross section and profile
 - Typical concrete sidewalk cross section and profile
 - Typical ADA concrete sidewalk cross section and profile
 - Typical ADA concrete ramp, curb, and playground surfacing cross section and profile

- Typical bituminous pathway cross section and profile
- Typical bituminous pavement (normal duty) cross section and profile
- Typical handicapped parking space, post, and MUTCD signage
- Typical right-of-way park/playground MUTCD signage
- Sediment trap detail
- Silt fence detail
- Shrub planting detail
- Prairie planting detail
- Park identification signage detail
- Deciduous tree planting detail
- Coniferous tree planting detail

If you would like to see examples of the minimal level of acceptable quality for installation of park elements, please contact the park district and ask for copies of park standards.



Chapter 9 - Focus Group Responses

FOCUS GROUP RESPONSES

Planning Resources Inc. (PRI) conducted a series of focus group meetings to elicit information regarding a variety of topics relating to the Park District and the community. A series of five meetings were held on September 23, 2008 at 1:00 pm and 7:00 pm, September 25, 2008 at 7:00 pm and January 12, 2009 at 4:00 pm and 7:00 pm. The Park District invited members of community groups, representatives of sports leagues, Park District staff and board members, Village elected officials, and representatives of homeowner associations in order to gather the widest pool of comments possible.

PRI prepared a list of questions to serve as a framework during the discussions, although the insights of the group also steered the conversation. The list of questions has been included below and responses are included in the meeting minutes that follow.

1. What are the strengths of the park district?
2. What are the weaknesses of the park district?
3. How satisfied are you with the quality of the existing recreation facilities?
4. How would you rate the overall level of maintenance of the parks and facilities owned and operated by the park district? Please identify the location and specifics of any maintenance concerns.
5. What improvements are needed in existing parks or facilities and at what locations?
6. Are there any portions of the district that are underserved in parks? If so, where and what types of amenities are needed?
7. What new recreation facilities would you like to see the park district provide?
8. How satisfied are you with the quality control of current programs offered by the park district?
9. What programs or activities do you, your family members, and/or co-workers most enjoy that are available through the park district?
10. What additional programs or activities do you feel the park district should offer that are not currently available?
11. How would you rate the quality of customer service provided by the park district? Please elaborate.

12. How effective is the Sugar Grove Park District in seeking feedback from the community and users on improving its performance?
13. How do you believe park and recreation services should be financially supported? Should they be self supported through user fees, completely through taxes, or a combination of each?
14. Do you think residents would be supportive of a tax increase if it is found that there are insufficient funds to properly operate and maintain existing parks, facilities, and programs to the standards desired by the community?
15. If this master plan identifies significant capital needs for the park district, how supportive do you think the residents would be of a tax increase?
16. What are the key issues and values in the Sugar Grove community that need to be considered while developing this comprehensive master plan?
17. Are there any hot issues or political sensitivities we should be aware of that could impact the success of the park district's planning efforts?
18. During the next ten years, what should be the top priorities of the Sugar Grove Park District?
19. Who are the key partners and stakeholders we need to speak with regarding this project?
20. Are there any programs or facilities currently available through the park district that should be eliminated? If so, which ones and why?

To see a report which summarizes what was learned at the focus groups, please contact the park district.



Chapter 10 - Community Survey Data

COMMUNITY SURVEY DATA

The Sugar Grove Park District selected Leisure Vision to conduct a community-wide citizen survey. Partnering with the Park District, Leisure Vision developed the survey questionnaire, tailoring it to elicit issues of importance to the community. Surveys were mailed to a random sample of 1,500 households throughout the Sugar Grove Park District. The goal was to have 300 residents complete and mail in the surveys. A total of 301 households returned their surveys.

Please contact the park district if you would like to review the Community Survey Findings Report dated December 2008.



