



**CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT  
SAUGANASH PARK  
FRAMEWORK PLAN**

January 16, 2019



# Contents

01	Framework Plan Purpose and Community Engagement
02	Vision
03	History
04	Existing Conditions
08	Framework Plan Principles and Objectives
09	Capital Recommendations
11	Program and Event Recommendations
12	Concept Plan
13	Implementation

Special thanks goes to the members of the community who participated in the planning process. This document has been prepared in coordination with representatives from the Sauganash Park Advisory Council, the 39th Ward Alderman, the City of Chicago, and the Chicago Park District. Thanks to those individuals for supplying information, insights, assistance, and reviewing plans and documents.

Plan prepared by the Chicago Park District, Department of Planning and Construction, Michael Lange, Lakefront Planning Coordinator, in cooperation with the Sauganash Park Advisory Council and 39th Ward Alderman.



**MARGARET LAURINO** | Alderman, Ward 39  
City of Chicago

**SPAC**  
SAUGANASH  
PARK ADVISORY COUNCIL

# Framework Plan Purpose and Community Engagement

## Purpose

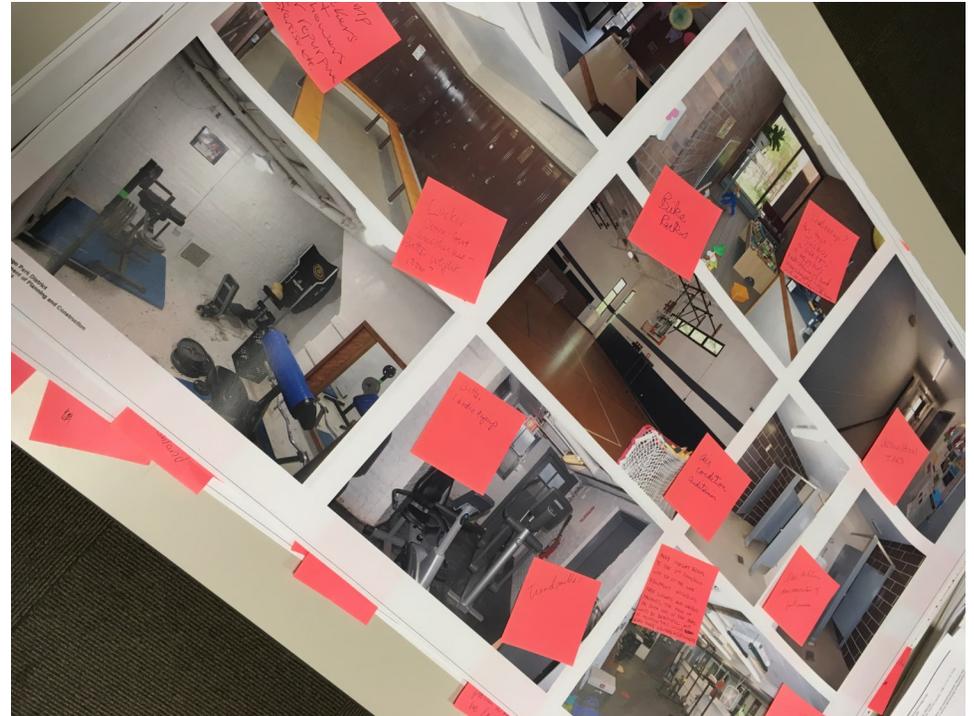
The purpose of this framework plan is to create a long-term vision for Sauganash Park and Trail that preserves, enhances, and manages the historic park resources as an integral part of our neighborhood, City, and region's recreational, cultural, environmental, and educational experience.

The plan responds to the diverse neighborhood needs and provides a vision for improvements to the park over time and serves as a planning tool for both the community and the Park District. It outlines priorities and ensures that improvements are done in a coordinated and holistic manner. The plan is referenced as capital funding becomes available.

