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Vicinity Map
Introduction

2
The Ackerman Park athletic fields are among the most used park and recreation facilities in the Glen Ellyn region. The Glen Ellyn Park District is currently meeting the demand of its users, however the condition of the fields don’t meet the expectations of some field sport user groups. Currently, Ackerman Park hosts youth, adult and Glenbard West High School participants, primarily in soccer and softball on 24-25 athletic fields, dependant on the season. The demand is high for practice and game fields which has resulted in field maintenance challenges for Glen Ellyn Park District staff and impacts the experience of users.

As the demand grows and the Glen Ellyn Park District adapts to the changing trends of youth organized sports, the Park District recognizes the challenges it may face in the immediate and long term future. This Master Plan evaluates the overall park system’s level of service, as well as the Ackerman Park field usage specifically. Both short and long-term recommendations are provided to guide the decision-making, development of detailed design and construction documents, and physical renovation and improvement of the park site.

In addition to recommended improvements to the athletic fields, there are opportunities to improve the natural areas at Ackerman Park which consist of wetlands, native prairie, forested woodlands and adjacent riparian environments. These areas offer passive recreation opportunities for Glen Ellyn’s diverse demographic make-up and improving them aligns with the Park District’s goals to increase its sustainable practices. In addition, future programming opportunities and connectivity to the surrounding neighborhoods and regional trails are of critical importance.

**History**

In 1966, twenty-five acres, of what was originally known as North...
Park, was purchased from School District #87 for $35,000. In 1973, the park was renamed Ackerman Park in memory of John Davis Ackerman, son-in-law of Deacon Winslow Churchill whose home and farm were located in the area. In 1974, additional acreage was purchased for a total of 56 acres. Since 1985, additional lots adjacent to Ackerman Park have been purchased for a total of 59 acres.

In the early 1990s, major renovations to Ackerman Park took place and included the installation of the softball hub (4 softball fields) at the Park’s southeast corner, an irrigation system and field lighting. In 1996, batting cages were installed at the Park and in 1998, four additional backstops and softball fields were added for a total of eight softball fields.

Between 2007 and 2008, four houses adjacent to the park along Lenox Road were acquired by the Park District. In October of 2008, construction of the Ackerman Sports & Fitness Center began, with the grand opening in January of 2010. The Ackerman Woods trail and no mow zone areas were established in 2012, maximizing the natural areas of the park and linking Ackerman Park to the Lenox Road properties.

**Project Approach**

The Consultant Team’s approach to this project included comprehensive information gathering and analysis. On-site review of all existing fields was performed to assess their current condition, functionality, special features, schedule of use, and capital improvement needs. Current maintenance standards as well as existing resources were also evaluated. Close interaction with and input from the Park District Staff and Board of Commissioners, user group chairpersons, and local residents resulted in the identification of the stakeholders’ concerns, perceived needs, and priorities for improvements.

A Level of Service Analysis and Benchmarking Analysis was performed to measure where Glen Ellyn falls in comparison to other similar local park agencies and national standards. Concurrently, a Demand Analysis was performed to evaluate the Glen Ellyn comprehensive park system and included usage of each field based on hours of participation. For Ackerman Park, the service area (population served by a single field) was calculated and mapped to provide a graphical representation of overall field usage throughout the park. From this information, the Consultant Team was able to identify the optimal alternatives for field layouts, and quantities of different sized fields to meet the demand.

The Comprehensive Master Plan includes prioritized recommendations to help meet the needs of the Glen Ellyn residents in the most cost effective manner. The final outcome is a working Master Plan for Staff to follow that outlines the requirements and priorities to improve the park.

The following report presents a summary of findings and analysis organized by major task. Additional support data and information is included in the Appendix.
Existing Conditions
Ackerman Park provides an array of passive and active recreation opportunities for Glen Ellyn residents and neighboring communities. Known as an athletic park, Ackerman Park's outdoor property hosts primarily soccer, softball, and summer camps three seasons out of the year on its specific sports fields and green space. Currently, the capacity of athletic fields is met through the overuse of existing fields resulting in minimal resting periods. The 64 acre park is bound by a Commonwealth Edison easement and the Great Western Trail to the north, DuPage County Forest Preserve to the east, St. Charles Road and Parkview Community Church to the south, and residential and commercial uses to the west. In its current state Ackerman Park includes eight softball fields, up to 18 dedicated soccer fields, two concession buildings, softball batting cages, playground equipment, and access to adjoining woodland and wetland areas.

Broken up into two areas *(See Figure 1)*, the athletic park consists of Upper Ackerman, northwest of the Ackerman Sports & Fitness Center and Lower Ackerman, east of the Ackerman Sports & Fitness Center. Each area respectively serves a variety of user groups. Upper Ackerman is primarily an open field area consisting of game and tournament fields used primarily by Glenbard West High School Soccer programs, the Lakers Travel Soccer Club, and House League Soccer. Lower Ackerman accommodates softball with eight diamond fields (Fields 1 - 8), four to the north hosting adult and youth teams, and the softball core to the south boasting four youth softball fields. Because the northern portion of Lower Ackerman is lit, the soccer programs use the site for practice fields on weeknights, particularly in the fall and early spring, along with youth teams using the softball fields on game days. User groups include the above-mentioned soccer programs along with the Phillies Travel Softball League, House League Softball, Glenbard West High School Softball program, several adult softball leagues, along with out of town tournaments of various program affiliates.

Ackerman Park is surrounded by remnant natural areas, including wetlands and wooded areas. On the Ackerman Park property is the remnant woodland along St. Charles Road, extending along the west property line adjoining a long wetland that at one point may have been a part of a more extensive stream. The woodland has recently been enhanced to provide nature trails connecting the Lenox Road residents to the Park. To the north, the Great Western Trail borders the property, bermed high and secluded from the park by brush, the gravel trail is heavily used by bikers, runners, and walkers with small openings to access Ackerman Park. Running along the Great Western Trail are ComEd powerlines which abut Ackerman Park.

