



**SYCAMORE
PARK DISTRICT**

Annual Report 2025



A YEAR OF INVESTING IN PEOPLE & PLACES



SYCAMORE PARK DISTRICT

MISSION

Connecting Sycamore to wellness, nature, and each other.

VISION

To enhance the Sycamore community through wellness, recreation and greenspace, the Board and Staff take a responsive and inclusive approach to service, community relationships, and sustaining the Sycamore Park District legacy.

CORE VALUES

We value...

Equity by recognizing and serving all groups in our community, and continually seeking new ways to be inclusive and engage with diverse populations.

Transparency through fiscal responsibility, equitable policies, and pro-active communication.

Sustainability and are committed to the conservation of Sycamore's greenspace for recreation and the well-being of the community today and for future generations.

Connections that stem from the relationships that begin and grow through the opportunities and partnerships we maintain.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report provides highlights of the Sycamore Park District's finances, significant projects and initiatives, facility usage, and community relationships in 2025. It is also a chance to reflect on goals and values as we look towards the coming year.

Complete budget reports and other District information can be found on the Transparency Portal at sycparks.org. Questions and feedback regarding the information in this document can be sent to

Jonelle Bailey, Executive Director
jonelleb@sycparks.org | 815-895-3365.

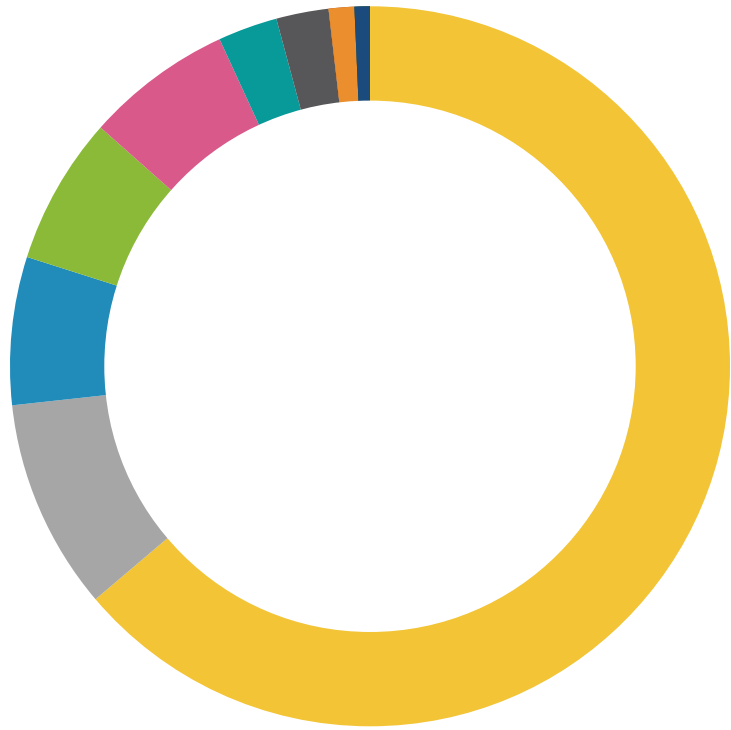
You may obtain a paper copy at the Sycamore Park District Community Center, 480 Airport Road, Sycamore.

ABOUT THE DISTRICT

The Park District, established in 1923, is in the process of acquiring and developing park sites and open spaces to serve a growing community. Park sites, totaling 509 acres, include neighborhood parks, community parks, two sports complexes, and natural areas. The Park District also maintains a Community Center, 18-hole golf course, dog park, sled hill, and splashpad. In addition, staff provides recreational and wellness programming throughout the parks and facilities.

Through the support of tax dollars, the Sycamore Parks Foundation, and partners, which include community groups and local bodies of government, the Sycamore Park District keeps Sycamore connected to wellness, nature, and each other.

YOUR TAX DOLLARS



The graph on the left shows how your 2024 tax bill (paid in 2025) is allocated among the various taxing districts in Sycamore.