## Engagement

Community engagement was an important component of the planning process. Activities ranged from large community meetings, advisory council working groups, and stakeholder and community organization interviews. This process focused on understanding the concerns of the community and the existing conditions in the park that impact use. The conversations focused on fieldhouse, overall park site, the trail, programming, and events. People in attendance represented groups that included but was not limited to:

- Sauganash Park Advisory Council
- The Sauganash Community Association
- Alderman Margaret Laurino
- The Sauganash Park Community Association
- Sauganash Woman's Club
- The Edgebrook Sauganash Chamber of Commerce





# History

Sauganash Park and its surrounding neighborhood bear the name of Potawatomi chief and early Chicagoan Sauganash (1780-1841), also known as Billy Caldwell. Born in Canada of a Wyandot Indian mother and an Irish father, Sauganash ("The Englishman"), was educated by Jesuit priests at the French settlement of Detroit. Sauganash became a Chicago resident in 1820, and was elected a justice of the peace six years later. In 1830, the federal government granted him a 1,200-acre reservation along the North Branch of the Chicago River. Sauganash sold most of his land six years later, moving to Council Bluffs, Iowa, to join the Potawatomis.

For nearly a century, farmers held much of the reservation land. In the mid-1920s, however, Henry G. Zander, Sr. and George F. Koester began to subdivide the area for homes. In 1926, residents of northwest Chicago's prestigious new Sauganash development petitioned for a park board to create recreational facilities in their growing community. The newly-formed Sauganash Park District acquired nearly four acres of property from developer Koester in late 1928. In August 1930, the district approved park plans and began improvements including walks, tennis and horse shoe courts, and a wading pool. Work was completed by Christmas Eve, and the district illuminated the park lights in celebration. Construction of a single-story, English-style fieldhouse with a 300-seat auditorium began in March of 1934.

The Chicago Park District assumed ownership of Sauganash Park two months later. The consolidated park district added ball fields and playground equipment and made other improvements over time. By 1977, the park district acquired another acre-and-a-half of adjacent property and built a large gymnasium addition to the fieldhouse. In 2008, the Sauganash Trail officially opened connecting a one-mile long multi-use recreation trail from Bryn Mawr to Devon. At Devon, the trail then connects into the Valley Line Trail through Lincolnwood and Skokie north to Dempster Street.



# Existing Conditions: Fieldhouse Exterior



Original Historic Fieldhouse (looking southeast)



Fieldhouse Addition (looking east)



Fieldhouse Addition (looking south)



Fieldhouse (looking northwest)

# Existing Conditions: Fieldhouse Interior



Historic Auditorium with stage



Fitness Center



Gymnasium



Music Room

# Existing Conditions: Site



Ballfields (looking south)



Outdoor Fitness (looking north)



Auditorium West (looking east)



Playground (looking west)

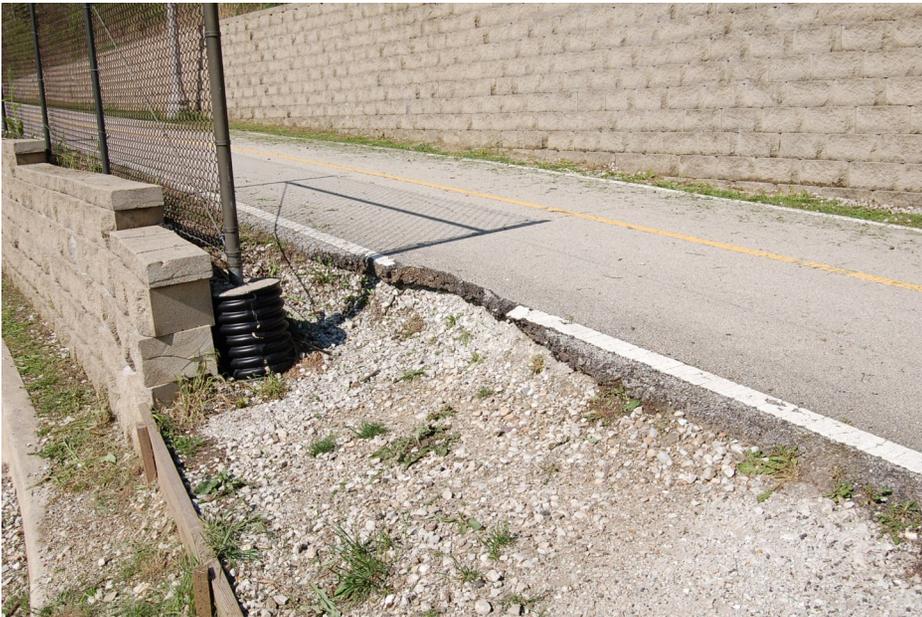
## Existing Conditions: Trail



Trail at Rogers (looking east)



