Wilmette Park District invites community to engage in helping plan the future of parks and recreation with Project Parks and Play

Wilmette, IL – The Wilmette Park District is inviting residents to join in a Comprehensive and Strategic Planning process, Project Parks and Play: Explore the Possibilities, to help plan the future of our parks, facilities, recreational activities and operations to best meet future needs of the Wilmette community.

Throughout the planning process, the Park District will listen to and engage residents in the process to create a clear vision for parks, facilities and recreation so that the Park District can best meet the needs of residents for play, health, wellness, open spaces and nature places.

The planning process for Project Parks and Play is expected to take 12-18 months. It will include community surveys, resident focus groups, public meetings, meetings with community organizations, and professional assessments of parks, facilities and programs for all residents.

“Our residents are the direct beneficiaries of our parks and recreation programs, open spaces and sports fields, and their input into the future of the District is instrumental. We want to know what programs they like or don’t like, if they’ve seen structures they’d like in our parks, and other ways we can improve our District,” said Michael Murdock, president of the Wilmette Park District Board of Park Commissioners. “We encourage residents to engage with this exciting process that will help shape the future of our parks, facilities and programs used by people of all ages.”

According to Park District Executive Director Steve Wilson, the planning process will result in two plans that will provide a roadmap for shaping the Park District’s future. The plans are:

- Strategic Plan which solidifies the Park District’s mission, vision, values and develops strategies that position the District for future success
Comprehensive Plan that evaluates the Park District’s physical assets, recreation programs, services and organizational performance, and designs projects and initiatives to strengthen the ability to meet the community’s needs going forward

“Our parks are free to all, regardless of age, economic status or physical ability, and they strengthen our community,” Wilson said. “Taking time to do long-range planning will help to create a future for the District that is reflective of the input received during the planning process. We want to ensure Wilmette’s parks and recreational activities continue to be the safe and welcoming common spaces for our residents to play, gather and recreate together.”

The planning process is being led by BerryDunn, a consulting firm that has assembled a team of experts in architecture, landscaping, communications, parks and recreation, and community engagement to support the project. In addition to parks and recreation consulting, BerryDunn works with clients from town, local and state governments to healthcare, not-for-profit, higher education, commercial, financial services, high tech and more.

To learn more about the planning process and public meeting dates, please visit https://berrydunn.mysocialpinpoint.com/wilmetteparkdistrict

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