**Park Usage**

Ackerman Park provides an array of passive and active recreation opportunities for Glen Ellyn residents and neighboring communities. Known as an athletic park, Ackerman Park's outdoor property hosts primarily soccer, softball, and summer camps three seasons out of the year on its specific sports fields and green space. Currently, the capacity of athletic fields is met through the overuse of existing fields resulting in minimal resting periods. The 64 acre park is bound by a Commonwealth Edison easement and the Great Western Trail to the north, DuPage County Forest Preserve to the east, St. Charles Road and Parkview Community Church to the south, and residential and commercial uses to the west. In its current state Ackerman Park includes eight softball fields, up to 18 dedicated soccer fields, two concession buildings, softball batting cages, playground equipment, and access to adjoining woodland and wetland areas.
Figure 1 - Existing Conditions Aerial View

Erosion from bicyclists entering the park off the Great Western Trail

Softball core hub in its existing state

View from the playground looking onto north lower Ackerman fields
Situated on an easement, the Park District has an agreement with ComEd to use the easement space for additional open space for Upper Ackerman, critical to soccer user groups. The eastern edge of the park is bordered by the Forest Preserve and the East Branch Du Page River, ultimately feeding into the Churchill Prairie Nature Preserve.

**Upper Ackerman**

Over the years, Upper Ackerman has seen increased use as soccer programs have expanded. The demands for practice and game fields throughout Glen Ellyn has led to the overuse of these areas in Upper Ackerman with little possibility of resting fields to repair turf. The original field soil was brought in from the dredged Lake Ellyn spoils and consists primarily of poor quality clay soils. Due to soil quality the site is perpetually soggy with frequent flooding from the adjacent wetland during heavy rainstorms. Combined overuse and poor field conditions with no ability to rest fields has resulted in frustrated user groups who would like to see improved field conditions.

The main entrance of the park off St. Charles Road leads automobile traffic directly into the northwest parking lot of Upper Ackerman for parking or drop-off. Pedestrian access from St. Charles Road is limited to the east side of the entry road and from the Great Western Trail just north of Upper Ackerman. However, there is no designated access point, and path users have created a few gravel ramps or eroded channels to access the northern area of the park. The Park District has received a grant to provide an ADA accessible trail access point for future users from the Great Western Trail to the Ackerman Park Trail Network.

**Strengths**

- Vast open space for field rotation opportunities
- Parking availability and access
- Access to St. Charles Road
- Seclusion from neighbors and roads
- Access to water sources

**Room for Improvement**

- Poor accessibility to Great Western Trail
- Soil and turf quality
- Limited irrigation
- Shelter areas
- Overall grading and drainage
- Connectivity
Lower Ackerman

Surrounded by drive lanes and parking, Lower Ackerman has hosted Glen Ellyn’s softball community since the mid-1980s, ultimately adding the softball core in 1990 and additional fields in 1998. The northern portion of Lower Ackerman has four softball fields, two of which are lit by the Park’s first field lighting from the mid-1980s. As all four of these fields face inward, a considerable amount of open space is available for soccer and other potential athletic programs to take advantage of the lighting for weekday practices and night games. The southern portion of Lower Ackerman includes the softball core, a clover leaf design with original arched backstops, the central core, batting cages and field lighting installed from the 1990s. These four fields are heavily used for games and weekend tournaments where the core attracts visitors from out of town. Steady usage of the core, especially on weekends, has required the Park District to develop a parking agreement with neighboring Parkview Church to accommodate overflow parking for Lower Ackerman. Lower Ackerman’s fields are considered in good condition with adequate grading and minor drainage issues. However, irrigation and lighting need to be updated in order to maintain adequate and safe playing conditions on Lower Ackerman fields. The hub provides two restrooms, storage, and food concession. Built by volunteers, the hub building is in need of an overhaul to replace inadequate plumbing.

Strengths

• Field usage and conditions
• Softball Hub
• Field lighting
• Diverse programmable field use

Room for Improvement

• Parking
• Antiquated lighting and irrigation
• Outdated Softball Hub amenities
• Pedestrian trail system
• Inadequate shelters
• Wayfinding signage
• Unsafe shadowing onto softball fields
• Parking & congestion
• Soil & turf quality
• Grading & drainage
Level of Services & Benchmarking Analysis
Comparative Analysis & Data

Benchmarking and Level of Service Analysis (LOS) are tools often used by agencies to measure where they fall in comparison to other similar agencies in regard to park acreage, budgets, staffing numbers and revenue recovery across their jurisdiction. Benchmarking will give the Glen Ellyn Park District managers and decision-makers an indication of how the District is delivering services, facilities and programs to its residents in comparison to other agencies in the region and the nation. The purpose of this analysis is also to provide a snapshot of Glen Ellyn’s parks and recreation resources, services and facilities, as well as provide a means to evaluate the District’s progress over time.

Benchmarking does have variables that may affect direct comparisons and those that may not be reflected in the data provided. In this comparison, these discrepancies may be specifically due to the age of the documents from which data has been pulled from, including Lisle’s 2006 Master Plan, the oldest document in the set. The level of detail that is delivered from other agencies may not reflect what is available from the Glen Ellyn Park District but every effort has been made to clarify the data when necessary. The benchmarking information presented here can be used as a catalyst for the District to continue to research best practices for more specific areas as they are needed, and primarily to benchmark against itself for improvements and resources needed over time.

During the 1980s, a set of standards was developed to assist agencies in measuring Level of Service (LOS) and help determining whether jurisdictions were meeting suggested “norms” with regard to types of parks, the amenities that should be in a park, and how many acres of parkland an agency should have. These guidelines are a starting point, as they do not take into account the unique qualities and needs of communities across the country. Local trends, climates and the popularity of some activities over others often dictate a greater need for particular facilities. The guidelines serve as a good baseline for determining a minimum standard for parks and primary amenities. These guidelines, coupled with input received from the community, analysis of participation numbers for various activities and comparisons to similar communities, provide the necessary additional information for determining the number of facilities that are appropriate.

