

Providing the very best in park and recreational opportunities,  
facilities, and open lands for our community.



# Oak Brook Park District

*A National Gold Medal Agency*

## 2020/2021 ANNUAL REPORT



### **OAK BROOK PARK DISTRICT**

1450 Forest Gate Road, Oak Brook, Illinois 60523  
[www.obparks.org](http://www.obparks.org)



Oak Brook  
Park District  
*A National Gold Medal Agency*

## 2020/2021 ANNUAL REPORT

# Mission Statement:

To provide the **very best** in **park & recreational opportunities, facilities, and open lands** for our community.

## Vision

To provide a diverse range of opportunities designed to keep the members of the Greater Oak Brook Community happy, fit and active. By maintaining fiscally responsible practices and focusing on communication, environmental stewardship, diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility, the Oak Brook Park District works to help our community as a whole be its very best and feel its very best.



## About this report

**This report highlights progress, accomplishments, goals, and initiatives of the Oak Brook Park District, as outlined in our 2016 and 2020 Strategic Plans.**

The report follows our five **STRATEGIC INITIATIVES**, developed through our Strategic Planning process. They focus on developing a tactical and adaptive working plan linking our mission, vision, and core values with policy making and organization. This will ensure the operational goals for the next three years fall within the parameters of our mission and vision.

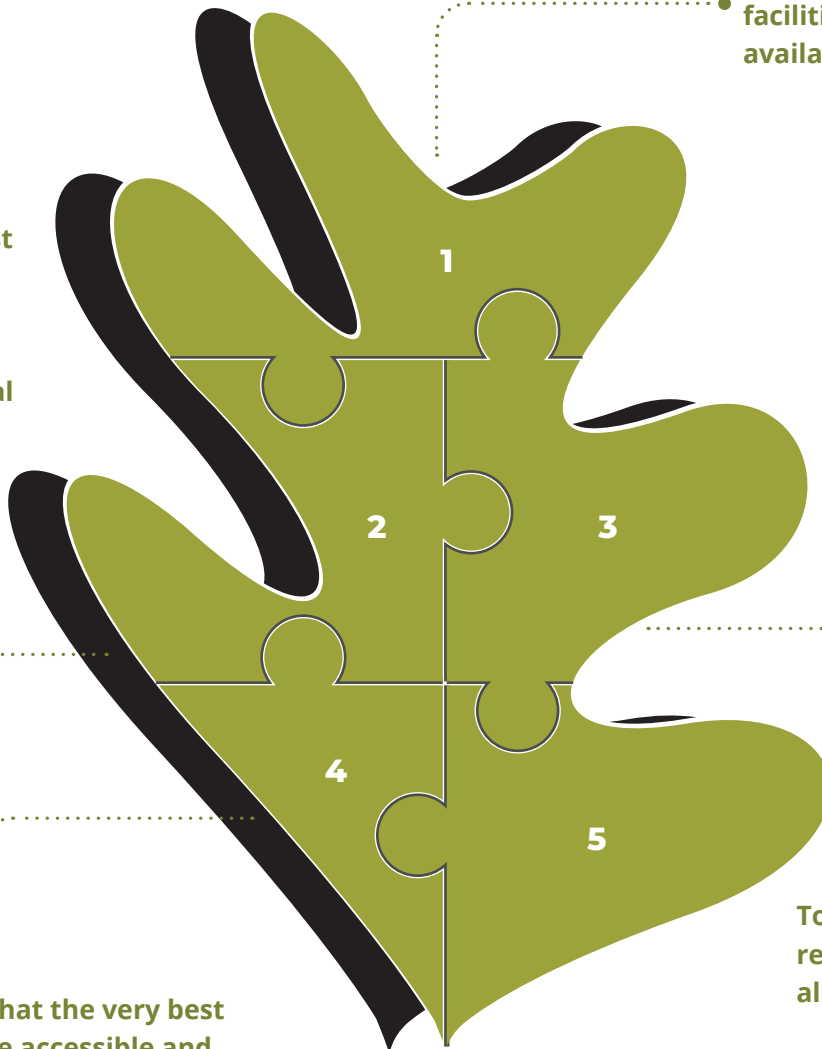






# 5 Strategic Initiatives

To provide the very best in park and open space to our constituents and to be a community leader in environmental conservation and stewardship.



To ensure that the very best facilities are accessible and available.

To foster a diverse work environment that encourages collaborative teamwork and the development of the very best in park and recreation professionals.

To prioritize the fiscally responsible use of resources in all aspects of our operations.

To ensure that the very best facilities are accessible and available.