Appendix A - Maps



**Map 1:
Location**



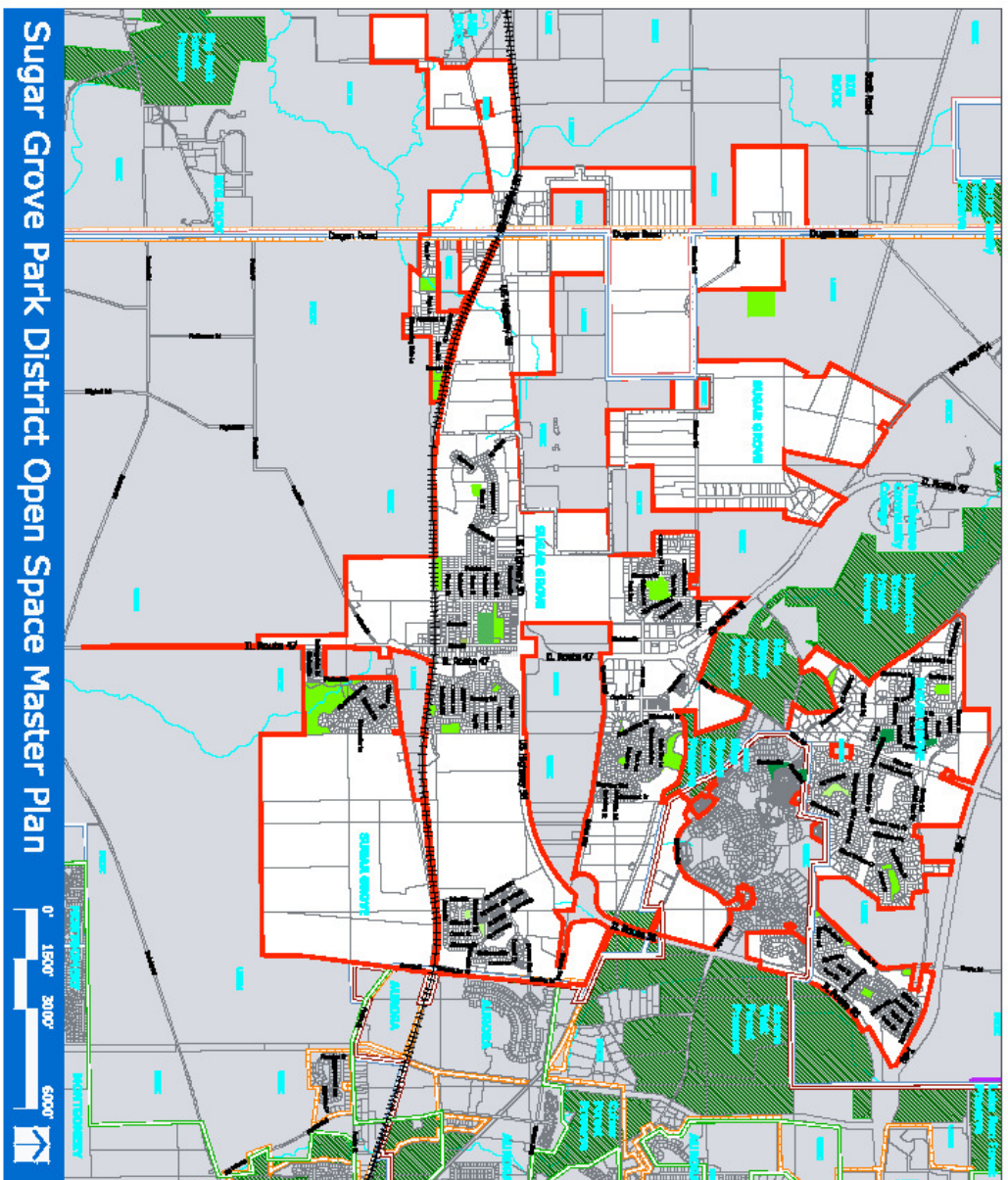
Sugar Grove Park District Open Space Master Plan

Map 2:
Jurisdictional Boundaries



Legend

- Sugar Grove Park District Property
- HOA Owned Park
- School District Owned Property
- Community House Owned Park
- Kane City, Forest Preserve Property
- Sugar Grove Municipal Boundary/
- Sugar Grove Park District
- Sugar Grove Library District
- No Library District
- Keneland 302 School District
- Hinkey-Big Rock School District
- Aurora West 129 School District
- Fox Valley Park District
- Aurora Municipal Airport
- Burlington Northern
- Santa Fe Railroad