The guidelines, last updated in 1995, provide a template of typical park classifications, number of acres a system should have and recommended service levels based on population. Since these guidelines are relatively outdated, they are strictly intended as a guideline. For a public park provider such as the District, the guidelines suggest, “A park system, at a minimum, should be composed of a ‘core’ system of park lands, with a total of 6.25 to 10.5 acres of developed open space per 1,000 residents.” The types of parks that can be included to meet the standards can be a combination of the following classifications as determined by the NRPA:
• Mini Park
• Neighborhood Park
• School Park
• Community Park
• Regional Park
• Special Use Park
• Natural Resource Area/Preserve
• Greenway

Each classification is based upon the types of amenities, size, service area, and access to the facility. In the case of this analysis, we understand that the Glen Ellyn Park District has many of these classifications of parks, but the primary focus of the analysis is on total acres of managed parkland and number of athletic fields (rectangular and diamond) so the data has not delineated park classifications throughout the Glen Ellyn system.

**Data Sources**

Data has been culled from nearby agency’s online park-related master plan documents as well as national comparison reports. *(See Figure 2)* This includes the following sources:

• Glen Ellyn Park District’s Comprehensive Plan, 2009-2013
• Wheaton, Illinois’s Park and Facility Master Plan, 2010-2015
• Lisle, Illinois’s Master Plan, 2006
• NRPA’s Special Park District National Database Report (2011)
• Trust for Public Land (TPL) 2012 City Park Facts

As noted, in addition to the local agencies, this benchmarking analysis also uses national medians and averages gathered from national sources. The National Recreation and Park Association’s (NRPA) new GIS-based tool, PRORAGIS provides data of similar communities in order to assist in comparing amenities against national averages on data for similarly sized and funded communities. The Special Park District National Database Report was developed by NRPA as an overall comparison on facility benchmarks; this included all special district agencies that participated in the PRORAGIS program in 2011, including 23 from Illinois (more than any other state). The number of agencies (46) is somewhat low in this dataset; however the agencies are most similar to the Glen Ellyn Park District.

Another source of national information is the Trust for Public Lands (TPL) City Park Facts Reports published in 2012 for fiscal year 2010. This data is collected from the 100 largest (population based) municipalities in the country and includes all park facilities within the boundaries of the jurisdiction, and budgetary data is combined if there are multiple agencies managing those resources. The number in the sampling is greater here; therefore the averages may be more stable. However, all of these jurisdictions are significantly larger than Glen Ellyn and are City-based, therefore they may have larger budgets, acres of parkland and staff resources than the Glen Ellyn Park District. *(See Figure 1.1 on page 17)*

**Benchmarking Analysis**

**Community/Agency Overview**

The Glen Ellyn Park District has a population that is lower than the average of the communities benchmarked against (approx. 36,000 Glen Ellyn vs. 37,642 average of the other two local agencies). A long-used “guideline” of 6.25 (minimum) to 10.5 (optimal) acres per thousand (1,000) residents has been replaced by NRPA with customized reports in PRORAGIS. The new PRORAGIS data is intended to compare agencies that are similar in population, acres of land and budget instead of the hard number guideline previously used. There are also summary reports produced by NRPA, and the Special District National Database Report was used in the comparison for Glen Ellyn. The acres per 1,000 residents median defined in the report is 13.06. Also worth noting is the 2012 TPL report, the median for all Cities is 13.1, however, according to their report, as population density increases, the acres per 1,000 residents goes down.

**Parkland Acres Per 1,000 Residents**

While the old guidelines are intended to only be a guide, they do serve as a benchmark in which to evaluate the service being provided in a geographic area, such as within the Glen Ellyn Park District. Glen Ellyn actively manages 329.4 acres of land. This includes developed and undeveloped parkland and calculates to 9.15 acres of parkland acres per 1,000 residents. *(See Table 3)* This results in a low acres/1,000 residents ratio compared to the benchmarked communities for acres of managed park land, but it is above the outlined Level of Service range of 6.25 to 10.5 acres per 1,000 residents that was once used as the definitive standard.
Rectangular and Diamond Fields

Fields for team sports are in high demand in all jurisdictions, and fields are heavily programmed during peak seasons, Glen Ellyn is no exception. The Park District has 23 rectangular mixed-use fields and 22 diamond fields of various sizes for baseball and softball. Compared to other agencies, Glen Ellyn has the lowest population per each rectangular mixed-use field and the highest population for above ball diamonds, (See Table 2) for more information.

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<th>Total Rectangular Fields</th>
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<th>Agency</th>
<th>Total Diamond Fields</th>
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*NRPA Special Districts population and acres of managed land are both median numbers. NRPA PRORAGIS acres per 1,000 and population per field numbers are median numbers. TPL City Facts Acres per 1,000 residents and diamond field population is also a median number. The NRPA Special Districts population per field is dependent on type of field (size and user, i.e. 90-foot base paths vs. youth softball)*
Demand Analysis
In order to evaluate the demand of facilities and amenities proposed for Ackerman Park, an overall Usage Analysis was performed to better understand the amount of hours each athletic field is occupied per season and in total per year. A matrix was developed to document the hours each field was used for practice and games, camps and tournaments for all fields throughout the Glen Ellyn Park District Park’s system. Secondly, for Ackerman Park specifically, these hours were mapped and illustrated in a gradient of colors, to show which fields and open space within the park are being used the most or least. Assessments were provided for the spring and summer/fall seasons along with a combined overall annual composite usage to gain a perspective on field overuse or under use.