● School District	63.80%
● DeKalb County	9.47%
● Sycamore Park District	6.64%
● City of Sycamore	6.63%
● CC 523 Kishwaukee	6.60%
● Sycamore Library	2.67%
● Sycamore Road & Bridge	2.35%
● Sycamore Township	1.15%
● DeKalb Co Forest Preserve	0.69%

CAPITAL BUDGET & ALLOCATING RESOURCES

The District has approximately \$525,000 available annually for the maintenance and upkeep of parks and facilities.

The Board focuses funds on the highest priorities and most impactful ways to achieve sustainability.

Areas where these funds were divided in 2025 include:

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

GOLF COURSE & CLUBHOUSE

TRAILS

SPLASHPAD

COMMUNITY CENTER

SPORTS COMPLEXES

EQUIPMENT

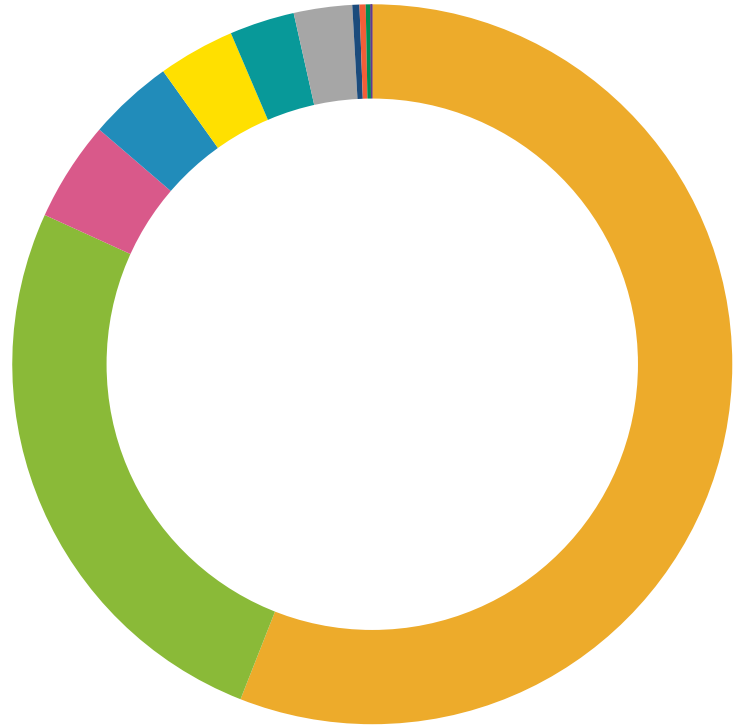
UPKEEP OF EQUIPMENT



OPERATING BUDGET

Revenue FISCAL YEAR 2025

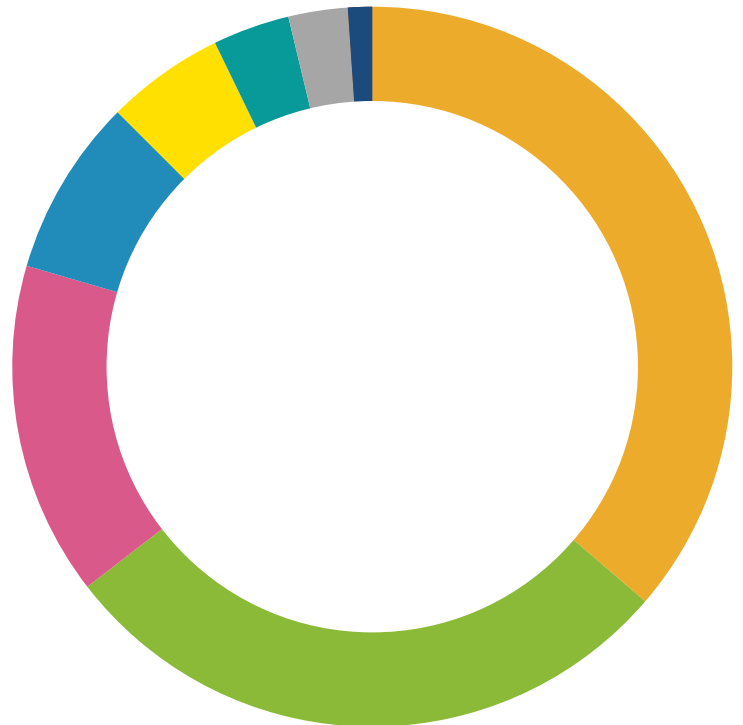
Property Tax Receipts.....	\$4,030,256	62.27%
Golf.....	\$930,395	14.84%
Miscellaneous.....	\$323,742	5.16%
Pathway Fitness/Gym.....	\$276,045	4.4%
Concessions.....	\$247,770	3.95%
Program Fees.....	\$210,040	3.35%
Interest.....	\$188,648	3.01%
Rentals.....	\$22,978	0.37%
Grants & Donations/Mtg.....	\$19,930	0.32%
Aquatics.....	\$15,237	0.24%
Dog Park.....	\$5,825	0.09%