Sugar Grove Park District Open Space Master Plan

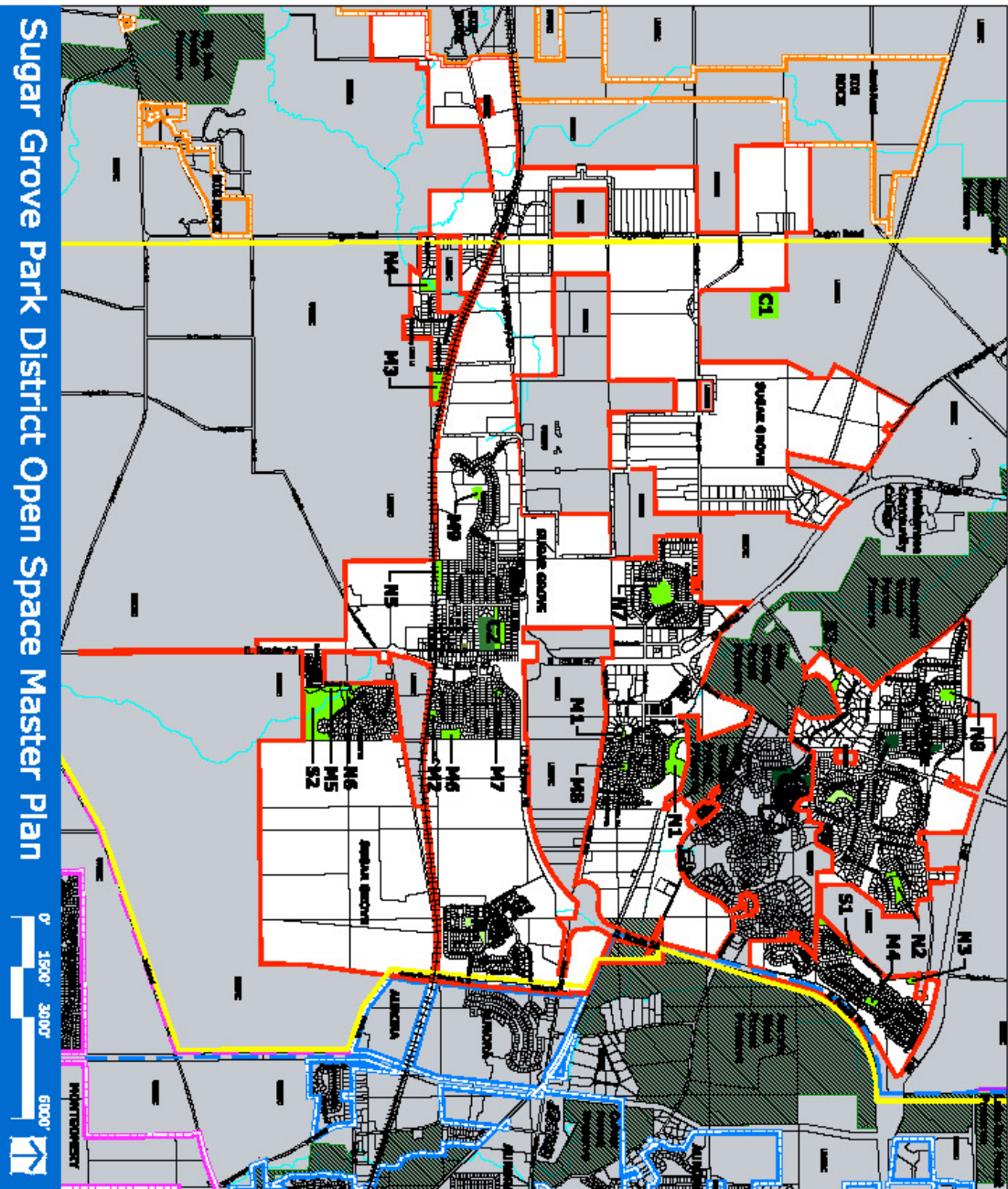
Map 3:
Existing Parks & Open Space



Legend

- Sugar Grove Park District Property
- HOA Owned Park
- School District Owned Property
- Community House Owned Park
- Community Park
- Mini Parks
- C1 - Sports Complex
- C2 - Volunteer Park
- Neighborhood Parks
- N1 - Belle Vue Park
- N2 - Black Walnut Park
- N3 - Walnut Woods Park
- N4 - Dugan Park West
- N5 - Jack Park
- N6 - Millard Park
- N7 - Hamstead Park
- N8 - Hamstead Park
- Specialty Parks
- S1 - Cannon Slough Park
- S2 - Hilliard Wetlands
- S3 - Stanford Wetlands
- Kane Cty. Forest Preserve Property
- Sugar Grove Municipal Boundary
- Sugar Grove Park District Boundary
- Montgomery Municipal Boundary
- Montgomery Boundary Agreement
- Aurora Municipal Boundary
- Aurora Boundary Agreement
- North Aurora Municipal Boundary
- North Aurora Boundary Agreement
- Big Rock Municipal Boundary
- Aurora Municipal Airport
- Burlington Northern
- Santa Fe Railroad