The results of the usage analysis illustrates the following:

1. The annual combined hours that all soccer fields are used at Ackerman Park is 7,592 hours, or 63% of the total athletic field usage.
2. Of the 7,592 hours of soccer field usage, 2,084 hours (27%) are used on the 110 yd. x 70 yd. sized fields.
3. Of the 7,592 hours of soccer field usage, 1,644 hours (21%) are used on the 80 yd. x 55 yd. sized fields.
4. Of the 7,592 hours of soccer field usage, 1,572 hours (20%) are used on the 60 yd. x 40 yd. sized fields.
5. Of the 7,592 hours of soccer field usage, 1,056 hours (13%) are used on the 40 yd. x 30 yd. sized fields.
6. Of the 7,592 hours of soccer field usage, 936 hours (12%) are used on the micro sized fields.
7. Currently, at the peak usage time for soccer of all field sizes from various participants and levels, the demand requires two (2) 110 yd. x 70 yd. equivalents, two (2) 80 yd. x 55 yd. equivalents, two (2) 60 yd. x 40 yd. equivalents, and four (4) 40 yd. x 30 yd. equivalents.
8. The annual combined hours that all softball fields are used at Ackerman Park is 4,308 hours, or 35% of the total athletic field usage.
9. Of the 4,308 hours of softball field usage, Fields 5 & 6, the only two fields which aren’t lighted, are used for a combined total of 288 hours, or 5% of the total hours that the softball fields are used.

Given the existing conditions, there are several variables for why some fields and areas of Ackerman Park are used more than others which includes but is not limited to the following:

1. The fields north of the Ackerman Sports & Fitness Center drain better than the fields in the northwest portion of Upper Ackerman and tend to be in better condition than in other areas.
2. The soccer level and age groups in the House and Lakers Soccer leagues may dictate which fields are used when.
3. Lighted multi-use fields in Lower Ackerman are used more often for practices in the fall than are the soccer fields at Upper Ackerman.
4. Volunteer coach's schedules may dictate the time that most teams can practice, consolidating more teams onto fewer fields, particularly in the fall season.
5. Convenience to parking and sidewalk access.
<table>
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<th>Park</th>
<th>Fields</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Summer</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Practice/Games</th>
<th>Camps</th>
<th>Tournaments</th>
<th>Hours Per Week</th>
<th>Field Hrs./Season</th>
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Table 4 - Usage Matrix
### Table 4 - Usage Matrix Continued...

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Figure 2 - Facility Field Usage Study, Spring Layout
Figure 3 - Facility Field Usage Study, Summer/Fall Layout

[Diagram of facility field usage with areas labeled SF-1 to SF-8 and Open Space]
Master Plan
The Ackerman Park Master Plan integrates program elements identified during on-site evaluations, meetings with various user groups and neighboring residents, Park District Staff and Board of Commissioners. The Master Plan responds to the community’s needs and recreation trends.

The proposed plan does not drastically alter the layout or programmatic make-up of either of these areas, but rather improves the layout, condition, and connectivity to react to the needs of the park’s users. The plan includes expanding the existing trails system to encircle the park with one large loop trail and connecting to the regional Great Western Trail. The plan also develops an interior network of trails to link amenities and create smaller walking loops within the park. A wayfinding signage master plan and concepts are proposed to better communicate the location of fields and park amenities. Engineered, properly graded natural turf fields are proposed for Upper Ackerman to improve the condition and increase the capacity of soccer fields throughout the park.

Proposed south of the practice fields are two reconfigured lighted adult softball fields that allow for better circulation within the softball core and offer more opportunities for lighted multi-use fields during soccer tournaments and practices. Additional improvements to the existing softball hub, including hardscape replacement, building renovations, shade structures, and improved backstops and lighting will significantly improve the quality of the softball facility.

**Master Plan Program**

**Proposed Amenities**
- Lighted open space for multi-use athletic fields
- 2 Reconfigured Adult Softball Fields (Each Lighted)
- Improved existing softball hub core and sports lighting
- 2 Shelters
- 3 Bike Stations
- 3 Outdoor Workout Stations
- Multi-use trail connection to the Great Western Trail
- Water Efficient Irrigation System throughout Park
- Portable Restroom Enclosure
- Improved Upper Ackerman soccer fields

**Cultural and Educational Amenities**
- Natural area interpretive signage
- Native vegetation stewardship program

**Circulation**
- 2.0 miles of additional multi-use trails
- Additional parking lot and improved vehicular circulation
- Trail and pedestrian connectivity off-site

**Multi-Use Trails and Circulation**
Based on the statistically valid Glen Ellyn Community Attitude & Interest Survey conducted in 2012, the highest ranked amenity recommended by the residents of Glen Ellyn was trails and pathways. The Master Plan includes over two miles of additional trails proposed throughout Ackerman Park connecting to the Great...
Figure 5 - Overall Master Plan
Western Trail, the Lennox Road Property, east to the East Branch of the DuPage River, and south to Riford Road, extending to numerous Village parks including the Lake Ellyn trail network.

Both internal and external pedestrian and bicycle circulation is improved by integrating the proposed trails. The path and trails will create the desired internal connection to promote enhanced connectivity within the park as well as to connections outside of the park. The connection to the Great Western Trail will provide better access to the regional trail and will allow Ackerman Park to better serve as a key destination for the community.

An additional parking lot is proposed in the Master Plan along the east side of the Ackerman Sports & Fitness Center to accommodate higher volumes of parking demands adjacent to the turf soccer fields. The parking lot is currently designed to gain a net total of 33 spaces, although a parking study is recommended prior to commencement of the future parking lot design. Additionally, reduced head-in parking along the drive lane encircling Lower Ackerman will reduce traffic congestion and improve safety of pedestrians crossing the drive to and from the fields of play.

**Wayfinding Signage**

A preliminary wayfinding master plan and signage concepts have been incorporated into the overall Ackerman Park Master Plan. Wayfinding signage is used to help users and visitors better navigate the park through the use of strategically placed signage and orientation markers. The signs should be consistent in design, color and materials. A hierarchy should be used as the signage at the park’s primary entry should be larger in scale than a mile marker sign along the park’s trail network.

The locations illustrated on the overall Master Plan are intended to direct users and visitors to various amenities throughout the park to limit confusion. They’re strategically proposed at trailheads, crossroads of high traffic volume areas, and gathering spaces like the softball core. It’s recommended that a specific wayfinding master plan be conducted during the design and implementation of the signage once plans to execute the recommended improvements at the park are underway.

