



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Pritzker Administration awards \$36 million in grants for local park projects

SPRINGFIELD – Today, Governor JB Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) announced \$36 million in grant funding was awarded to 67 local park projects throughout Illinois to help communities acquire land and develop recreational opportunities. The grants were awarded through the Open Space Land Acquisition and Development, or OSLAD, program.

For the fourth year in a row, the governor ensured funding was set aside for economically distressed communities, resulting in 20 underserved communities receiving \$11.4 million in OSLAD grants this year.

“As Governor, I’m committed to building stronger, healthier communities in Illinois. My administration continues to make critical investments that support underserved areas, and we’re proud to bring new recreational facilities and expanded green spaces to communities through the OSLAD program,” **said Governor JB Pritzker**. “From playgrounds and walking trails to pickleball courts and native landscaping, we’re investing millions to revitalize outdoor gathering spaces, strengthen local communities, and offer new recreational opportunities to Illinois families across the state.”

Established by the Illinois General Assembly in 1986, OSLAD is a cost-sharing program between state and local governments which 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 \$675 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 the Illinois Department of Natural Resources is thrilled to play a small part in helping communities thrive.”

“For more than 36 years, the OSLAD program has helped establish Illinois as a national leader in parks and recreation by investing in park and recreation agencies that consistently accomplish a great deal with limited resources,” **said Peter Murphy, president and CEO of the Illinois Association of Park Districts**. “Park districts, forest preserves, conservation districts and recreation agencies stretch every dollar to preserve open space, drive local economic opportunity, and provide safe, accessible, reliable places for Illinoisans to play, exercise and connect with nature. And at a time when demand for parks and open spaces has never been higher, OSLAD funding is critical to ensuring a strong, sustainable future for these vital community assets and destinations.”

“We commend Governor Pritzker and members of the General Assembly for recognizing and supporting the essential role that IAPD member agencies play in enhancing the quality of life in communities throughout Illinois,” Murphy added.

Cambria in Williamson County to upgrade village's only park

An OSLAD grant will enable the Village of Cambria, population 1,800, in southern Illinois to upgrade and expand recreational facilities at the community's only public park. The village is considered economically distressed and was awarded a \$196,849.50 OSLAD grant for the project.

The James Mohan Memorial Park improvement project will upgrade and expand recreational facilities for residents. The project includes upgrades to the park's existing asphalt walking path, basketball court and tennis court area. The tennis court, which is rarely used, will be repurposed into three pickleball courts with new surfacing and fencing. The basketball court, one of the most heavily used features by local youth, will be resurfaced and restored to safe conditions. In addition, the deteriorated wood-post perimeter fencing will be replaced to improve safety and appearance.

"In 2025, the Village of Cambria made a commitment to pursue funding to address much needed improvements to our park. With the creation of a grant committee, alongside the existing park committee, elected officials, village staff and members of the community worked together to apply for funding. These funds are essential to making this project possible," said **Village Trustee Marshall Brown**. "These improvements will enhance accessibility, safety and recreational opportunities for residents of all ages and help ensure the park remains a welcoming community space for years to come."

Grandview in Sangamon County to build sports complex

The Village of Grandview was awarded a \$600,000 OSLAD grant to build an outdoor sports complex featuring two bocce ball and pickle ball courts, two soccer fields, a basketball court, and a 5-foot-wide concrete walking path at the site.

The park also will be graded for storm water prevention and have a fence around the north and east side. Grandview, with a population of about 1,400, is considered a distressed community.

"This project represents far more than new courts and walking paths. It represents opportunity, equity and investment in the people of Grandview," said **Village President Maria "Mia" Ray**. "For a small, economically challenged community like ours, OSLAD funding is the difference between having a vision and being able to bring that vision to life. This grant allows us to create a safe, accessible, and inclusive space where residents of all ages can be active, connect with one another, and take pride in their community."

