

XII Sustainability

Overview

Sustainability as defined by the Brundtland Commission of the United Nations on March 20, 1987: “sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.

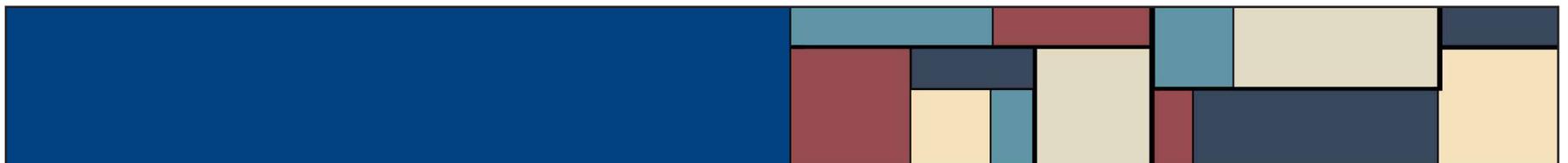
Park Districts are increasingly finding pressure to provide services and maintain their facilities more sustainably for the well-being of their community and the environment. The first step for a park district to adopt a sustainability plan

or policy would be the formation of a “Green Team” or “Sustainability Team”. The team would need to determine what sustainable initiatives are achievable for the WDPD and would be responsible for implementing sustainable concepts and principals where feasible within the organization and assisting the Park Board in identifying environmental initiatives. The Team should be comprised of a cross-section of employees from all departments and would meet regularly to review the park district’s efforts.

In addition, the WDPD should research utilizing the Illinois Park and Recreation Association

(IPRA) Environmental Report Card which establishes a standard that park districts can comply with for the IPRA’s Distinguished Park and Recreation accreditation. The IPRA report card outlines environmental initiatives or green practices and can help identify areas for further assessment that impacts the park district, such as energy efficiency improvements.

The Wood Dale Park District should develop an environmental policy focused on the core elements of purchasing, use of resources, energy, waste management, and planning and management.



Another tool for green building and sustainable design is LEED, or Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design. LEED is a green building certification program that recognizes sustainable building strategies and practices. The park district could utilize LEED for any new building renovations or expansions. In addition to LEED, there is also The Sustainable Sites Initiative (SITES™). Which is “a program based on the understanding that land is a crucial component of the built environment and can be planned, designed, developed, and maintained to protect and enhance the benefits we derive from healthy functioning landscapes. Sustainable landscapes create ecologically resilient communities better able to withstand and recover from episodic floods, droughts, wildfires, and other catastrophic events. They benefit the environment, property owners, and local and regional communities and economies.” (Sustainable Sites Initiative, 2015)

Sustainable Focus Areas

The following is a list of sustainable practices, which use low impact design strategies that can be implemented throughout the park district.

Materials & Recycling

Materials come from natural resources that have been extracted, manufactured, or processed for human use. The following policies could be adopted by the park district:

- Expand recycling opportunities in the parks with a priority to shelter and picnic areas, as well as active sports fields. This includes a commitment for the WDPD to manage removals in a timely manner.
- Incorporate sustainable/green purchasing language into vendor contracts and

specifications.

- Review material management: including the complete lifecycle of materials from manufacturing to purchasing to disposal. This includes selecting products that can be recycled or reused rather than disposed of in a landfill.
- Purchase locally or regionally produced materials and plants. Use a set of guidelines such as EPA’s Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP) or GreenSeal.org.
- Hosting recycling events for the community, such as holiday lights, hazardous waste, electronics, drug prescriptions, etc.
- Use vegetation and reflective materials to reduce the urban heat island and minimize effects on microclimate and on human and wildlife habitat.
- Use low VOC furnishings and paints and low toxicity cleaning products.

Transportation

To significantly reduce the amount of pollution and greenhouse gas emissions generated each day, the park district should consider implementing:

- Opportunities for improving alternative options, including transit, biking and walking.
- Review and add bike rack locations at all park district sites.
- Update fleet and equipment to include alternative fuel and/or hybrid vehicles.

Water

Water is a limited resource that is essential to all life, and sustainable landscapes are those that

reduce water use, improve filtration, and promote healthy rivers, lakes, and oceans. (Sustainable Sites Initiative, 2015)

The following policies could be adopted by the park district to conserve and protect our Earth’s hydrologic functions:

- Reduce imperviousness through the use of permeable pavements.
- Maintain natural drainage courses, and mimic natural systems for stormwater quality control.
- Reduce use of storm pipe for stormwater management.
- Use native plants, and implement natural area restoration and management.
- Offer a rain barrel program for residents so they are able to disconnect their downspouts from the storm system and reuse the rain water on site.
- Avoid development and disturbance near streams and wetlands, and on sites with high risk of flooding.
- Use raingardens, constructed wetlands, green roofs, and bioswales, to capture and slowly infiltrate water into the soil or groundwater.

Energy

Energy conservation is reducing energy consumption through using less of an energy service. Below is a list of ways to reduce the park district’s energy consumption and be more energy efficient.

- Purchase Energy Star rated appliances.
- Review the park district’s current air filters and convert to MERV 8 rating or better to improve indoor air quality for patrons/ staff

and extend the useful life of HVAC systems.

- If new buildings are proposed, they should be sited with an east-west axis, where practicable, to optimize passive solar design and include the use of broad roof overhangs to block midday summer sun.
- Review current heating and cooling systems for energy efficiency.
- Implement a staff policy to turn off printers, computers, and scanners at night and on weekends.
- Explore solar energy or other renewable energy options both for heating water and providing electricity.

Educational

In addition to being a leader in sustainability, the WDPD could offer programs focused on environmental education and lifestyle choices.

The park district could also reach out to SCARCE, (SCARCE stands for: School & Community Assistance for Recycling and Composting Education), for educational opportunities and training.

Programs the WDPD could offer may include:

- Community gardening
- Water conservation
- Greening your home
- Native plant material
- Composting

Summary

The WDPD's environmental policy will confirm the District's commitment to leadership and

sound use of the District's and its resident's resources in a responsible manner.