TOTAL.....\$6,270,866

Expense FISCAL YEAR 2025

Salaries & Wages.....	\$1,989,749	27.63%
Debt Service.....	\$1,547,186	21.48%
Materials & Supplies.....	\$821,603	11.41%
Insurance.....	\$436,846	6.07%
Contractual.....	\$290,968	4.04%
Utilities.....	\$188,954	2.62%
Special Recreation.....	\$146,002	2.03%
Misc.....	\$59,427	0.83%



TOTAL.....\$5,480,735

LEGACY CAMPUS & RECREATION



LEGACY CAMPUS

	2023	2024	2025
Splash Fountain Visits	3,779	3,300	3,363
Dog Park Memberships	338	331	267
Community Center Daily Visits	54,100	54,289	60,955
Pathway Fitness Members	2023	2024	2025
24/7 Members*	312	307	360
Building Hours Pass Holders*	279	276	329
Track Only Passes*	270	296	327
Open Gym Passes*	337	332	352

*Average Active Members/Pass holders per month

2025 Highlights

- Over 1,500 native plant plugs were planted in front of the Community Center with support from Pizzo, Rotary, volunteers, and Park District staff.
- A new shade post and structure were installed on the east side of the Community Center patio, providing improved shade for summer classes and splashpad users.
- An automated door was installed at the upstairs track entrance of the Community Center to improve accessibility for users.



PARKS & MAINTENANCE

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS



North Grove Park playground was completed in the fall.

A new skate spot was completed in the **Community Park** near the grass ball diamonds, refurbishing the existing basketball court to allow skateboard slides and jumps while maintaining a half basketball court.

The roof on the historic **WPA Shelter** located in the **Community Park** was replaced using similar shag shingle material to preserve its character.

The new **Greenleaf Park** area was graded and seeded into turf, laying the groundwork for future park development.

A park tour with Board members was completed in November, highlighting new park areas and recent improvements.

Plans were finalized and preliminary work completed for the **Great Western Tail extension** connecting the Page and Pleasant Street trail to Old Mill Park, with construction scheduled for 2026.

SYCAMORE GOLF CLUB

The golf course experienced a record revenue season with a full slate of outings, leagues, and high school tournaments.

A new drain line was installed between the practice putting green and the clubhouse, alleviating long-standing water pooling issues.

Two heavy snow events shortly after Thanksgiving resulted in the early closure of the golf course for the season.

The **City of Sycamore** installed a new drain line from the 7 alternate tee to the 16 fairway along the creek, improving neighborhood drainage west of Parkside Drive.

SPRING STORM DAMAGE

A major windstorm caused significant damage to the golf course and sports complex, including light poles and fixtures, trees, fences, and a ballfield dugout.

Weaver Construction received an Illinois Association of Park District Best Friend of Illinois Parks award for their rapid response and repairs, including stabilizing the damaged dugout and preventing the press box from collapsing.



SPORTS COMPLEXES

Plans were completed for the Kiddieland playground area north of the Good Tymes Shelter, with a full playground replacement and new mulch surfacing planned for 2026.

A new parking lot was completed at the south end of the **Riverside Soccer Complex**, improving access and traffic flow during peak use.

NATURAL AREAS

ENCAP was hired in the spring to conduct controlled burns around the three **Parkside Preserve** ponds. This early April burn created an opportunity to discuss prescribed fire as part of an Earth Day educational lesson.

Burns provide a necessary reset for native plants and removed accumulated dead material from previous years while improving safety and efficiency for ongoing maintenance and removal of invasive and volunteer trees.

