

Dear Residents,

It has been an exciting few months since my last Director's Message. I know it is hard to believe, but the holidays will soon be upon us. Believe it or not, plans have already begun for Wauconda Fest 2024 in June and the Annual Triathlons in July. Keep an eye out for early information on both events in the upcoming Spring/Summer Guide due out mid-March.

Comprehensive Plan – Over the last year, the District has been working with Hitchcock Design Group on developing a District Wide Comprehensive Plan. This process included a community survey, stakeholder and public input meetings, interviews with staff, and completing an inventory of all the amenities in all our parks. The information collected was then organized into a roadmap for park improvements throughout the next six years. In October 2023, the Park Board of Commissioners approved the plan and are looking forward to implementing the key points of the plan for the betterment of the District's residents. The Comprehensive Plan can be found on the District's website under the General information tab.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) – In October 2023, the District completed a plan to add a frequently asked questions page to the District's website. This page represents a quick and easy link to some of the District's most asked questions. When you get a chance, visit the page at www.waucondaparks.com/faqs and learn something new about your Park District. Information will be updated periodically throughout the year.

Osage Park Redevelopment – Pre-Construction work has begun on the Osage Park Redevelopment project. Boundary and topographical surveys, along with soil borings have been completed. Staff is working with Hitchcock Design Group for the design and construction management phases of this project. It is expected that bid documents will be prepared and out in January with construction expected to begin in early Spring 2024. This project calls for the resurfacing of the tennis courts with a transformation of one court to two pickleball courts, resurfacing the basketball courts, creating one basketball court and one pavement soccer court, small fitness area, rain garden with interpretive signage, increased accessibility to all amenities, and additional landscape to enhance the beauty of the park. The District received an OSLAD (Open Space Land Acquisition and Development) Grant from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to fund half of the cost of this project.

Programs and Special Events – Please take some time and look through this guide. Our recreation staff has been working hard to develop new program ideas to meet your needs. Most of the usual favorites are included but check out some of the new programs like the Royal Ball and Flower Arranging (page 8), Dad and Me Project Time (page 15), and partnership programs with Catholic Charities and Wauconda Township (page 31).

Help Wanted – Calling all High School/College students and Retirees. It is never too early to start thinking about that summer job. We offer a wide variety of opportunities from park maintenance to camp counselors. See our ad on page 11. Apply soon, as positions fill quickly.

In closing, I wanted to thank you all for your support and continued patronage. We really appreciate seeing all the happy people coming to our parks and facilities to recreate. We look forward to seeing you again soon!

Happy Holidays and best wishes for another great year in 2024!

Sincerely,

Tim Staton, CPRP
Executive Director
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Osage Park Master Plan