Trail Overlook (looking west)



Trail Entrance Erosion (looking west)



Trail Top (looking south)

## Framework Plan Principles and Objectives

Based upon the community input and vision categories, there are 3 primary principles:

1. Balance the park environment with spaces for people that provide a range of activities that are active and passive in service with the community.
2. Foster an inclusive park setting that reflects and supports the culture of its users and neighbors and is open to everyone.
3. Create a park environment that will serve the entire community, across generations and invites everyone to come out and play for a lifetime.

The main objectives of the plan and any projects and/or programming are as follows:

- Create a cohesive park atmosphere
- Improve park walkways and trail circulation
- Preserve historic fieldhouse integrity
- Increase programming and staffing
- Enhance landscaping
- Improvements should be environmentally friendly

# Capital Recommendations

## Site Improvements

A cohesive park atmosphere can be created with some minor improvements to the park and trail. These can include:

- New bench seating, bike racks, drinking fountains, and gathering spaces
- Accessible Parking spaces and designated patron parking
- Gateway features at entrances to the Park
- New connections to the trail and park
- New ornamental lighting within the park and trail

## Feature Improvements

- Improve baseball fields by adding warm up batting boxes and improving drainage
- Resurface basketball court
- Replace pour-in-place rubber playground surface
- Work with programming on the development of a Nature Play Area
- Add Bocce Ball Court
- Install a seasonal ice slick



Nature Play Spaces can incorporate the surrounding landscape to bring nature to children's daily play



Gateway features at park entrances can create foster a sense of community and identify



"Backyard ice slicks" provide a simple "pop up" seasonal activity

# Capital Recommendations

## Landscape Improvements

Integrating passive and active uses creates a balanced park environment that encourages community interactions across all generations, which can be achieved with these simple improvements:

- Create community garden space for gardening that includes perennials, annuals, and edible garden plants
- Preserve existing trees in park and promote replacement plantings
- Improve the natural planting along the trail to create a more attractive environment
- Stabilize embankment along the trail to prevent erosion

## Building Improvements

- Improve historic fieldhouse elements exterior including windows, doors and masonry
- Replace the entire roof, gutters and downspouts on the entire fieldhouse since the previous multi-phase partial roof replacement (1985, 1988, 1992) was completed over 25 years ago
- Upgrade the interior to include air conditioning, improved lighting, restroom accessibility upgrades, and fitness center



Plantings along the trail balance the natural park environment



Restoration of historic building elements supports the culture of the community

# Program and Event Recommendations

## Programming Improvements

Programs that are inclusive and support the culture of the community creates a safe park environment. A few recommended program improvements will foster a park setting that invites all generations to come out and play such as:

- Adding instructors for drama, dance, and art programs
- Sports Leagues for adults 35-55
- Gardening classes and Nutrition Education
- Wellness and Fitness Classes

Seasonal events provide an opportunity to explore and experience the park throughout the year. Opportunities with community groups can be fostered to further support and promote events that could include:

- Movies in the Park
- Holiday Events for Kids; Halloween or Spring Events
- Sauganash-palooza
- Shakespeare in the Park
- Winter Flea Market
- Multi-generational dance nights