## To ensure that the very best facilities are accessible and available.

- **Upgrades at Central Park West!** With the assistance of Senator Glowiak, the Park District was able to obtain a capital improvement grant through the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Activity. Various projects at Central Park West were completed using this \$143,000 grant.

After conducting a comprehensive community input process, it was determined that Central Park West should be repurposed to offer more programming for the active aging population. The Park District responded to this need by changing Central Park West's rental structure

so that rentals only take place on weekends, with the rest of the week dedicated to programs for active aging. A local architect and engineering firm was contracted by the Park District to provide an assessment of the current condition of the facility, along with recommended actions, the most important being the correction of ADA compliance issues.

In response to the architect's report, the Park District replaced 1,800 square feet of asphalt with ADA-compliant asphalt and made the building easier to access with the grant. Further, the main meeting room was surrounded on both north and south sides by sliding doors that were not ADA compliant. Grant funds were used by the Park District to replace all of the existing doors in order to address this issue. Lastly, the Park District replaced aging and out-of-code HVAC equipment so that programs would have a consistent climate-controlled environment.



## To provide the very best in park and open space to our constituents and to be a community leader in environmental conservation and stewardship.



- **New LED Fixtures!** In an effort to increase the quality of athletic field lighting while substantially reducing energy consumption, the outdated sports lighting at the Central Park ball fields was replaced with modern LED fixtures. The Park District received a \$42,000 rebate from ComEd for implementing the energy-saving lighting.

- **Celebrating Earth Month:** As stewards of the environment, the Park District is committed to supporting the population of native trees and plants in our community. During Earth Month in April, staff partnered with the Living Lands and Waters Million-Trees Project and were able to distribute 450 native Oak tree saplings to patrons in less than 24 hours.



**To foster a diverse work environment that encourages collaborative teamwork and the development of the very best in park and recreation professionals.**

- **Bath and Tennis Club at the Village Sports Core:** COVID did not allow the Bath and Tennis pools to open, but the Park District managed the Tennis and Field under restricted guidelines due to COVID-19.
- **NEW DEI Committee:** A brand new committee dedicated to diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives was formed in February 2021. The Board of Commissioners then approved a Social Equity Policy on April 19, 2021.



**To provide an all inclusive range of the very best passive and active recreational programs and opportunities to our entire community.**



### Special Events

- In 2020, the Oak Brook Park District created an all-inclusive winter illumination. Visited by over 40,000+ participants, this illumination brought people together during challenging times for families and communities. Varying towns and villages of DuPage and Cook County were able to have the same experience regardless of their socioeconomic status. Due to the hardship many families and businesses experienced during this time, the Park District sought out opportunities to lend a helping hand. In addition to a donation box at the end of the trail, a sign with a QR code linked to the Greater Oak Brook Area Chamber of Commerce COVID-19 Relief Fund GoFundMe page was placed on the trail. The Park District was able to donate a total of \$4,401.00 to the fund.

Our light installation has been curated in-house by our Superintendent of Information Technology and the Parks and Planning Department. The Winter Lights at Central Park is a unique, moving installation light show, with six scenes stretched across a half-mile loop, centered around bringing hope to the community. Music plays along the path while LED holiday lights are programmed to correspond to the rhythm of the beat. Participants immerse themselves in dancing trees, inspirational signs, colorful rainbow arches, cascading snowflakes, and musical hearts throughout the scenic walk.



- Socially distant concerts were offered to the community during the Summer of 2020. Socially distant circles (6 feet in diameter) were available for purchase on the park district website. Eight concerts took place between July and September, with over 280 socially distant circles purchased!

### **Family Aquatic Center**

- Each pool was able to run as a separate and individual space, allowing us to maximize our utilization within strict capacity limits. Lockers were not available for use during the majority of the pandemic. Instead, buckets were used when the locker rooms were closed. Each guest could use a disinfected bucket to store their dry goods on deck while they swam and turn in the bucket for disinfecting prior to us giving it out to another guest.
- Private lessons were available through most of the fall/winter as COVID mitigations allowed. Group lessons were brought back this summer and the Aquatics team is looking to expand staff to meet the increase in demand for lessons once again. Private swim lessons were offered with our instructors utilizing face shields when in the water with students.



### **Fitness Center**

- Patrons utilized the Upace App that allowed them to make reservations at the fitness center, track, and pool, to comply with ever-changing capacity restrictions.
- Group Exercise classes were provided via ZOOM so that our community could experience fitness from their homes.

### **Recreation**

- Youth sports, arts, fitness, and other recreational programming were provided virtually via the park district website and social media when possible.
- Staff delivered recreation by hiding candy-filled eggs for kids in the front yard during Halloween, Thanksgiving, and the Holiday Season.