Improvements coming to Witt's city park in Montgomery County

The City of Witt in Montgomery County was awarded a \$600,000 OSLAD grant to complete improvements at City Park located in the heart of the community.

Planned improvements include the installation of a walking path, a stage, new accessible playground equipment, parking, bicycle racks, a half basketball court, pickleball courts, new light poles around the park, benches, bird houses, bat roosts, and flowers and native trees.

"The residents of Witt are very appreciative of the OSLAD grant award to improve the City Park, which is a gathering place for all the community's activities sponsored by the BreakAway Program and Envision Witt that include quarterly youth-focused and family-oriented activities. The Witt Lions Club also sponsors the annual Labor Day Celebration activities at this park," said **Witt Mayor Tim Taylor**.

"These planned improvements will ensure our residents have a safe place to walk and utilize the basketball and pickleball courts. The playground equipment will allow children to play in a safe environment, and the stage will allow additional entertainment opportunities for community events. The OSLAD grant award is the beginning to assist the City of Witt in meeting its goal of a revitalized city for residents and surrounding community members to enjoy in the future."

Mattoon to develop accessible youth-focused outdoor facility

The City of Mattoon in Coles County plans to develop a portion of Momentum Park into a .94-acre bicycle-focused outdoor recreation facility geared toward youth and families. The city was awarded a \$600,000 OSLAD grant for the project.

Improvements will include a beginner pump track, a tot track, skills trails, connector trails and a natural playscape and playground designed to ensure access for children and families who may not ride bicycles. Additional site features will include an accessible concrete plaza, shade structure, benches, picnic tables, trash receptacles, bike racks and a bike repair station. Native and prairie plantings will be incorporated as conservation and educational features, and the site will directly connect to the existing Lincoln Prairie Grass Trail, creating a safe and inclusive public recreation space.

“Receiving an OSLAD grant, to be used at our new Momentum Park, is a transforming event for Mattoon. It will serve our community with the demand we have for healthy outdoor recreation for all ages,” said **Mattoon Mayor Rick Hall**. “This project will strengthen community pride and our quality of life while providing a connection for our citizens. The City of Mattoon appreciates the partnership with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and its continued commitment to improving well-being across Illinois.”

Du Quoin’s Thelma Pettiford Park to receive upgrades

The City of Du Quoin in Perry County will install new playground equipment, add a walking track and make other upgrades to Thelma Pettiford Park. The park offers important recreational opportunities for local youth. The city was awarded a \$125,622 OSLAD grant for the project.

“I want to thank the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and Director Natalie Phelps Finnie for this investment that will enable us to replace and upgrade the playground equipment at the Thelma Pettiford Park, near our municipal pool and baseball and softball fields,” said **Du Quoin Mayor Josh Downs**.

“This area is used extensively in the spring and summer months when Du Quoin youth are participating in athletic competitions. We will also be replacing our traditional wood mulch with rubber mulch, taking advantage of a more renewable product that lasts longer and is safer for the children of Du Quoin to enjoy for many years to come.”

FY2026 OSLAD grant awards

**Denotes a distressed community*

Bond County

City of Greenville, Plaza on Second, phase 2 – \$600,000*

Bureau County

City of Spring Valley – \$245,877.40

Champaign County

Champaign County Forest Preserve District, Nature Center Gateway to Recreation at Homer Lake – \$600,000*

Rantoul Park District – \$526,500*

Urbana Park District, King Park revitalization – \$600,000

Clay County

City of Flora, Flora accessible park redesign project – \$344,800

Coles County

City of Mattoon, Momentum Park – \$600,000*

Cook County

Arlington Heights Park District, Flentie Park – \$600,000

Bartlett Park District, Tallgrass Park – \$292,800

Chicago Park District, Northerly Island park development – \$600,000*

Dolton Park District, Blackstone Park, phase 2 – \$600,000*

City of Elgin, Channing Park – \$600,000

Village of Elmwood Park, Kiddie Korral Park improvement project – \$600,000

Park District of Forest Park, main park – \$600,000

Hanover Park Park District, Ranger Park site improvements – \$600,000

Village of Indian Head Park, Sacajawea Park/Kelli's Playground redevelopment – \$385,500