**Support Amenities**

The master plan includes numerous amenities and features that enhance a user’s experience at the park. These elements include a portable restroom enclosure, shade features and shelters, bike stations, workout stations, seating opportunities and signage. The improved amenities are illustrated on the plan. *(See Figure 5).*
Note: Signage examples are preliminary to indicate information typically included on wayfinding signage elements and don’t represent final wayfinding signage design.
Upper Ackerman

Upper Ackerman is proposed to be improved to game quality natural turf fields. Improvements will require a significant amount of earthwork, with fields being crowned in the middle from end line to end line, and drainage swales between fields. Drainage inlets would be added to properly drain the water and convey it to the appropriate stormwater management facility. Sustainable design practices and stormwater best management practices (BMP’s) are highly recommended, which may include the use of bioswales, rain gardens, stormwater reclamation and reuse, and other non-traditional practices to manage stormwater.

Existing low spots that remain saturated after large rain events would be eliminated and the wear and tear on saturated soccer fields would be reduced. Through proper rest periods, improved grading and drainage, irrigation, and appropriate athletic field seed mixes, the condition of the fields could be improved to game field quality and to meet the expectations of its users.
The open space area of Upper Ackerman could accommodate two 110 yd. x 70 yd. soccer fields, two 80 yd. x 55 yd. soccer fields, and four 60 yd. x 40 yd. soccer fields (See Figure 7). It’s recommended that one of each 110 yd. x 70 yd. and 80 yd. x 55 yd. soccer fields and two 60 yd. x 40 yd. fields be rested each fall season, at the end of the summer program, with the remaining open fields being rested the following year. Resting fields each fall alternately will allow for optimal field conditions by allowing time for the high use areas of the fields (particularly the midfield and goalie mouths) time to regenerate new turf. To ensure proper soil amendment and turf seed recommendations, a soils study is recommended for all athletic fields throughout the park.

Depending on the results of an irrigation audit, the water main which serves the existing quick couplers for manually irrigating Upper Ackerman may be salvaged and used for a portion of the proposed irrigation system. Additionally, Upper Ackerman is also proposed to include a new shelter at the southeast corner for sun and inclement weather protection, a trail which traverses the property line of the Park and connects to the parking lot and entrance to the Ackerman Sports & Fitness Center, portable restroom facility enclosure, and workout stations.

Figure 7- Upper Ackerman Soccer Field Layout Plan
As of November 1st, 2013, the Glen Ellyn Park District recently applied for and was awarded the Openlands - ComEd Green Region Program Grant. With a generous award of $10,000, the Park District will use the grant toward completing the Ackerman Park-Great Western Trail Connection Project. The trail connection will provide ADA accessibility for path users and those connecting to Ackerman Park.

**Figure 8 - Great Western Trail Connection**
**Lower Ackerman**

Predominantly used for softball and soccer, Lower Ackerman is heavily programmed yet with current analysis of the site, certain fields have gone unused creating issues with field rotation coordination. Based on meetings with Park District staff, House League soccer, Lakers Soccer, and the Phillies Softball League, the Consultant Team recommends removing two softball fields to accommodate the layout based on future program usage and participation. Based on minimal usage of Softball Fields #5 & #6, the two unlit adult sized softball fields at Ackerman Park, it’s recommended that the total softball fields be reduced to six to allow for re-graded open space used for practice fields at the north portion of Lower Ackerman. The removal of softball fields #4 and #5 provides the opportunity to regrade and re-seed the area in preparation for greater quality open space, specifically for soccer. The open space provides multiple field layouts for soccer practice accommodating house and travel soccer schedules at all levels. *(See Figure 9)*.

Existing fields #3 and #6 should be reconfigured and re-graded in preparation for the two new proposed adult softball fields. These fields shall also be lighted with new, energy efficient lights and will be irrigated to ensure optimal condition year round. The outfields of the two adult softball fields shall be multi-use to allow for the striping of soccer fields when the softball fields aren’t in use. Additional lighted soccer fields will provide longer hours of use, particularly in the fall when daylight is reduced.

The concession building located next to the playground has the potential to be converted into a storage facility for park field maintenance. With this space, maintenance staff has the ability to store softball and soccer field amenities in a secure location, also providing easier access for coaches and league staff. If concession space is to be converted, food trucks will provide greater variety for park users during the weekend by parking in the newly designated concession area just north of the existing maintenance building.
Figure 9 - Lower Ackerman Plan
As a result of the proposed reconfigured adult softball fields, the newly acquired open space can accommodate one 110 yd. x 70 yd. soccer field, three 80 yd. x 55 yd. soccer fields, and two 60 yd. x 40 yd. soccer fields. Any 80 yd. x 55 yd. field can be swapped for one or two 60 yd. x 40 yd. soccer fields along with any smaller soccer field in place of the 110 yd. x 70 yd. soccer field. Micro fields can be dispersed along the softball hub when games do not conflict within each other or within larger fields in north Lower Ackerman.

The configuration of the Lower Ackerman softball hub is planned to remain intact, with improvements planned for the hardscape surfaces, backstops and fencing, and removal of existing trees that are in poor condition and difficult to maintain. *(See Figure 10).* New trees are to be planted along the perimeter of the sidewalks approaching the Softball Hub. Backstops and fencing is advised to follow the length of the foul line with removable netting to further protect persons from fly balls.

Improvements to the restroom fixtures and plumbing are recommended, in addition to shade structures for spectators, concession seating opportunities, landscape beds behind home plate to soften the space, new energy efficient retrofitted light fixtures, and irrigation systems that control water loss and usage based on weather and evaporation rates.