### **Tennis Center**

- To assist in defraying the costs of reopening the Tennis Center after the shutdown, the Tennis Center was selected to receive a Facility Recovery Grant. The Tennis Center was able to purchase additional teaching supplies and sanitizing equipment thanks to this grant.
- Staff had to adapt tennis programming to meet guidelines. With creativity and a lot of planning, the Tennis Center was able to offer many of its programs, lessons, and camps. We implemented ball restrictions so players did not share tennis balls, we monitored and maintained social distancing during all programs and events, and we set up separate entrances and drop-off/pick-up locations.



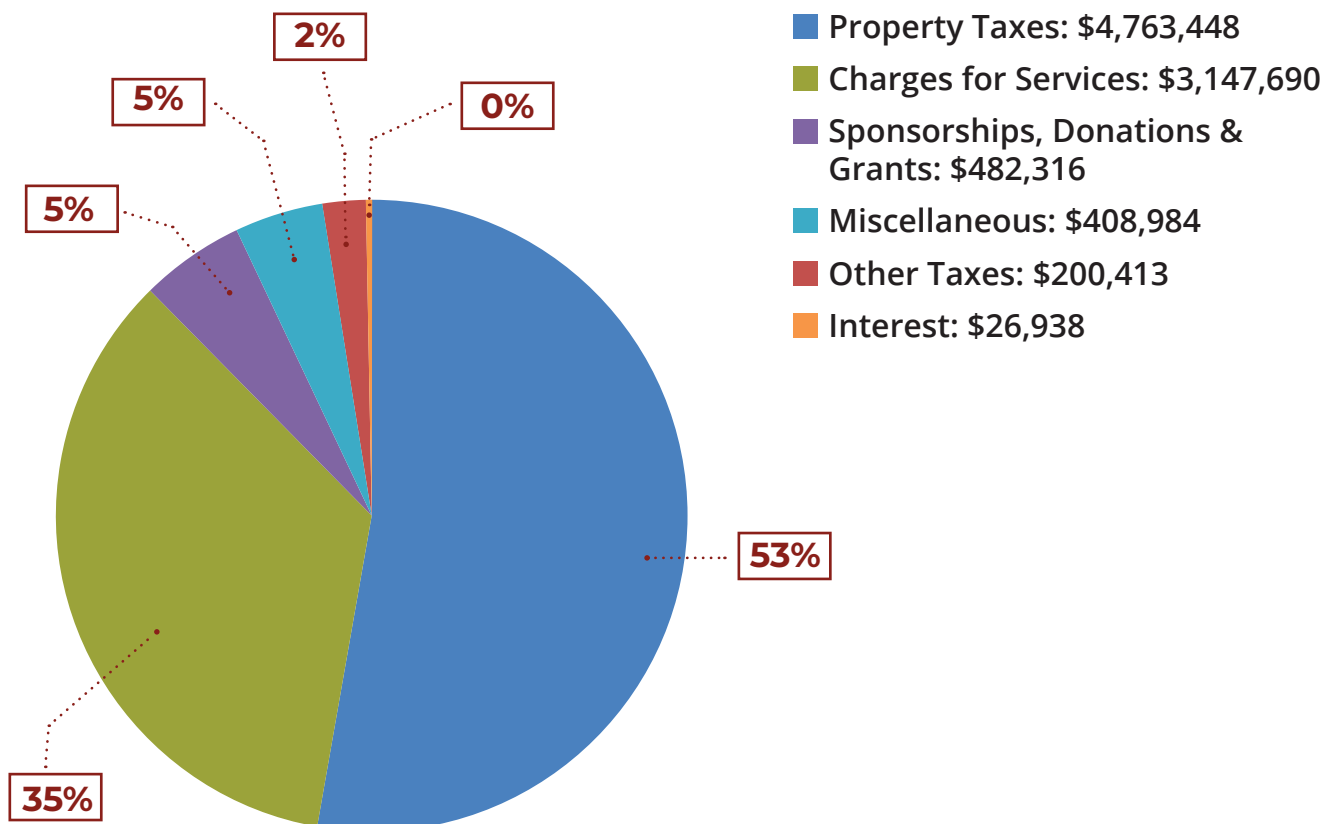
# Agency Financial Recap



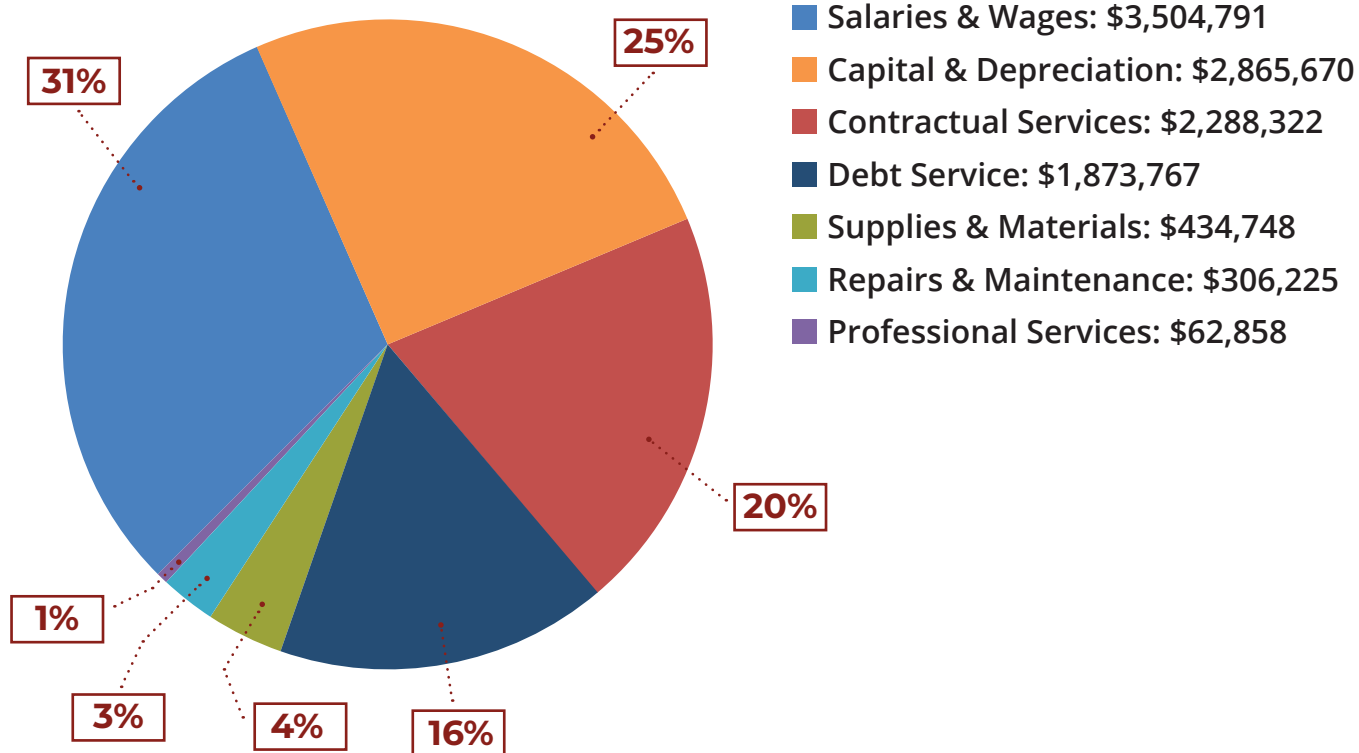
To prioritize the fiscally responsible use of resources in all aspects of our operations.

Fiscally responsible practices were imperative during the pandemic. The Park District Board of Commissioners supported the district's decision to draw from accumulated reserves, to help mitigate the loss of revenues that was precipitated by the pandemic. Additionally, the park district was able to save substantially on utility expenses with fewer patrons visiting our indoor facilities.