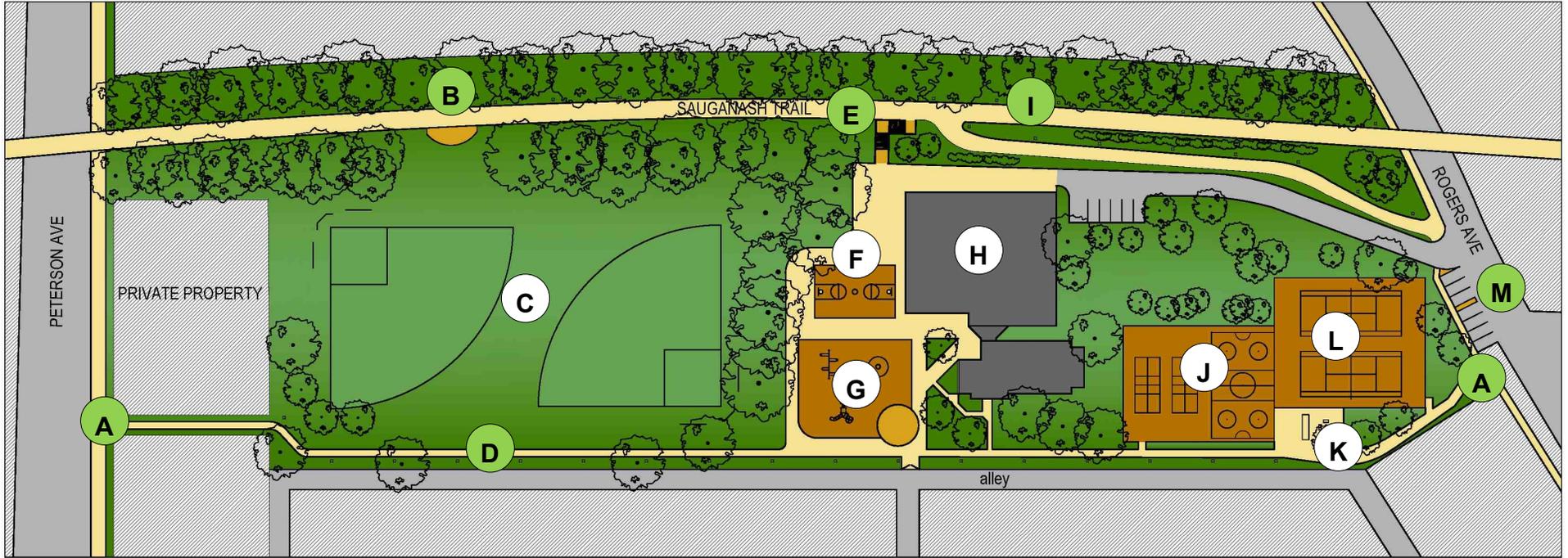


Drama shows the Nutcracker provide a program that entertains all generations



Dance nights encourages seniors to come out and play.

# Concept Plan



- |  |   |                               |
|--|---|-------------------------------|
| <b>A</b> Proposed Gateway                  | <b>F</b> Basketball Court                   | <b>K</b> Outdoor Fitness Area |
| <b>B</b> Proposed Trail Overlook           | <b>G</b> Playground                         | <b>L</b> Tennis Courts        |
| <b>C</b> Multipurpose Athletic Field       | <b>H</b> Fieldhouse                         | <b>M</b> Proposed Parking     |
| <b>D</b> Proposed Ornamental Park Lighting | <b>I</b> Proposed Ornamental Trail Lighting |                               |
| <b>E</b> Proposed Stairway                 | <b>J</b> Multipurpose Court                 |                               |

## Implementation

The framework plan serves as a guide to the future improvements at Sauganash Park and Trail. It anticipates that changes will be implemented over time with some projects beginning sooner while others may come years into the future. This plan is the community's collective vision for the future of the park and provides a method for evaluating changes and improvements.

The recommendations outline in the plan depend on the availability of funding mechanisms (private and/or public), consent from property owners, support from local alderman and legislative leaders, and from the community. Projects can be implemented as funding is available and would proceed with design and construction in accordance with applicable local, state, or federally mandated rules and processes. Design of any project may vary from what is shown in this framework and should be evaluated accordingly.





**Chicago Park District, Board of Commissioners  
Chicago Park District, Michael P. Kelly, General Superintendent & CEO  
Department of Planning and Construction**

For more information about your Chicago Park District visit  
[www.chicagoparkdistrict.com](http://www.chicagoparkdistrict.com) or call (312)742-PLAY (7529) or (312) 747-2001 (TTY).

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