Additional recommendations include a trail connection at the northwest corner of Lower Ackerman, where a shelter is proposed south of the playground to offer shade and protection from severe weather. A trail is proposed from the existing playground following the inner edge of the parking lot and terminating at the east/west trail connecting the maintenance facility, two adult softball fields and east portion of the park. Future collaboration with the DuPage County Forest preserve is also recommended to encourage a trail that extends along the north side of St. Charles Road from the East Branch of the DuPage River to Main Street. This sidewalk would allow for fewer crossings and easier access to the park for pedestrians and bicyclists coming from the north side of St. Charles Road.
**Lenox Road Property**

The Lenox Road Property is approximately 3.5 acres and is located adjacent to Ackerman Park at the southwest corner of the park, surrounded by an existing stand of mature trees to the east, north and west, with a delineated floodplain also to the north and St. Charles Road to the south. Natural pathways were recently cleared through the woodlands, connecting the Lenox Road Property to the park's entry drive, with prairie and no mow areas designated at the trailheads. The Park District has acquired all but two properties located along the Lenox Road cul-de-sac and have expressed interest in acquiring the remaining two properties in the future. It is advised to install a boardwalk along the dividing wetland to connect Ackerman Park with the Lenox property. Once a boardwalk is installed, a more connected trail system can ensue to further improve health and fitness activities.

As the timeframe for when the remaining two properties are acquired is unknown, this area of the park is considered to be the final phase of improvements. There are several variables which may dictate the use of this land. Factors such as the sale of existing Park District assets, future level of service demand by the residents, or a shift in demand for improvements may drive the use of the Lenox Road Property.

Use options that have been discussed with Staff and the Board of Commissioners include the following:

- Dog Park *(see Figure 14)*
- Maintenance Building and Garden Plots *(see Figure 15)*
- Open Space / Woodland Restoration
  OR
- Any combination of the above mentioned uses
Figure 13 - Lenox Road Property Plan
**Dog Park**

In the future, if the existing Glen Ellyn dog park is in need of being relocated or if the demand is such that another should be added, the Lenox Road property at Ackerman Park could serve as an ideal location. Dog parks are a relatively inexpensive amenity and with the exception of occasional turf repairs at entries and other areas of high use, they require minimal maintenance. Additionally, dog parks have great social and well-being benefits for dogs and their owners.

The proposed dog park and alternative Lenox Road Property options may be combined to offer multiple uses of the property.

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**Figure 14 - Dog Park Concept**
Maintenance Building & Public Garden Plots

An updated maintenance facility would help to consolidate the Park Districts maintenance equipment and storage. While re-purposing the Johnson Center facility, the Lenox Road Property would provide ample space for a new maintenance building. Ultimately providing a larger garage space and outdoor storage of stockpiled materials. Additional uses for this space might include garden plots. Garden have gained popularity in the past few years, complimenting the Park Districts initiatives to improve its ecological footprint and provide sustainable amenities to the public.

The proposed maintenance garage, garden plots and alternative Lenox Road Property options may be combined to offer multiple uses of the property.

Figure 15 - Maintenance Building & Public Garden Plots Concept
Open Space / Woodland Restoration

The development of passive recreation areas at Ackerman Park could serve a more diverse cross section of the Village’s demographic. Open space and the preservation of the Ackerman woodlands is an alternative improvement for the Lenox Road Property to help restore native ecosystems and habitats. A natural trail system, including a boardwalk connecting the Ackerman Sports and Fitness Center parking lot and pathways within the Lenox Road property would encourage the use of the Ackerman Woods area for walking, running, or educational nature walks. In this concept, Lenox Road is proposed to be vacated, with primary pedestrian access from the trailhead at the east or north side of the property.

See page 52 for the proposed implementation strategy for preserving and restoring Ackerman Woods.

Figure 16 - Open Space/ Woodland Restoration Concept
Ackerman Woods Preservation

The preservation of natural areas within the Glen Ellyn park system is important to protecting, restoring, and conserving native ecosystems to foster an environmental ethic among its citizens. This involves conducting plant inventories and evaluations, ecological monitoring, and stewardship projects within the Ackerman Woods area designated for preservation to limit future development. These tasks are proposed to be performed by both staff and volunteers within the Glen Ellyn community.

By referencing the historic “Federal Township Plats of Illinois (1809-1891) (See Figure 17), we gain an understanding of what the vegetation characteristics of Ackerman Park would have been as the first surveyors moved through Milton Township. Stands of timber, streams, marsh areas, cultivated fields, and starter towns are typically recorded on these maps. The plat map of Milton Township is predominately made up of prairie since the site is located in the Northeastern Morainal Division of the state which is generally classified into dry, mesic, wet, and sand prairie. (See Figure 16). Wildfire frequented the prairie, recycling mineral and organic matter, stimulating plant growth, and keeping woody vegetation at bay. However, with the anthropogenic suppression of fire post-settlement, small trees grew rapidly and converted prior prairies to dense forests. Because fire swept east through the grand prairies fueled by the western winds ultimately burning out along river beds, timber stands were generally rare west of water bodies as can be seen in the Miltown Township plat. Looking at existing floodplain and wetland zones within the Ackerman site explains this rarity as the site is predominantly wet indicating the timber stand would have been wet woodland where fire was naturally suppressed. Analysis of the original plat along with aerial photographs, wetland maps, floodplain zoning, and several site visits provides a detailed look at how the site has changed overtime with distinct references to its prior natural state. Portions of the site’s remaining woodland and wetland have been degraded overtime through human suppression, water fluctuations, and the arrival of non-native invasive species. The larger portions of the site developed for residential and recreational use have been disturbed for so long that any act of restoration would have to be highly intensive. The Lenox Road properties that were once fully engrossed in oak-hickory savanna create the best fiscal opportunity for restoration. The wetland areas running along the northeast property line of the Ackerman site and into the woodland along with the small portion at the northwest property have been highly degraded by invasive species. Although brush clearing and mitigation have been on-going the wetlands restoration will be an on-going process that requires yearly non-native invasive species suppression.

Enhancement & Expansion of Natural Area

There are four basic components to ecosystem restoration: site preparation, installation, erosion control, and stewardship. It’s highly recommended that stewardship be supplemented by a professional ecological restoration firm along with trained Park District staff. Volunteers can and should be involved in the stewardship process; however it is not recommended to depend upon volunteer efforts solely. Stewardship actions typically consist of mowing, selective
herbicide applications, seed collection & supplemental seeding/planting, prescribed fire, and monitoring. Below you will find the recommended steps to restore and expand Ackerman Park's natural areas. Each step can be applied to woodland, wetland, and prairie at various phases of the park's restoration. Within every step, specific species may be listed to target as these species are the most prevalent and can do the most damage, they should be eradicated first. Appendix C provides a greater list of invasive/exotic species that should be eliminated as well.