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AURORA, IL 60007
APRIL 2009



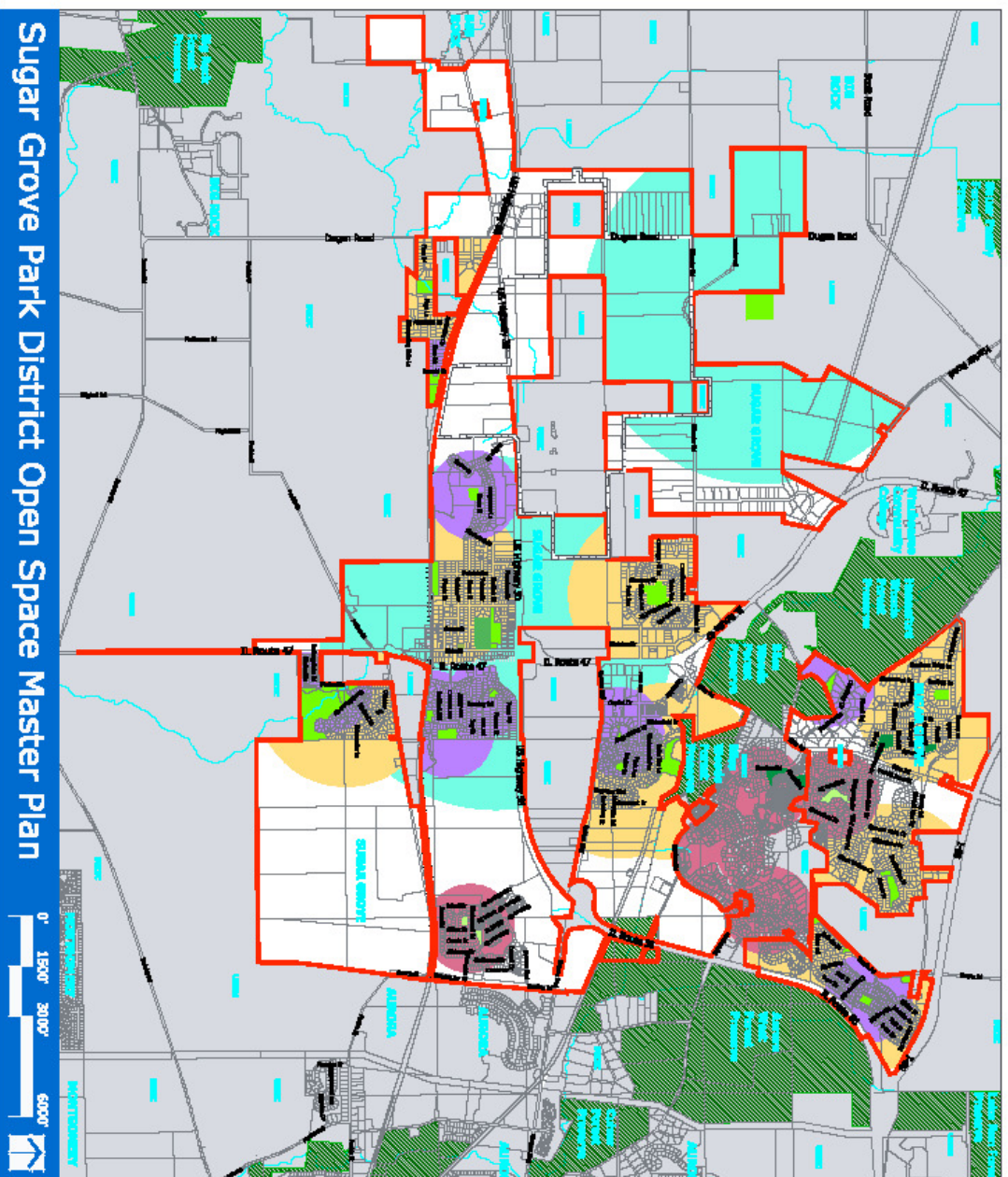
Sugar Grove Park District Open Space Master Plan

