



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Pritzker Administration awards \$55.2 million in grants for local park projects**

*Grant funding will help 100 parks statewide develop recreational opportunities*

SPRINGFIELD – Today, Governor JB Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources announced that more than \$55.2 million in grant funding was awarded to 100 local park projects throughout Illinois to help communities acquire land and develop recreational opportunities.

For the third year in a row, the governor ensured funding was set aside for economically distressed communities, resulting in 29 underserved locations receiving \$17.3 million in grants from the Open Space Land Acquisition and Development, or OSLAD, program.

“Since I became Governor, it’s been my mission to build stronger, healthier communities across Illinois,” **said Governor JB Pritzker**. “Through the OSLAD program, we’re bringing that vision to life by awarding over \$55.2 million to local park projects, expanding green spaces and creating new recreational opportunities for all.”

Established by the Illinois General Assembly in 1986, OSLAD is a cost-sharing program between state and local governments that helps communities fund land acquisition and development for parks and outdoor recreation projects. It’s become one of the most popular grant programs in Illinois. Since its establishment, OSLAD has awarded \$640 million for park projects throughout Illinois (including the awards announced today).

“This round of OSLAD grants represents long-awaited projects from the smallest villages of rural Illinois to Chicago and the suburbs,” **said IDNR Director Natalie Phelps Finnie**. “There is an impressive amount of work, creativity, and ambition that goes into planning new outdoor recreational facilities, and I’m delighted the Illinois Department of Natural Resources is able to play a small part in helping communities thrive.”

“For 35 years, the OSLAD grant program has provided Illinois communities with critical matching grant funds enabling them to promote healthier lifestyles and improve the quality of life for their residents while boosting local economies and positively impacting the environment,” **said Peter Murphy, president and CEO of the Illinois Association of Park Districts**.

“We are very grateful to Governor Pritzker, the Illinois General Assembly, and Director Finnie for recognizing the OSLAD program’s overwhelming benefits by ensuring that these dedicated grant funds are awarded for much needed park improvement projects that assist communities throughout Illinois.”

### **Calhoun County village to build park with a river view**

Among the OSLAD park projects included in this round of funding is a new park and interpretive area with river access in Hamburg, population 99, in Calhoun County.

The village, which is considered economically distressed, will receive a \$599,150 OSLAD grant to create a linear riverside park with an elevated boardwalk for river viewing and fishing, an improved and expanded parking lot for vehicles and boat trailers, restroom facility, pocket parks with pathways to seating for views of the river, native plantings, and interpretive signage. The goal of the park is to provide opportunities for residents and visitors to learn more about the sustainable use of natural resources and life in a riverplain.

“This grant – with the three years thinking about it, preparing it, and refining it – has increased interaction among our village residents, enabled us to identify some shared priorities and values, and will move us forward in a big way toward becoming a more sustainable village on the banks of the Mississippi River,” **said Hamburg village trustee Kathi Beyer.**

“The historical, cultural, and natural resources of this riverside community will become more accessible and available for our residents and regional visitors in ways that preserve and protect the history and the land and water that surround us. It also will lead to enhanced economic growth opportunities in appropriate ways for the village and countywide. We are so grateful for this award.”

### **Rockford Park District to renovate aging aquatic center**

The Rockford Park District will receive a \$600,000 OSLAD grant for renovations and safety improvements at Harkins Aquatic Center, a free pool facility that was last renovated in 2003 but is one of Rockford’s most popular summertime destinations for youth, teens and families.

Plans call for removing the current pool surfacing and replacing it with a new liner; safety repairs to the existing water slide; renovating the existing shower rooms, including improved accessibility; interior concession area improvements; and a new hot water heater system. The current pool surface is not conducive to the freeze-thaw climate of the Midwest winters and requires many repairs annually.

Harkins Aquatic Center features a leisure pool with zero depth entry, open swim and lap lanes, and a maximum depth of 4 feet. It has a water slide and children’s spray pool with lots of shade structures, and concessions are available for guests. Free swim lessons are offered daily at the pool, and it’s a summer food program location.

“We are incredibly grateful for this much needed funding awarded by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources through the OSLAD grant to renovate one of the Rockford Park District’s most popular and free aquatics facility,” **said Rockford Park District Executive Director Jay Sandine.**

“With only two main revenue streams (property taxes and fees), grant funding is critical to our organization to invest in what our community told us was most important to them, such as neighborhood parks, youth and teen programming, along with aging infrastructure. Receiving this OSLAD funding will allow this summertime staple to be updated and enhanced for future generations to enjoy.”

### **Village of New Haven’s plans include a new community park**

The Village of New Haven in Gallatin County in southern Illinois will use its \$482,400 OSLAD grant to construct a village park on vacant property near the village hall and community center. Plans call for building a regulation-size basketball court, accessible playground with wheelchair access, a pavilion, accessible sidewalk construction, and to build a fence. New Haven, with about 400 residents, is considered an economically distressed community.

“I was honored to receive the news that we have been approved for an OSLAD grant from the State of Illinois through the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Our village board member Terra Holak started the application process for this grant several months ago, to obtain funding for park improvements and playground equipment for our town,” **said Village of New Haven Mayor Martin Duffy.**

“We extend our heartfelt thanks to Governor JB Pritzker, to IDNR, to director Natalie Phelps Finnie, and to everyone who helped us secure this grant. It is a great feeling to know that small towns matter and the children of New Haven will benefit from this wonderful grant award for years to come.”

### **Riverton eyes expansion of Field of Dreams Park**

The Village of Riverton in Sangamon County will receive a \$600,000 OSLAD grant to expand Field of Dreams Park.

