Capital Improvement Plan

The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is the District’s comprehensive multi-year plan for land acquisition and park development, new building construction, building and facility management, park site improvements, and technology and major equipment. The CIP outlines the projects that are expected to take place over the next five years. Capital projects typically have costs of over $10,000, have a life expectancy of at least 5 years, and may result in the creation of a capital asset.

The Capital Improvement Plan is a dynamic and evolving guide for spending over a five-year period. The CIP outlines spending priorities and expected schedules and is formed to allow for adjustment over the five-year period. The CIP allows for flexibility, for instance, if actual project expenses are above (or below) a projected budget in the CIP, as new outside funding is granted for specific projects or programs, or as new district priorities develop. The CIP is published annually to reflect the growth of the Plan each year.

Capital Improvement Plan Process

Throughout the year, the Park District compiles requests for capital improvements from numerous sources. External requests generally come from annual budget hearings, letters, emails, website inquiries, legislators, advisory councils, board meetings, community groups, city agencies, new laws, unfunded mandates, and other similar sources. Internal requests are typically derived from park inspections, facility assessments, the work order system, framework plans, policy initiatives, strategic objectives, and needs identified by recreation, culture, service, planning, construction, and maintenance departments.

The requests are bundled into programs and sub-programs that reflect a shared project type. Establishing programs and sub-programs help us to compare similar projects. Projects that are primarily paving work, for example, are organized first into a program called "site improvements" then second into a sub-program called "paving".

Once the requests are organized, an internal working group investigates, analyzes, and weighs each request. This group includes representatives from each of the departments responsible for implementing the capital plan: Planning and Development, Capital Construction, Facility Maintenance, Natural Resources, Green Initiatives, Information Technology, Budget, and the Office of the Chief Operating Officer. Investigations occur throughout the year. From request compilation to prioritization, internal review spans approximately six months.
The working group’s first step is investigation. Each capital request is investigated to determine the scope, estimated cost, and comparative need for the project. This investigation is combined with research into the source, context, prior assessments, and institutional knowledge of the park and its facilities.

After investigation and research, the working group weighs projects against others in the same sub-program. This analysis takes into consideration the following typologies: projects that are urgent, high-priority that should be undertaken if possible; high-priority projects that should be done if funding becomes available; worthwhile projects to be considered if funding becomes available; and desirable, but not essential, low-priority projects. To understand the continuum of need, an "urgent, high-priority" request might be replacing a broken water main; a "desirable, but not essential" request might be a new floral garden. Part of this process also includes examining the distribution of past and proposed projects and funds across the District relative to the geographic, legislative, and demographic characteristics of the City.

The total estimated cost of the Capital Plan and its individual projects must fall within the anticipated funds available. This places limits on the number of projects that can be addressed in a given year. The working group’s Capital Plan recommendation to the General Superintendent must stay within adopted financial constraints.

The five-year term of the District’s Plan allows the District to maintain long-term fiscal health, lend stability to capital investment planning, meet longer term goals and objectives, establish meaningful timelines for projects, and make clear to the public the District’s future investment intentions.

Capital projects completed in 2018 include: a climbing wall at Steelworker’s Park and new playgrounds in Munroe Park and Gill Park.
Capital Improvement Funding Sources

General Obligation Bond
Historically, the District issues approximately $30-$40 million annually in G.O. Bonds for capital improvements. In 2018, the Board of Commissioners approved $33 million in bond funding for capital projects in 2019. For the years 2019-2023, it is estimated that $153 million in general obligation bonds will be issued to fund capital improvement projects.

Harbor Bond
In 2018, the District plans to issue a new harbor improvement bond in an amount not to exceed $8 million. These funds will be used for dock and gate replacement as well as other capital improvements to our nine existing harbors along the Chicago Lakefront.

Special Recreation Assessment Bond
The Special Recreation Assessment (SRA) levy, is part of the District’s annual property tax. This SRA levy assessment generates approximately $12 million to support the special recreation operations and programming as well as complementary capital improvements.

Parking Garage Lease Revenue
In 2006, the Board of Commissioners approved the transfer of three downtown parking garages to the City of Chicago. The City of Chicago then entered into a 99-year lease of the garages, resulting in $347.8 million in proceeds for the District. $122 million of these proceeds were reserved for capital improvements to neighborhood parks. The residual balance is primarily used for project development where tax-exempt financing is not an eligible source, such as the District’s concession areas.