COMMUNITY POLLINATOR GARDEN

Sponsored by the **Sycamore Rotary Club** and **Sycamore Parks Foundation**, the landscaping around the Community Center entrance was transformed into a Community Pollinator Garden.

Community volunteers along with the Sycamore Rotary Club and Pizzo & Associates helped install 1,550 native plant plugs. The new garden enhances curb appeal, expands opportunities for interactive nature education, and showcases native plant options suitable for home gardens.



NATIVE CHILDREN'S GARDEN

2025 education efforts focused on developing an ongoing native planting project with the weekly summer camp. The new "Children's Garden" at the Community Center provides hands-on learning where children can:

- Observe native plant growth
- Learn basic plant identification
- Watch insect and animal visitors
- Engage directly with soil and gardening activities



Approximately 200 native plants will be installed annually until the entire mulch bed along the north entry walkway is filled. Ongoing weeding and replanting during the summer will be incorporated into future camp lessons.

SYCAMORE GOLF CLUB

150
ROUNDS
PER DAY
AVG.

30
NEW PASS
HOLDERS

19
COMMUNITY
OUTINGS

10
HOLES
IN ONE



	2023	2024	2025
Pass Holders	363	419	449
Rounds Sold	31,768	33,849	36,182

YOUTH GOLF & DEVELOPMENT

- SAY-Golf Instructional Program: 66 junior golfers (ages 5–14) | a 5% increase from 2024.
- SAY-Golf Junior League: 16 youth golfers (ages 11–15) competed in a six-week junior league | a 23% increase from 2024.
- Hosted three special youth tournaments:
 - Fox Valley Junior Golf Tour (FVJGT)
 - Illinois Junior Golf Association (IJGA) Player's Challenge
 - Alvin Wildenrad Jr. Championship

Sycamore High School Golf

- Nearly 400 high school golf rounds recorded (practices and matches).
- Hosted the Interstate 8 Girls Conference Match.
- Hosted the IHSA Regional Girls Golf Match for the second consecutive year.

FACILITY & AMENITY IMPROVEMENTS

- Added 10 upgraded golf carts
- Ranger cart vinyl wrapped and branded courtesy of Banner Up.
- Added 8 new push carts from Bag Boy.
- Installed 3 new outdoor lockers for storage.
- Pro Shop refreshed with new displays and an updated layout.
- All tee signs updated, including community sponsor recognition.
- New Welcome Board installed near the putting green.



EVENTS, TOURNAMENTS & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Hosted 30+ golf events, including in-house and public outings
- Introduced three new events:
 - Spring Skills Challenge
 - Par 3 Tournament
 - Crosstown Showdown (in partnership with DeKalb Park District)

CHARITABLE IMPACT

- Hosted 19 community golf outings.
- Supported 10 organizations through fundraising initiatives.
- 1,297 golfers participated in community golf outings.
- \$3,780 raised through charitable golf events.



2025 Strategic Plan 2030

As we look ahead, our focus is on maintaining the high standard of care for our existing facilities, expanding and enhancing our program offerings, and deepening our engagement with the diverse communities we serve.



FUNDING & FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

To secure long-term financial health and improve facilities *in 2025 we initiated...*

A Five-Year Budget Plan

Grant Funding

North Grove Park: \$348,300 Open Space Land Acquisition and Development Grant

WPA Shelter Roof: \$12,000 DeKalb County Community Foundation Community Needs Grant.

Park Development Projects

Advancing projects at Great Western Trail expansion, Reston Ponds Park, North Grove, Skate Spot, and Good Tymes Shelter renovation.

Facilities Improvements

Annual upgrades, included new signs, landscaping, and phased lighting upgrades at sports fields.

ADA Compliance & Accessibility

Updated dock access and identified smaller projects for immediate improvement.



SUSTAINABILITY & ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

To protect our green spaces and ensure long-term operational resilience, *in 2025 we focused on...*

Succession Planning & Career Development

Evaluated the best practices to establish a strong staff development framework.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging Initiatives

Collaborated with the DeKalb County History Center and Ellwood House Museum to continue conversations through Dessert and Dialog program series and develop a new community-wide initiative, Branches of Belonging.



