



PARK DISTRICT of OAK PARK

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Ground-breaking ceremony set for new, Oak Park Community Recreation Center on March 19

Multi-use center made possible through community donations; provides "A Place to Belong"

Digging in the dirt will begin a milestone celebration for the [Park District of Oak Park](#) (PDOP) and the nonprofit [Parks Foundation of Oak Park](#) as officials, donors and volunteers gather at 1 p.m. on March 19 to break ground for the new [Community Recreation Center](#) (CRC), 229 Madison St.

The CRC will address three important Park District facility needs that the community identified in multiple surveys: Gymnasium space, indoor walking/running track and fitness center. The CRC will enable the Park District to provide additional year-round opportunities and programs to a diversity of Oak Park residents of all ages. The track will be free to use for all Oak Park residents and the fitness center will offer affordable rates.

The CRC also will provide much-needed safe space for 6-12 graders from 3-6 p.m. after school for free programming and a place to "hangout" with friends. The CRC is located within one mile of both middle schools and Fenwick and Oak Park River Forest high schools.

"The health, well-being and quality of life of every Oak Park resident is a top priority for the Park District. This CRC will strengthen our community by providing people of all ages a place to belong -- an inclusive place that contributes to the health and wellness of residents," said Park District Executive Director Jan Arnold.

She said the Park District is pleased that 29.39 percent of contractors awarded bids for the CRC's construction are Minority/Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBE). This exceeded the District's 25 percent MWBE goal.

CRC is being built with support from many generous donors and the support of the Parks Foundation that launched a \$20 capital campaign in January 2020. A group of residents, donors and volunteers manage the campaign to provide a place that addresses gaps in the community's recreation and health

needs. Once open as early as spring 2023, the facility will be self-funded by fitness center memberships and program user fees.

“National standards suggest a community with the populations of Oak Park should provide more than 260 acres of green space for residents, yet we only have 83 acres because we are landlocked. There are needs that the CRC can help address,” said Edward Kerros, Park Foundation board member and development chair. “Many generous donors and volunteers are making this project happen, and we are very grateful for the support.”

The CRC will include courts for sports such as basketball and pickleball, community rooms, a fitness center, e-sports room, walking/running track, space for the Community Mental Health Center, and more. The Center will be built as a net-zero energy building made possible after the Park District secured funding from both the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation and the Village of Oak Park’s sustainability fund to cover the additional cost of energy efficiency.

To donate to the capital campaign, supporters can visit the Parks Foundation website and click the “donate” button: parksfoundationop.org. As an extra incentive, all donations of \$25 or more will receive a yard sign to proudly display their support for Center.

For more information on the CRC, visit <https://www.oakparkcrc.com/>.

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About Park District of Oak Park: The Park District of Oak Park serves the recreation needs of Oak Park’s 53,000 residents, providing nearly 3,000 programs and special events annually throughout our versatile recreation centers, 18 parks totaling 84 acres, two outdoor pools, indoor ice rink, gymnastic center, the Oak Park Conservatory, Cheney Mansion and Pleasant Home. Since 1912, our high-quality programs and well-maintained parks and facilities have dependably met residents’ diverse leisure, wellness, childcare and other needs and helped enhance quality of life. Learn more at <https://www.pdop.org/>.

About the Parks Foundation: The Parks Foundation promotes giving opportunities around Oak Park parks and to support extraordinary projects within the Park District of Oak Park. Its mission is to collaborate with Oak Park residents, community groups and partner organizations to support exceptional and extraordinary projects that enhance our parks and community life. Founded in 2012, the Foundation is chartered with the State of Illinois as a 501(c)3 charitable organization. While a separate and independent entity, the Foundation coordinates closely with the Park District of Oak Park to help address community health, recreation and wellness needs for all. For more information, visit the Parks Foundation website at: <https://parksfoundationop.org>.