Map 4:
Park Service Areas



Legend

- Sugar Grove Park District Property
- Community Park Service Area
(1 mile radius)
- Neighborhood Park Service Area
(2 mile radius)
- Mint Park Service Area
(4 mile radius)
- HOA Park Service Area
(4 mile radius)
- Kane Coy. Forest Preserve Property
- Sugar Grove Municipal Boundary
- Burlington Northern
- Santa Fe Railroad



ACQUISITION STRATEGY METHODOLOGY

In order to best predict which areas of the Village of Sugar Grove will require park service in the future, we utilized the following method:

1. Carry over the park service area radii for existing parks (from Map 5). Areas already being served by the Park District are outlined in solid green.
2. Identify areas zoned as residential (per Map 3 of the Village of Sugar Grove Comprehensive Plan prepared by UPS*TPAP). These are shown on the map in yellow.
3. By overlaying these two sets of information a pattern of yellow-shaded areas covered versus not covered by existing park service areas emerges. For areas where expected future residential developments are not served by existing park development, we have delineated an approximate size, location, and classification type for each of the general recommended acquisition areas (shown in purple). Each area has been assigned a letter and a brief description is included for each area.

AREA DESCRIPTIONS

- A. South of I-88 and east of Bliss Road:
This approximately 41-acre area is currently agricultural. When developed, we recommend the installation of two 1 to 1.5-acre mini parks.
- B. South of Denny Road and north of Norris Road:
This natural area is adjacent to and overlooked by Carson Slough Park. This land should be preserved for its ecological benefits and wildlife habitat (approximately 129 acres).
- C. South of Hanks Road and west of IL Route 56:
As this approximately 72-acre area of agricultural land is converted to residential, a 1- to 2-acre mini park should be developed.
- D. North of Galena Boulevard and west of IL Route 56:
This approximately 71-acre of agricultural land should have a 0.5 to 1-acre mini park when developed.
- E. South of IL Route 56 and east of IL Route 47:
Given the configuration of this area, a neighborhood park of 5- to 7-acres plus two 2-acre mini parks would be appropriate to develop in this approximately 345-acre area.

- F. South of railroad tracks and east of IL Route 47:
This approximately 748-acre area is currently agricultural with stands of trees in the center. This area is ideal for the development of a community park and recreation center which could be developed in the vicinity of the existing trees. The preserved stands of trees plus active recreation would take up approximately 65-acres of the site. Mini parks, 0.5 to 1-acre in size, could service the outlying areas of the development.
- G. West of IL Route 47 and south of railroad tracks:
Within this approximately 169-acre tract of agricultural land, a 5-acre neighborhood park could be developed.
- H. South of US Highway 30 and north of railroad tracks:
This approximately 76-acre area is currently agricultural. When developed as residential, a 5-acre neighborhood park would be appropriate to serve residents.
- I. East of Dugan Road and north of US Highway 30:
A 0.5 to 1-acre mini park should be developed to serve the future residents with this approximately 36-acre area.
- J. South of Wheeler Road and north of Aurora Municipal Airport:
This approximately 182-acre area is currently agricultural. Development should include a 5-acre neighborhood park.
- K. West of IL Route 47 and north of Wheeler Road:
Within this approximately 157-acre area of agricultural land, a 5-acre neighborhood park could be developed.