GROWTH & PROGRAM EXPANSION

To meet evolving community needs, *in 2025 we prioritized...*

Nature Education

Natural area interpretive signs were developed for Reston Ponds and North Grove Parks.

Established a community pollinator garden and children's education garden at Legacy Campus.

Community & Government Partnerships

Collaborated with DeKalb County History Center and Kishwaukee Special Recreation Association to expand inclusive programming.

Facility Staffing and Operations

Added a full-time custodian



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & INCLUSION

To strengthen our connection with the public and ensure equitable access, *in 2025 we implemented:*

PDRMA Accreditation & Industry Recognition

Applied for a Champions of Change Award and began working towards Gold Medal recognition in 2026 and NRPA Accreditation Application in 2027

Accessibility & Inclusion Improvements

Reviewing accessibility at each park with DSATS and ADA compliance funds and strengthened partnerships with KSRA & accessibility consultants.

Community Connections

Community connections play a vital role in maintaining a vibrant park system that doesn't just exist - it thrives!

\$16,710

Sponsorships
& Advertising

\$2,720

Value of in-kind
donations &
services

27+

Business & groups
met the community
@ the Park District



Thank you to the following businesses and organizations who helped connect Sycamore to wellness, nature, and each other in 2020/21.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENTS

City of Sycamore
Sycamore CUSD 427
Kishwaukee Special Recreation
Association

AFFILIATES

AYSO Soccer
Kishwaukee Valley Storm
Sycamore Youth Baseball
Sycamore Girls Softball

PARTNERS

DeKalb County Forest Preserve District
DeKalb County History Center
Family Service Agency of DeKalb
County
Kish Kids Outside
Sycamore Chamber of Commerce
Sycamore Parks Foundation
Sycamore Public Library

FRIENDS, SPONSORS, & DONORS

Aurora Music Company
Banner Up Signs
Chef Rudy Galindo
Chicago Golf District Association
CMJ IT Solutions
Cronauer Law, LLP
DeKalb County United Soccer
DeKalb Park District
Doty and Sons
Concrete Products, Inc.
Edward Jones Financial Advisor:
Brittany L. Starkey
Ellwood House Museum
ENCAP, Inc.
Engineering Resource Associates
First State Bank
Genoa Park District
GoodFellows
Hauser-Ross Eye Institute
Heartland Bank
Illinois Junior Golf Association

Jubilee Artisans
Kiwanis Club of Sycamore
Men's 16-inch Softball League
Midwest Irrigation
MVP Sports Bar
NewLife Church of Sycamore
NIU Athletic Dept
Northern IL Federal Credit Union
Old National Bank
Orthodontic Experts
Pest Control Consultants
Pizzo & Associates
Raising Cane's
Ralph's Car Wash
Resource Bank
Rochelle Hospital
Rotary Club of Sycamore
Safe Passage
ServiceMaster Restoration and
Cleaning by Skip
Sycamore Fire Department
Sycamore High School Athletics
Sycamore High School
Golf Program
Sycamore Lions Club
Sycamore Police Department
Sycamore Whiskey Club
Upscale Fadez
Vurr Lont Candles
Weaver Construction
Winter's Landscaping





BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



Bill Kroeger
President



Ben Doty,
Vice President



Denise Ackmann



Daryl Graves



Chad Jewett

PARK BOARD MEETINGS

The Board of Commissioners meets on the 4th Tuesday of each month at 6pm in the Sycamore Golf Club Clubhouse, 940 E. State Street, unless otherwise noted at sycparks.org. The public is invited to attend.

LEADERSHIP TEAM

Jonelle Bailey..... Executive Director, CPRE, MAOL
 Jeff Donahoe.....Superintendent of Parks & Facilities, GCSAA, CPO, CPSI
 Jackie Hienbuecher.....Superintendent of Finance & Business Services, CPA & CPRP
 Lisa Metcalf.....Superintendent of Recreation Services, CPRP
 Paul Price.....Superintendent of Golf Services

ESTABLISHED
1923

23
PARKS

9.8
MILES
TRAILS

509
ACRES