Outside funding is vital to the park capital plan. These funds alleviate pressure on District bond funding and provide desired projects around the city. Pictured are three capital projects completed in 2018 with outside partners. Above is Norwood Park with the Chicago Blackhawks and and Walnut Park with the U.S. Soccer Foundation. Left is Washington Park with the US Tennis Association.
Outside Funding
Federal, State of Illinois, City of Chicago, and private grants and donations are essential to the success of many capital projects. Nearly half of the capital plan is funded with outside partners. Outside funding has been especially important in the development of new park lands, construction of new field houses, installation of new artificial turf fields, and renovation of playgrounds.

The section “Grants, Donations, and Sponsorships” has more detail on the District’s outside funding sources and uses.

Capital Improvement Funding Uses

The following categories and sub-categories describe the District’s groupings for various projects:

Acquisition and Development
  - Acquisition of Property
  - New Construction
  - Park Development Planning

Facility Rehabilitation
  - Major Rehabilitation
  - Minor Rehabilitation
  - HVAC and Energy Efficiency
  - Windows and Doors
  - Roof
  - Concrete, Masonry, Structural
  - Sculpture and Monument
  - Swimming Pool
  - Fitness Center

Site Improvements
  - Athletic Field
  - Playground
  - Spray Pool
  - Courts
  - Fencing
  - Paving
  - Lighting
  - Site Improvement
  - Landscape

Technology, Vehicles and Equipment

2019-2023 Total Funding by Program
$284.4 Million

Includes both Park District and Outside Funding. For outside funding, the year designates the expected year outside funding will be expended, not necessarily the year of grant award. (Many grants allow for spending over multi-year periods).
2019-2023 Capital Improvement Plan

Planning for the 2019-2023 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is underway. Expected sources for the 5-year program include $155 million in new G.O. Bond and $131.4 million in outside funding. The Capital Improvement Program is a living document, and additional outside funding is expected to be identified and committed for projects within the years 2019-2023. The Chicago Park District continues to actively seek additional outside grants, donations, and sponsorships for the 2019-2023 CIP.

2019-2023 Capital Improvement Plan

As opportunities arise in our existing urban environment, the Chicago Park District strives to acquire and develop new quality parkland around our City. These projects are major investments that require strong financial and community partnerships.

Major investments in the 2019-2023 Capital Improvement Plan follow Mayor Emanuel’s Building on Burnham Plan, a comprehensive plan to guide park investment into four key program areas: the Lakefront, the Chicago River, natural areas, and new community recreational opportunities.

With the 2016 launch of Building on Burnham Plan Mayor Emanuel stated, “Daniel Burnham’s vision has guided the growth of Chicago for more than a century and made us known as the City in a Garden. This new strategy builds on both the work we’ve done over the last four years and Burnham’s plan to help ensure that the City in a Garden is within reach of every child of Chicago. In this way, we can ensure that our children make no little plans – because we want their dreams and their futures to be unlimited.”

Highlights on these initiatives are provided in the following pages:
The Lakefront

Attracting millions of visitors every year, Chicago’s 26-mile Lakefront is central to providing key open space and recreational opportunities to both Chicago residents and tourists from around the world. The Building on Burnham Plan reaches beyond the existing successes of the Lakefront to make the park space even more accessible and inviting for users. One major project underway is the Lakefront Trail (LFT) Separation. Funded through a generous $12 million private grant, the trail system will be redesigned to separate faster moving bicycle traffic apart from slower moving pedestrian traffic. By the end of 2018, the final sections of paving will be complete with some site and landscape improvements to be finished in Spring 2019.

Additionally, access to the Lakefront is being transformed. The City of Chicago Department of Transportation is constructing a new pedestrian and bicycle access bridge at 41st street. This new bridge is the second of five bridge projects to improve access to the lakefront on the City’s south side. A replacement bridge was completed at 35th Street in 2016 and additional projects at 31st, 39th and 43rd Streets are in the works. These key access points provide residents of the Douglas, Oakland and Kenwood communities much needed safe, convenient, and separated from vehicular traffic choices to get to the lakefront for recreation, enjoyment and commuting.
The Chicago River

Following on the success of Chicago’s Lakefront improvements, the next step of the Building on Burnham Plan looks to transform Chicago’s Riverfront into an amenity just as popular and important for Chicagoans. Plans and investments focus on transforming the Chicago River and adjacent properties into a recreation destination, providing at least one point of access to the riverfront along every mile of the river starting from the city limits on the north to the Little Village neighborhood on the south, all while promoting habitat restoration.