Step #1
Clear non-native invasive and weedy native canopy trees and understory brush from woodland:
- Common Buckthorn (Rhamnus cathartica)
- Japanese Honeysuckle (Lonicera japonica)
- Riverbank Grape (Vitis riparia)
- Grey Dogwood (Cornus racemosa)
- Norway Maple (Acer platanoides)
- Boxelder (Acer negundo)
- Slippery Elm (Ulmus rubra)
- Black Locust (Robinia pseudoacacia)
- Sandbar Willow (Salix exigua)
- Mulberry (Morus sp.)

Cutting should be done by hand, taking place in the dormant season to minimize impact to the site. The cleared area will need to be monitored for at least the next three years for woody saplings of the targeted species.

Step #2
Clear out weedy and invasive species along herbaceous layer by hand pulling, cutting and/or herbicide application. Invasive species should be eliminated from the site using herbicide. If herbicide is unwelcomed in the community, brush-cut or mow target species prior to them producing viable seed. Allow two weeks for the herbicide to take effect before seeding. Once targeted species are eliminated hand seed the areas with a native woodland seed mix.

Step #3
Begin a tree replacement program to ensure the next generation of native trees is in place as older trees decline. Tree replacement should focus on restoring the forested ecosystem that occurred prior to European settlement thus any area that is woodland or prairie should be restored over time to become woodland or an open savanna.

Tree planting to any of these areas should consist of approximately:
- 20% White Oak (or Swamp White Oak in woodland wetland areas)
- 20% Bur Oak
- 15% Red Oak
- 15% Hickory
- 5% Black Cherry
- 5% Sugar Maple
- 5% Red Maple
- 5% Hackberry
- 5% Basswood
- 5% Black Walnut

For added diversity within the woodland understory trees and shrubs can be planted along the edges to provide wildlife habitat and additional seasonal color. These recommended species include: American Hornbeam, Hop Hornbeam, Redbud, Common Witchhazel, Highbush Cranberry, Serviceberry, and American Hazelnut. Ideally, tree saplings from the existing historic trees will be found growing within the forested area. When saplings are found on-site they should be protected from deer browse and fire until they reach a caliper of approximately 3-4 inches.
Figure 19 - Ackerman Woods Stewardship Plan
Prioritized Recommendations
The Glen Ellyn Park District has taken the first step to satisfy the needs and desires of its residents and stakeholders by assessing the functionality and proposed short and long-term improvements at Ackerman Park. This report has identified several opportunities that the Park District will be able to implement over time and are acknowledged in this section of the report based on achievable timeframes organized in 1-2 year, 2-5 year, 5-10 year and 10-20 year actions. Actions that are deemed long-term (5-10 year or greater) may require further strategic planning due to the possible change in demand, trends, demographic outlook, and other issues that may impact growth and expenditures within the Glen Ellyn Park District.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM #</th>
<th>OBJECTIVE</th>
<th>TARGETED OUTCOME</th>
<th>COST</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>Replace existing Softball Fields #4 and #5 with natural turf fields. Remove backstops, side fences and infield.</td>
<td>Allow for additional soccer field opportunities to respond to the increased demand for soccer fields and rest periods of other fields within the park.</td>
<td>$38,000 plus Park District Maintenance Staff labor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>Construct ADA accessible trail connection from the Great Western Trail to Ackerman Park.</td>
<td>Improve Ackerman Park’s trail network to the regional Great Western Trail (GWT) and allow for ADA accessibility to and from the GWT.</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>Install monumentation at the northwest corner of Riford Road and St. Charles Road and the secondary entry at the southeast corner of Lower Ackerman that is equally visible for motorists traveling in either direction along St. Charles Road.</td>
<td>Improve visibility of park entrances. Hierarchy of signage will differentiate between primary and secondary entries.</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>Coordinate with the DuPage County Forest Preserve a potential trail system connecting Ackerman Park to the East Branch of the DuPage River.</td>
<td>Allow for passive recreation opportunities connecting Ackerman Park to the DuPage County Forest Preserve trail systems.</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>Test soils at all athletic field locations and conduct a soils report prepared by a qualified geotechnical engineer.</td>
<td>Determine the amount of earthwork, haul-off, soil amendments, mitigation and quality of existing soil in anticipation of future field improvements.</td>
<td>$12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>Audit existing softball hub irrigation system to determine to what extent the irrigation system would need to be renovated to improve water efficiency, reduce operations and maintenance labor and costs, and improve water coverage.</td>
<td>Determine costs necessary to improve existing irrigation system and whether existing infrastructure may be salvaged.</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>Conduct plant inventories and evaluations of the plant material in Ackerman Woods.</td>
<td>Better understand the level of invasive species that exist within Ackerman Woods and develop a strategic plan for removals.</td>
<td>$0</td>
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<tr>
<td>ITEM #</td>
<td>OBJECTIVE</td>
<td>TARGETED OUTCOME</td>
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<td>1.08</td>
<td>Incorporate the development of a Park and Recreation Volunteer Program for natural area improvements and conservation into the district wide program.</td>
<td>Utilize citizen volunteers’ time, labor, and knowledge for the maintenance and improvements of natural areas throughout the Glen Ellyn park system.</td>
<td>$0</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>Proactively identify, seek out and pursue supporting matching funds for grants and alternative funding. Submit applications for grants focused on trails, health and fitness.</td>
<td>Obtain grants to help fund projects which reflect the needs of a wide demographic range which are typically supported more than most park and recreation improvements.</td>
<td>$0 if performed in-house / Approx. $10,000 consultant fees per grant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>Evaluate potential revenue generating program areas where fee increases may be considered. As facilities and amenities are improved, evaluate the fees for programs, camps, and tournaments and other special events and consider a gradual increase in user fees</td>
<td>Improved facilities and amenities warrant higher user fees and will help to generate additional revenue for the Park District.</td>
<td>$0</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>Work to provide more admission-based community special events and host additional regional youth sports tournaments.</td>
<td>Generate revenue and awareness through special events and youth sports tournaments.</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>Contact DuPage County to encourage the installation of a sidewalk connection on the north side of St. Charles Road from Main St. to Riford Rd. (West Park Entrance).</td>
<td>Work with DuPage county’s budget to improve sidewalk fluidity for pedestrians and cyclists.</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<td>2-5 YEARS</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>Retrofit softball field hub light poles with new and improved sports field lighting fixtures.</td>
<td>Improve quality of lighting, energy efficiency, reduce operations and maintenance needs and reduce light spillage.</td>
<td>$180,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>Replace existing restroom fixtures and toilets in the softball hub core concession and restroom building and improve plumbing to commercial grade levels.</td>
<td>Maximize restroom capacity and allow restrooms to be open during times of high softball field usage.</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>Install shelter and portable restroom enclosure at Upper Ackerman as indicated on the Master Plan exhibit</td>
<td>Provide shade for spectators and protection from inclement weather. A portable restroom enclosure will improve the aesthetics of the restroom facility at the park.</td>
<td>$34,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>Install trails as proposed in the Master Plan exhibit for Upper Ackerman and extending south along the Ackerman Park entry drive to St. Charles Road.</td>
<td>Improve pedestrian and bicycle trail connectivity throughout the park, and adjacent properties which connect to other Village parks and amenities.</td>
<td>$98,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>Install workout stations along the new trail network of Upper Ackerman.</td>
<td>Incorporate an amenity at Ackerman Park that encourages outdoor health and fitness.</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>Add new bike racks to support the use of the new multi-use trails</td>
<td>Encourage and promote bicycles as a mode of transportation to and from the park.</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
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<td>OBJECTIVE</td>
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<td>2.07</td>
<td>Install wayfinding signage and directories at the park entry, Ackerman Woods trailhead, at the playground of Lower Ackerman, at the trailhead of Upper Ackerman, and at the Great Western Trail.</td>
<td>Better communicate the locations of fields, amenities, trailhead locations, and trail network routing to new and existing users of the park.</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>Incorporate interpretive signage to the existing nature trails of Ackerman Woods.</td>
<td>Provide an educational amenity for passive recreation users of Ackerman Park.</td>
<td>$9,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>Add additional paving north of the maintenance building.</td>
<td>Allow for food truck access to serve as an alternative, nontraditional concession opportunity.</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
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**10-20 YEARS**