Village officials have been trying for years to build out amenities at the park, which currently is home to baseball, football and soccer fields, along with a concession stand and small playground. They recently were able to purchase 12 adjacent acres, and the OSLAD grant will enable the village to expand the park’s features with an amphitheater, splash pad, a new concession stand and restroom, a “Zen garden,” an 8-foot-wide multi-use path, a new parking lot, and more.

“I’m ecstatic. This grant is going to give us a chance to move this entire project to the front of our priority list and get this park developed,” **said Village President Joe Bartley**. “We’re going to be able to expand a park that’s already there and add a lot of amenities that our residents want. This is a great opportunity for the village.”

### **FY2025 OSLAD grant awards**

#### **Bureau County**

Princeton Park District - \$216,000  
Village of Sheffield - \$600,000  
Village of Spring Valley - \$600,000  
Village of Ohio - \$600,000\*

#### **Calhoun County**

Village of Hamburg - \$599,150\*

#### **Champaign County**

Champaign County Forest Preserve District - \$1,125,000\*  
Champaign Park District - \$600,000\*  
River Trails Park District - \$379,017

#### **Clark County**

City of Martinsville - \$600,000\*

#### **Coles County**

City of Charleston - \$600,000

#### **Cook County**

Arlington Heights Park District - \$600,00  
Berwyn Park District - \$600,000  
Broadview Park District - \$600,000  
Burr Ridge Park District - \$425,100  
Chicago Park District - \$1,000,000  
City of Elgin - \$600,000  
City of Evanston - \$600,000  
Forest Preserve District of Cook County - \$1,067,500  
Glencoe Park District - \$600,000  
Hanover Township - \$600,000\*  
Homewood-Flossmoor Park District - \$600,000

Park District of Franklin Park - \$255,200  
Park District of La Grange - \$600,000  
Park District of Oak Park - \$600,000  
Midlothian Park District - \$400,000  
Morton Grove Park District - \$600,000  
Northbrook Park District - \$600,000  
Oak Lawn Park District - \$600,000  
Streamwood Park District - \$600,000  
Village of Brookfield - \$600,000  
Village of Grant Park - \$300,000  
Village of Lemont - \$600,000  
Village of Lincolnwood - \$600,000  
Village of Matteson - \$600,000  
Village of Orland Park - \$600,000  
Wilmette Park District - \$600,000  
Worth Park District - \$600,000\*

### **Dekalb County**

Dekalb Park District - \$600,000\*  
Village of Lee - \$600,000\*  
Village of Shabbona - \$224,040

### **DuPage County**

Carol Stream Park District - \$600,000  
City of Warrenville - \$600,000  
Darien Park District - \$600,000  
Downers Grove Park District - \$600,000  
Forest Preserve District of DuPage County - \$600,000  
Itasca Park District - \$600,000  
Roselle Park District - \$600,000  
St. Charles Park District - \$600,000  
Village of Glendale Heights - \$600,000  
Village of Willowbrook - \$600,000  
Village of Winfield - \$378,000

### **Fulton County**

Village of London Mills - \$600,000\*

### **Gallatin County**

New Haven - \$482,400\*

### **Iroquois County**

City of Watseka - \$597,625

### **Jefferson County**

Village of Bluford - \$600,000\*

### **Kane County**

Campton Township - \$600,000  
Huntley Park District - \$384,500  
Village of South Elgin - \$600,000

### **Knox County**

Geneva Park District - \$600,000

Village of Maquon - \$587,553\*

**Lake County**

Lake Bluff Park District - \$293,300

Mundelein Park and Recreation District - \$600,000

Vernon Hills Park District - \$600,000

Village of Antioch - \$600,000

Village of Fox Lake - \$600,000

Village of Waukegan - \$600,000

Wauconda Park District - \$600,000

**LaSalle County**

City of Ottawa - \$636,450

Village of Grand Ridge - \$300,000

Village of Mendota - \$600,000

**Lee County**

Village of Ashton - \$163,175

**Livingston County**

Village of Cullom - \$600,000\*

**Madison County**

Village of Glen Carbon - \$600,000

Village of Hamel - \$600,000

**Macon County**

Decatur Park District - \$400,000

**Marion County**

City of Centralia - \$43,000

**Marshall County**

Village of Sparland - \$600,000\*

**McDonough County**

Blandinsville-Hire Park District - \$600,000\*

**McHenry County**

City of Woodstock - \$600,000

Village of Fox River Grove - \$600,000

**McLean County**

City of Bloomington - \$600,000

**Montgomery County**

Village of Irving - \$600,000\*

**Peoria County**

District of Peoria, Pleasure Driveway Park - \$600,000\*

Village of Elmwood Park - \$376,250

**Pike County**

Griggsville Community Park District - \$600,000\*

**Pope County**

City of Golconda - \$600,000\*

**Sangamon County**

Springfield Park District - \$600,000\*

Village of Loami - \$600,000\*

Village of Riverton - \$600,000\*

**Stark County**

Village of Bradford - \$600,000\*

**Stephenson County**

Village of Davis - \$302,265

**Tazewell County**

Fon du Lac Park District - \$600,000

**Vermilion County**

City of Danville - \$600,000\*

**Wabash County**

Village of Bellmont - \$600,000\*

**Whiteside County**

City of Morrison - \$81,500

Sterling Park District - \$600,000\*

**Will County**

New Lenox Community Park District - \$600,000

Plainfield Park District - \$260,000

**Winnebago County**

Rockford Park District - \$600,000\*

**Woodford County**

Village of Spring Bay - \$168,500\*

\*Denotes an economically distressed community.

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