In the 2019-2023 CIP there are major habitat and riverbank restoration projects along the riverfront. In partnership with the Chicago Department of Transportation, a new elevated pedestrian and bicycle trail, named Riverview Bridge, is under construction over the Chicago River. The new bridge, part of the 312 RiverRun trail, will provide new connection along the river from Clark Park on the south end to Horner Park on the north end and is expected to be completed in early 2019.

Additionally, a new project at River Park is now underway. This River Riparian Restoration project is a partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Metropolitan Water Reclamation District and focuses on removing an existing dam and grading and planting the river edge to improve habitat and recreational opportunity in the river. The dam will be removed in 2018 with river edge improvements continuing into 2019.

Right: The new 312 RiverRun provides new access along and over the Chicago River. Photo courtesy of Epstein Global.

Below: A concept image for the River Riparian Restoration project on the north branch of the Chicago River. The project will remove an existing dam and permit upstream passage for boaters and fish alike.
Natural Areas

Natural areas are unique open spaces focused on restoring the connection between people and nature. These mostly passive spaces are dedicated to the cultivation and enrichment of ecological diversity and to providing health and wellness opportunities. Natural area habitats include prairie, wetland, woodland, dunes, lagoons, and native gardens. Natural areas can be found throughout Chicago’s parks, ranging in size from 0.25 acres to 278 acres.

The Chicago Park District manages 99 natural areas throughout the City, consisting of over 1,850 acres and representing more than 21% of total park acreage. Under the leadership of Mayor Rahm Emanuel, the amount of natural areas has more than doubled in Chicago, increasing over 1,150 acres since 2011. Under the Mayor’s Building on Burnham Plan, our new goal is to have 2,020 acres of natural areas district-wide in the City of Chicago by the year 2020.

In 2018, more site improvements such as nature play spaces, pathways, fencing, and seating have been included in natural areas to allow for easier exploration. Additional acreage has been identified for future conversion to high quality natural areas. With work continuing through the 2019-2023 CIP we will increase the footprint of existing natural areas to allow for greater habitat diversity, better ecosystem services and a better opportunity to “get lost in nature.”

New natural areas, such as the Nature Play area at Welles Park and the Marian Byrnes nature area shown in the images above, can provide habitat improvement as well as new recreational and educational opportunities.
Recreational Opportunities

Recreational assets and programming for children and families in every neighborhood will remain a core program for the Chicago Park District under the Building on Burnham Plan. Through expanded partnerships with our sister agencies including the Chicago Public Schools and Chicago Housing Authority, we aim to provide new recreational opportunities not yet available in the city limits.

In the 2019-2023 Capital Improvement Plan, one such opportunity is a new indoor track and field at Gately Park in Chicago’s Pullman and Roseland Communities. This new facility will assist in revitalizing track and field in the Chicago area. The 140,000 square foot track and field facility will be designed to host championship level meets and will have a 3,500 seating capacity. The site will also host a new local campus for After School Matters. The facility is currently in construction.

Another major new recreational destination is the Ford Calumet Environmental Nature Center in Big Marsh. Currently underway, this facility will be a hub for nature and eco-recreation programming for all of Chicago. Located in the southeast side of Chicago, exhibition space will focus on the cultural and industrial history of the area as well as habitat, environmental and eco-recreation education.

Additionally, development at Addams Park for a new 100,000 sq. ft. indoor recreation center that will feature an indoor practice track, artificial turf field, multi-purpose courts, club room and other amenities is underway. This project’s expected completion is late 2019.

Throughout the District the 2019-2023 capital improvement program plans for new artificial turf fields, tennis court rehabs and conversions, playgrounds, outdoor fitness stations and other site improvements throughout the neighborhoods of Chicago.
Non-Tax Revenues

Grants, Donations and Sponsorships

Partnerships are vital to the District’s operations. The Park District has continued to count on generous private donations, corporate sponsorships, and grants from Federal, State of Illinois, City of Chicago, and local organizations. These one-time revenue sources help alleviate the District’s expense burden for capital projects and operating programs. In receiving outside funding, the District is able distribute resources to the Chicago community in greater amounts.

Outside operating grants, donations, and sponsorships fund innovative programs including Night Out in the Parks, Special Olympics, and summer camp scholarships. Capital grants and donations fund projects including new parks and fieldhouses, historic facility renovations, and new natural areas and playgrounds. In the past five years, the District has been successful in obtaining an average of nearly $40 million per year in outside funding toward District priorities, not including in-kind grants and donations. As of fall 2018, over $27.7 million in outside funding has been awarded this year with additional grant awards expected by year-end.