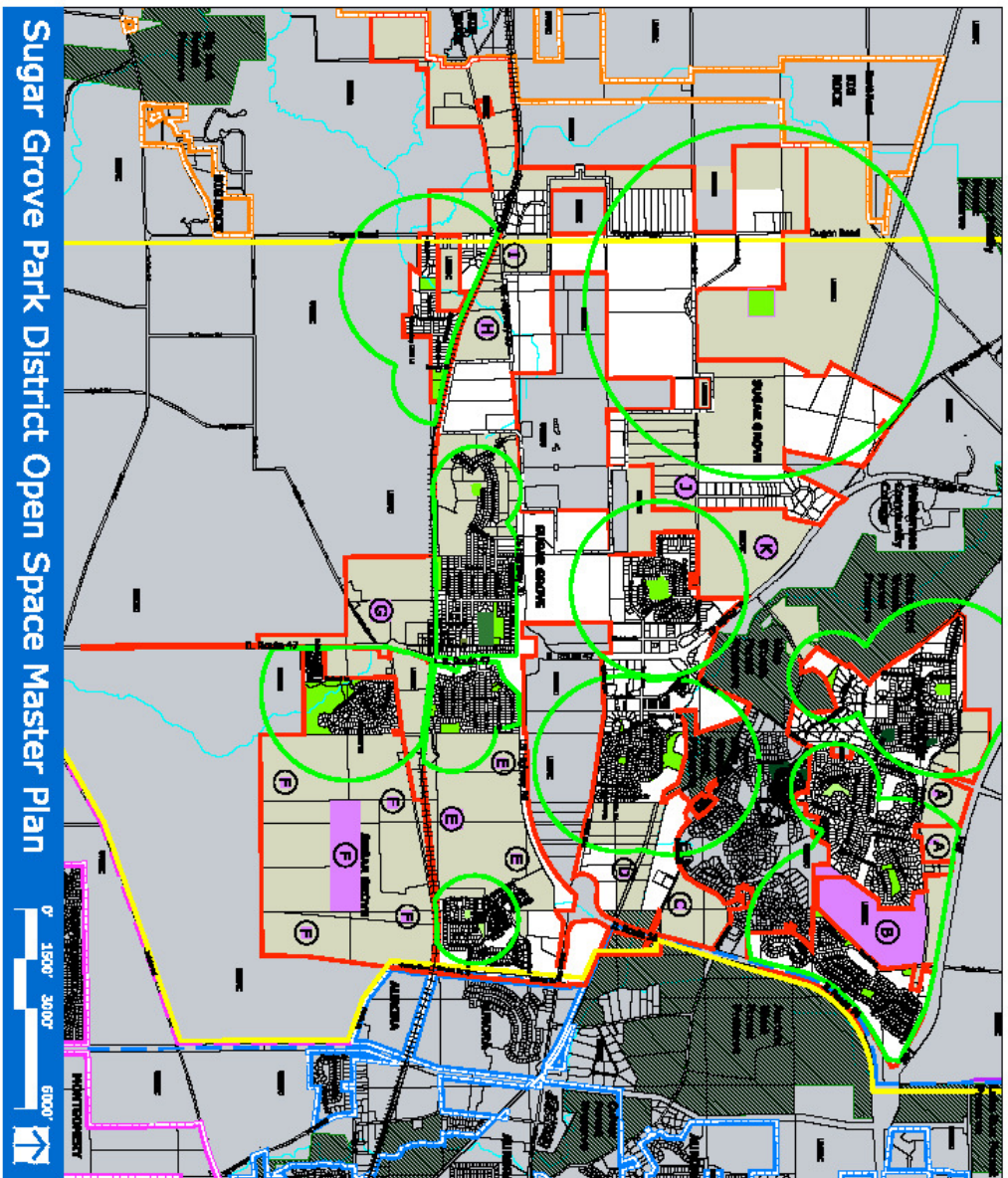
In order to provide park service to the anticipated residents, the land could be acquired through purchase by the Park District or through land cash donation as subdivisions are developed. Another option available is that the Park District could continue to enter into partnerships with homeowner associations or intergovernmental agreements to utilize land in these areas without direct ownership.

Map 5:
Acquisition Strategy



Legend

- Sugar Grove Park District Property
- Kane Cty. Forest Preserve Property
- Potential Land/Cash Acquisition
- Areas
- Area of Potential Future Sugar Grove Acquisition
- Areas Served by Existing Parks
- Sugar Grove Municipal Boundary
- Sugar Grove Park District Boundary
- Aurora Municipal Boundary
- Aurora Boundary Agreement
- Montgomery Municipal Boundary
- Montgomery Boundary Agreement
- North Aurora Municipal Boundary
- North Aurora Boundary Agreement
- Big Rock Municipal Boundary
- Burlington Northern
- Santa Fe Railroad



Sugar Grove Park District Open Space Master Plan

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April 2009

Map 6:
Potential Trail Connections



Legend

- Sugar Grove Park District Property
- HOA Owned Park
- School District Owned Property
- Community House Owned Park
- Potential Major Crossing
- Existing Trail/ Pathway
- Proposed Trail/ Pathway
- Kane Cty. Forest Preserve Property
- Sugar Grove Municipal Boundary
- Burlington Northern
- Santa Fe Railroad