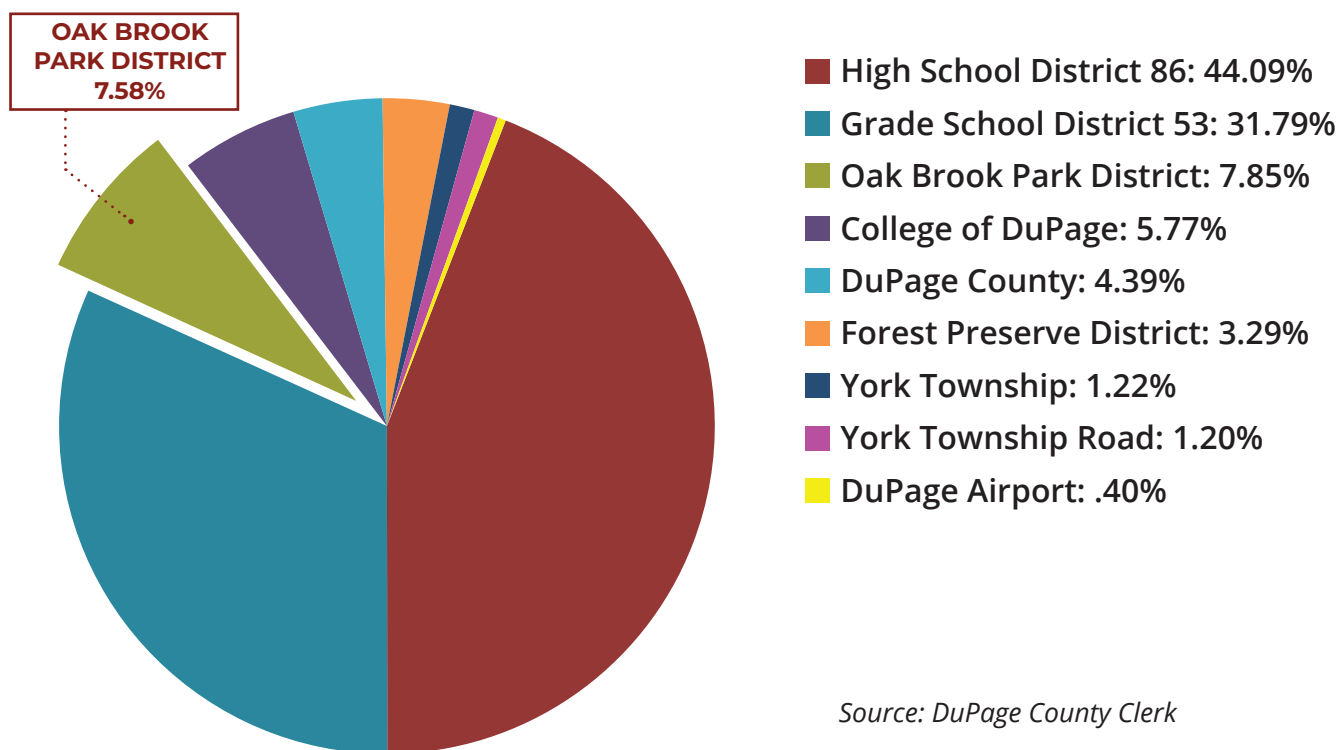
## Fiscal Year 2020/2021 Revenues



## Fiscal Year 2020/2021 Expenditures



## 2020 Property Tax Distribution: Oak Brook, York Township



Source: DuPage County Clerk





## Developing the North Athletic Fields at Central Park

Through a successful 2018 referendum, the Oak Brook Park District purchased the 34-acre parcel of land north of Central Park. Staff gathered community input, and working with architects and engineers, developed a phased approach for improving and developing the site.

After securing a \$400,000 OSLAD grant, the Park District went to bid and broke ground in the early summer of 2020 for Phase I development. The park was opened for use the following spring. Improvements to the site include a mile-long looping trail that connects to several existing walking trails, a paved parking lot with capacity for 200 vehicles, development of two full-sized illuminated and irrigated soccer fields, two basketball courts, and picnic shelters, as well as fitness stations and bag-toss games. Phase II planning is underway.





# Awards

## FAMILY AQUATIC CENTER

The Family Aquatic Center lifeguards received a 5 star audit evaluation, the **highest ranking** to be received, from Starguard Elite, LLC, an internationally recognized leader for training and assessing lifeguard skills.



## Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA)

The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting to the District for its comprehensive annual financial report (CAFR). This was the **twenty-sixth** consecutive year that the District has received this prestigious award.

# Adapt and Pivot

"We have a chance to do something extraordinary. As we head out of this pandemic we can change the world. Create a world of love. A world where we are kind to each other. **A world were we are kind no matter what class, race, sexual orientation, what religion or lack of or what job we have.** A world we don't judge those at the food bank because that may be us if things were just slightly different. Let love and kindness be our roadmap."

— Johnny Corn, Comedian/Actor





In March 2020, the words “COVID-19” and “pandemic” became part of our everyday vocabulary. Like many organizations, the Park District had to click “pause” so that we could adapt and pivot through this time. Staying safe inside, working from home, and seeking out a store with disinfectant wipes became top priorities for many of us. The Park District was not exempt from this chaotic time and met many challenges. Over 300 part-time staff members were laid-off, events and programs were canceled, and we closed our facilities on March 14, 2020. This was undoubtedly the most difficult year for many people worldwide and we will most certainly never forget the loss and sacrifices people experienced.

From the Upace App, to Group Exercise classes via ZOOM, to the socially distant concerts in the park, staff was committed to providing safe experiences. Our team created so many innovative opportunities to recreate. The reality is that words could never truly describe how we fell down in 2020. But if you think back, you will remember how we all picked one another back up. You will remember, simply, because you were there. We were here all together getting stronger one day at a time. Thank you for being our constant with your patience and support.

Laure Kosey, Executive Director