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<th>2018 Outside Funding Sources*</th>
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<th>Capital</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>Federal Grants</td>
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<td>Local Grants and Contributions</td>
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<td>Non-Governmental Grants and Donations</td>
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* As of November 2018, additional grants may be awarded by year-end. Date represents year of grant award, not necessarily the year in which the grant is expended. Totals include operating and capital grants and donations. Totals do not include joint grants or in-kind donations.

Major Federal Government contributions in 2018 to the Chicago Park District included the U.S. Department of Agriculture funding to support the Summer Food Program ($2.6 million) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - Coastal Management grant to improve the Wildlife Habitat along Chicago’s North Lakefront. US Veteran Affairs provided a grant of $90,000 to support the 2018 Midwest Valor Games after not receiving funding for a few years. Also in 2018, the City of Chicago provided over $9.3 million for various park improvements around the City including dog friendly areas through multiple parks, and turf field and track rehabilitation at Dunbar Park. Furthermore, city Aldermen collectively provided $1.3 million in MENU funds for park capital projects which included new playgrounds, courts, and ballfield improvements.

In addition to governmental funds, generous private funding of more than $13 million in 2018 was vital to sustaining our District programs and capital priorities. Significant private funding was dedicated by Exelon towards the new Gately Indoor Track and Field and Addams/Medill Indoor Recreation Centers. Announced last year, the Kenneth C. Griffin Charitable Fund generously donated $3 million gift to convert unused tennis courts into soccer mini-pitch fields. A total of 50 courts will be constructed in parks across the city over the next five years and 10 were completed in 2018.
2018 Major Private Grants, Donations, and Sponsorships

$1,000,000 and Above
Jim Gordon Philanthropic Fund
Barack Obama Foundation
U.S. Soccer Foundation²/Kenneth C. Griffin

$500,000 - $999,999
Chicago Cubs Charities¹

$100,000 - $499,999
Bank of America¹
Bears Care¹
Chicago Blackhawks¹²
Coca-Cola Company
Hamilton Exhibition LLC
LISC/NFL Foundation¹
The Maggie C. Daley Park Fund, a donor advised fund of The Chicago Community Foundation¹
South Shore Club Chicago LLC

$10,000 - $99,999
Adams Park Advisory Council
American Lung Association
Aramark
Art Issue Editions
Blue Cross Blue Shield
Chicago White Sox Charities¹
Friends of North Park Village Nature Center
Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation
KaBOOM! Inc.
Mayfair Civic Association and Park Advisory Council
National Recreation and Park Association
Special Olympics International
Terra Foundation for American
U.S. Tennis Association¹²
Welles Park Advisory Council

¹ Designates the funding is in total or part through the Chicago Parks Foundation, our 501c3 philanthropic partner.
² Designates the funding is in total or part an in-kind contribution. Investment made directly by an organization other than the Park District to the benefit of Park District operations or property.
2019-2023 Grants, Donations, and Sponsorships

The 2019 operating program and the 2019-2023 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) continue to rely heavily on outside sources to fund District priorities. Current outside funding committed for the next five years totals $93.8 million, with additional funding awards expected. Major sources of outside funds for projects in the 2019-2023 CIP include federal funding for habitat restoration work at Big Marsh, Rainbow Beach, and Park 566 as well as a bicycle and pedestrian trail for Park 562 Van Vlissingen Prairie in the South Deering Community Area. The release of the State IDNR grants will also allow many important projects to move forward in the 2019-2023 CIP, including major building restorations to community fieldhouses and community centers, many of which are historic treasures. City of Chicago funding has been obligated to expand the fieldhouse at Maplewood Park, construct a new fieldhouse at Williams Park, and to develop Steelworkers Park. Finally, private outside funding has been secured to complete the Lakefront Trail Separation and construct new recreational centers.

**2019-2023 Expected Outside Funding by Source**

$131.4 Million

- **City Grant Funds**: 51%
- **State Grant Funds - Confirmed**: 34%
- **Federal Grant Funds**: 14%
- **Private Grants and Donations**: 1%

*Designates the expected year outside funding will be expended, not necessarily the year of grant award. (Many grants allow for spending over multi-year periods).*
City of Chicago
Rahm Emanuel, Mayor

Board of Commissioners
Jesse H. Ruiz, President
Avis LaVelle, Vice President
Donald J. Edwards
David A. Helfand
Tim King
M. Laird Koldyke

General Superintendent & CEO
Michael P. Kelly

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