

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

Parks Division

1) Demographic Environment

- A. Passive Areas
- B. Athletic Fields
- C. Natural Areas

2) Socio-cultural Environment

- A. Passive Areas
 - 1. Older adults, families, couples, and people interested in walking, fishing, relaxing, or simply enjoying nature and the outdoor environment gravitate towards these areas
- B. Athletic Fields
 - 1. Active adults, team oriented people, exercise groups, cheerleading teams, young athletes use the athletic fields.
 - 2. Organized teams, leagues, and non-permitted teams use the athletic fields.
 - 3. Resident children often use the fields for play, or any group needing unobstructed open space
- C. Natural Areas
 - 1. Nature groups and school groups, which would include teachers and bird-watchers, and all who seek a close experience with nature make use of the natural areas.
 - 2. Used by parks as erosion control, noise buffers, anti-encroachment, bio-Swale areas for water purification, and nature areas.

3) Competitive Environment

- A. Passive Areas
 - 1. Schaumburg Park District
 - 2. Elgin Park District
 - 3. Dundee Township
- B. Athletic Fields
 - 1. Schaumburg Park District
 - 2. Palatine Park District
 - 3. Elgin Park District
- C. Natural Areas
 - 1. Schaumburg Park District
 - 2. Elgin Park District
 - 3. Cook County Forest Preserve District

4) Economic Environment

- A. Passive Areas
 - 1. Passive areas are not only expensive to establish and maintain, but they take away valuable manpower and materials from high priority rental and income generating areas.
 - 2. Escalating costs of seed, fertilizer, and top soil make the decision making process more difficult when allocating resources.

B. Athletic Fields

1. Overuse from yearlong rentals, non-permit games, and the high expectations coaches and players dictate have diminished the field conditions. Short periods between seasons do not allow for effective field regeneration.
2. The exaggerated use of field supplies to off-set the time line for repair, coupled with the extreme escalation of cost for those supplies and the ever rising manpower costs have diminished the cost effectiveness of the athletic fields and their rental possibilities.
3. Because of the aforementioned overuse, short rebound time, and escalating costs, seasonal shutdown of fields is mandatory on a rotating basis causing further scheduling difficulties for recreation and more abuse of the remaining operating fields.

C. Natural Areas

1. Survey results have proven that residents have embraced the idea of Naturalized areas which allowed little used and difficult to maintain areas to return to their natural state, and has transferred manpower and equipment to high profile areas and athletic fields.
2. More naturalized areas have reduced our carbon footprint and our environmental impact on our parks, our community, and the planet.

5) Technological Environment

Improved interactive web sites, e-mail, and texts use have made communications with residents easier as these modes become more popular and residents get more comfortable with their operation.

Automated irrigation not simply a water source needs be given thought in all planning to effectively establish new athletic fields and high profile areas. The cost savings in water and manpower alone give credibility to their addition. Multi-use equipment purchases and greener fuel saving devices have enabled the park's staff to more effectively do their jobs and reduce the impact on the planet.

6) Political & Legal Environment

The physical properties of the park district continue to improve every year. All playgrounds meet today's standards. Athletic fields are in excellent shape (those given the luxury of ample turn-around time between seasons). All shorelines have been naturalized / stabilized along with seldom used and difficult to maintain park areas.

Environmental scan

Planning & Development

Change Ready

1. The Hoffman Estates Park District population will level out at about 55,000 as remaining residential communities are developed primarily in the western territory. Concurrently the average household population will drop as the number of children decrease over time.
2. Babyboomers between the ages of 48-66 years of age will remain a dominant age cohort. These individuals will continue to lead active lives and call on local recreation opportunities to fulfill their leisure needs.
3. A shift from a predominate white population base will continue as more Asian, Hispanic and Middle Easterners purchase dwelling units within the community. Concentrations of these ethnic populations will influence the need for new and different forms of leisure services and activities.
4. The Megapolitan influence in providing recreation services will continue to impact resident utilization whether it be from HEPD or surrounding parks districts, private facilities or the educational community.

Key competitors for customer loyalty and support of programs

Athletics and active activities

Park Districts

1. Schaumburg Park District
2. Palatine Park District
3. City of Elgin Parks and Recreation

Private Agencies

1. YMCA
2. Lifetime Fitness
3. Advocate Health and Fitness

Passive activities

Park Districts

4. Schaumburg Park District
5. Palatine Park District
6. City of Elgin Parks and Recreation
7. Cook County Forest Preserve

Program and classes

1. Schaumburg Park District
2. Palatine Park District
3. City of Elgin Parks and Recreation
4. Harper College
5. School District 54
6. Schaumburg Township

Social Equity

Disposable income should remain about the same in both the short term and long term. This is due to the higher than average educational background of most of the bread winners within the community. However for the minority of residents with limited educational background the separation from a social economic point of view will widen in both the short term and long term. The need to establish programs to address this economic disparity will need to be addressed.

Managing resources

With a potential shift in population from a younger user base to an older user base the need for traditional facilities will also shift. Significant additional indoor program space will replace the need for outdoor active programmed amenities. This shift has already begun with the reduction in the need for outdoor athletic field space.

To better control resources the district will need to look at centrally locating facilities to reduce travel time costs of maintenance and programming staff. Multi-use facilities constructed to withstand the wear and tear impact will become the norm.