Park District of LaGrange, Sedgwick Park – \$600,000

Memorial Park District, Frost Park – \$303,300

Morton Grove Park District, Prairie View Park – \$600,000

Mount Prospect Park District – \$600,000

Village of Niles, Niles Nature Nook – \$600,000

Northbrook Park District, Techny Prairie Park and Fields renovations – \$600,000

City of Northlake, Ful-Roy Park, phase 2 development project – \$425,520

Oak Forest Park District, Don Gorman Park – \$600,000

Oak Lawn Park District, Centennial East – \$600,000

Olympia Fields Park District, Bicentennial Park, phase 1 – \$239,500

City of Palos Hills, Krasowski Park – \$355,100

Prospect Heights Park District, Country Gardens Park redevelopment – \$600,000

Village of Schaumburg, 90 North Park, phase 3 – \$600,000

Village of South Barrington, South Barrington Conservancy – \$600,000

Worth Park District, Gale Moore Park improvements – \$600,000*

DeKalb County

DeKalb Park District, Prairie Park – \$400,000

Genoa Township Park District – \$600,000*

Sycamore Park District, Reston Ponds Park, phase 2 – \$477,900

DuPage County

Glen Ellyn Park District, Village Green Park – \$600,000

Naperville Park District, Nike Sports Complex – \$600,000

Edgar County

City of Paris, West Lake Park project – \$600,000

Grundy County

Village of Coal City, Hunter's Run Park – \$600,000

Village of Minooka, Lions Park – \$600,000

City of Morris, Fields of Saratoga Park – \$600,000

Henry County

Galva Park District, Galva Park – \$600,000*

Iroquois County

City of Watseka, Chicago Street Park – \$600,000*

Kane County

Forest Preserve of Kane County, Muirhead Springs Forest Preserve wildlife overlook – \$600,000
Village of Pingree Grove, skate park improvements – \$600,000

Kankakee County

City of Kankakee, West Riverwalk – \$990,000*

Lake County

Lake County Forest Preserve District, accessibility site improvements at Lake Carina Forest – \$600,000
City of Lake Forest, South Park, phase 2 – \$600,000
City of Waukegan, Waukegan Dune and Beach access plan – \$573,000

Livingston County

Village of Dwight, Renfrew Park master plan, Phase 2 – \$600,000

Madison County

Village of Williamson, Williamson Park – \$125,000*

McHenry County

Village of Algonquin, Willoughby Farms Park – \$600,000
Huntley Park District, Project Horizon, phase 1 – \$600,000

Montgomery County

City of Witt, city park improvements – \$600,000*

Ogle County

City of Rochelle, pickleball project – \$237,000

Perry County

City of Du Quoin – \$125,622

Peoria County

Pleasure Driveway Park District of Peoria, Chartwell Park improvements – \$600,000*

Rock Island County

Rock Island County Forest Preserve District, Niabi Zoo educational and recreational enhancements – \$527,800*

Sangamon County

Village of Grandview, Grandview Sports Complex – \$600,000*
City of Springfield, Lake Springfield Center Park – \$600,000*
Springfield Park District, Dreamland Park redevelopment – \$600,000*

Stephenson County

Freeport Park District, Krape Park improvements – \$582,445.50

Whiteside County

Coloma Township Park District, Rock Falls Centennial Park tennis court replacement – \$600,000*

Will County

City of Braidwood, Braidwood Town Center – \$600,000

Plainfield Park District, Tamarack Settlement Park renovation – \$600,000

Williamson County

Village of Cambria – \$196,849.50*

Winnebago County

Rockford Park District, Brown Park improvements – \$600,000

City of South Beloit, Neighborhood Park at Nature at the Confluence – \$600,000

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