



# 2019/2020 Fiscal Year Year in Review





## Kaper and Lions Park Revitalization Projects

In summer 2019, both Kaper Park and Lions Park reopened with impressive changes and significant improvements.

The Kaper Park project began with the removal of the beloved Timbertown playground. Construction continued throughout the fall but was delayed beginning in January 2019 when the general contractor of the project declared bankruptcy. The Cary Park District pressed forward despite the delays and challenges that were presented to bring this project to completion.

In July and August 2019, the Park District held ribbon cutting events to celebrate the revitalized parks. Improvements to Kaper Park included a brand new universally designed accessible playground, splash pad, restrooms/storage building, picnic shelter, charging stations, and a new walkway from the parking lot to the playground. Timbertown was commemorated with a history sign also at the park.

Lions Park improvements include baseball field renovations, lacrosse and football field improvements, a refurbished plaza with a picnic shelter, benches, spectator bleachers, and the renovation and expansion of restrooms and the concession building. Also located at each park are charging stations donated by the Cary Park Foundation.

Since it's opening, this park has been a popular place for gatherings, groups, and families to enjoy.



## Hoffman Park Trail

On May 11, 2018 the Cary Park District was awarded a \$1,104,000.00 Illinois Transportation Enhancement Project (ITEP) Grant from the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) to construct a 1.4 mile trail at Hoffman Park.

This trail extension will connect to the existing 2.1 miles of trail at Hoffman Park and provide for a continuous loop throughout the park, as well as, connections to the Village of Cary's Rotary Park. Once constructed, the Park District will manage a total of 6.5 miles of trail throughout the community which link many local residents to parks, neighborhoods, natural areas, and several Cary community resources. It is expected to be constructed in 2021.



## New Cary Park District Preschool Building

In spring 2019 an opportunity for the Park District presented itself when the property located at 100 Cary-Algonquin Road (formerly Rocky Raccoon) became available for purchase.

The Park District has been offering a preschool program for over 35 years. Since the early 90's it has been held in the Lions Park Preschool building, 1180 Silver Lake Road, Cary. The current facility is a former pole barn maintenance garage that was converted into a two classroom school. While it has served the community well, it has reached the end of its useful life as a dedicated programming space. Anticipating this, over the past several years, the Board of Commissioners and staff have been evaluating other options to relocate the program including alternative locations to consider for acquisition, as various buildings and properties have become available within the Park District.



The former "Rocky Raccoon" building is a purpose built facility for preschool and early childhood programming making it a wonderful option to meet the needs of the community and Park District.

In June 2019, the Cary Park District reached an agreement to purchase this property as the future site of the Cary Park District preschool program. Shortly after the purchase, interior and exterior work began on the building. The building was completed summer 2020 and contains 5 classrooms, office & workspace, restrooms, storage, parking lot and brand new play equipment.



## Hoffman Park Give Back Gardens

The Give Back Gardens at Hoffman Park are six gardens maintained by local volunteers. All of the harvest is donated to the Cary Grove Food Pantry. These gardens are also used in Park District programming. Students in the Park District Preschool, campers in ECHO Extreme, and friends from the NISRA Adult Day Program learn and assist with planting, weeding, and harvesting of crops throughout the year. After 9 growing seasons, the operation hit the 10,000 lbs mark for fresh organic produce grown, harvested, and donated to the Cary-Grove Food Pantry.

The Hoffman Park Give Back Gardens were part of the Master Gardeners' 2019 Garden Walk.

## Hoffman Park Dog Park

An agility course was installed at the Hoffman Park Dog Park. Equipment consists of a wait table, an adjustable height jump bar, an A-frame climber, a double barrel tunnel, and a set of six flexible weave poles.

## Equipment Replacement/Improvements

Maintaining the current resources of the Park District is an annual priority of the Board of Commissioners. Nearly \$72,000 was invested in equipment replacement and facility maintenance. Highlights include a pickup truck, 15' wide tow-behind mower, a zero turn mower, and propane conversions on two fleet vehicles.

## Commissioner Appointments to Park Board

Commissioner Michael Murphy was appointed to the Park Board in October 2019. He replaced Erin Hauck.

## Carl & Claire Marie Sands

### Main Street Prairie

In November 2019 the Board of Commissioners approved a Vegetation Management & Enhancement Plan for the Sands Main Street Prairie. This plan was one of the first steps to be completed under the 6-year Carl & Claire Marie Sands Main Street Prairie Advancement Plan approved in 2018. Invasive plant control in the remnant savanna area on the eastern portion of the site was completed by staff during the winter months.



## GFOA Award

The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) of the United States and Canada awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting to the Cary Park District for its comprehensive annual financial report for the fiscal year ending April 30, 2020. This is the fifteenth consecutive year that the District was recognized with this prestigious award.

## Playground Guardian Park Protector

The Cary Park District purchased Playground Guardian, a cloud-based inspection software that allows the Park Maintenance Department to perform park inspections/audits, report incidents/accidents, document potential hazards and create work orders electronically.

# 2019/2020 Fiscal Year Recreation Stats

## Recreation Programs & Special Events

Hosted 20 special events including seasonal events, Concerts in the Park, Children's Entertainment Series, Summer Celebration, and more.

Over 7,000 people attended 2019 Summer Celebration.

Over 930 people attended 2019 Fall Family Fest.

Offered over 775 recreation programs for children as young as 6 months to seniors. Some of our most popular programs include E.T. KidZone, Camp ECHO, Sunshine Camp, Preschool, and Swim Lessons.

In April 2020 during the early phases of COVID-19, the Park District offered four virtual programs and seven Play in Place weekend activities

The Cary Park District Preschool taught 70 students in it's program. Of that, 39 students moved on to kindergarten for the 2020/2021 school year.

E.T. KidZone offers before and after school programming at Briargate, Deer Path, Oak Knoll, and Three Oaks Schools, as well as, day off programming. There were approximately 25,000 participations for the 2019/2020 school year.

## Memberships

338 Fitness Center Members

349 Dog Park Members

1,780 Pool Pass Members



*Photo taken summer 2019*

## Camp ECHO

Camp ECHO stands for Exploring Cary's Hidden Outdoors and is for children and teens in grades kindergarten to eighth grade. 2019 was the eighth year we held our camp in partnership with McHenry County Conservation District at the beautiful Fel-Pro RRR Conservation Area in Cary. Total enrollment during the 10 weeks of camp was 2,326 children. This was the highest enrollment since Camp ECHO began in 2012.

## Community Center Pool

A total of 1,780 pool memberships were purchased for the 2019 season. Overall there were 18,907 visits.

## Foxford Hills Golf Club

The driving range ball dispenser was replaced at Foxford Hills Golf Club with a new dispenser. The positive impact of this new dispenser which allowed golfers to self serve on the driving range was felt immediately.

Although the golf course closed in March due to COVID-19, there were a total of 26,721 rounds played for the fiscal year.

## COVID-19

In March 2020 when it was becoming clear that Coronavirus (COVID-19) was rapidly spreading in our state, the Park District canceled all recreation programs and closed the Park District Preschool and Kraus Senior Center beginning March 14. Shortly after, Governor Prizker announced his Executive Order which required residents to stay at home. Beginning March 19 all remaining facilities including the Community Center and Foxford Hills Golf Club, as well as, all restrooms and playgrounds throughout our park system were closed. The closure of the Hoffman Park Dog Park followed several days later.

The Park District staff quickly pivoted and began providing virtual recreation resources, Play in Place weekend activities, and virtual recreation programming.