<p>| 4.01   | Prepare a parking study based on the current and future use projections of the park to determine if the parking demand warrants additional parking areas. | Additional parking increases the capacity of the park's users and limits traffic congestion. | $15,000 |</p>
<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>Install parking lot east of Ackerman Sports &amp; Fitness Center (include parking lot lighting).</td>
<td>With new and improved facilities, parking demands may warrant additional parking spaces. A parking lot in lieu of head-in parking along the drive encircling Lower Ackerman will reduce congestion and provide safer drive lane crossings for visitors of the park.</td>
<td>$177,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>Consider future uses of the Lenox Road property to potentially include the following concepts: open space/Ackerman Woods restoration, dog park, maintenance building and storage facility, and/or garden plots. The proposed options may be combined to offer multiple uses of the property.</td>
<td>While future engagement of the community and evaluation of community needs will be important to the programming of Lenox Road, this property may be considered for future improvements depending on market demands and funding available to the Park District.</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
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Notes:

1. The cost estimates are preliminary and shall be refined as the improvements for each area of the park are advanced and further documented. Design fees and other consultant fees, unless noted otherwise, are not included.

2. Inflation rates have not been considered - all improvements are estimated based on the current market costs.
Funding Sources & Partnership Opportunities
Funding Sources & Partnership Opportunities

Funding Sources

The sufficiency and consistency of park and recreation funding has been unsteady whether the general economy of a community is doing well or poorly. Some of the factors underlying the problem are:

- unpredictable fluctuations in the economy
- rising operation and maintenance costs
- increasing land values
- aging infrastructure
- increased regulatory requirements
- increased cost of doing business
- shifts in societal demands

Traditional Funding

Marketing and Customer Service - There may be untapped market opportunities by increasing services in the Glen Ellyn community, specifically with sports leagues. The goal is to win “customers” and retain their loyalty. By understanding the community’s needs and desires, the Glen Ellyn Park District is using this Ackerman Park Master Plan effort to learn how to tailor its offerings to provide better services to its residents. Also, a detailed analysis of options involving expansion of service hours or types of services provided was conducted and recommendations regarding facility expansion were made to accommodate additional use of the park. In addition, a market opportunity could also involve improving services for existing participants so as to increase the number of participants or the amount of use by repeat customers. Doing so could be as simple as improving communication with current user groups to better inform the local community about current offerings.

User Fees - Another important aspect of customer service is the determination of appropriate user fees. Too high a fee could limit participation, whereas setting fees too low could mean passing up opportunities to defray costs and improve cost recovery. User fees are charged to those who utilize park and recreation programs, and may include facility admissions, facility and equipment rental fees, tournament admission fees, athletic league rates, etc. It is important that the District track both direct and indirect costs, so as to set fees to cover equipment, labor, and maintenance for the support services it is providing at Ackerman Park. The District could consider developing a tiered fee system for rentals which is structured by classification as non-residents, private residents, nonprofit organizations, and seniors. This policy is quite progressive and reflects the philosophy that those who benefit should pay. The greater the community benefit, the higher the subsidy.

Bonds - The District’s current bonding capacity depends on taxes, fees and other income and can only be evaluated based on projected revenue to pay the debt service. Also, the District plans to pay off existing bonds prior to the consideration of additional bonds.

Additionally, given a relatively stagnant current tax base, the District should evaluate the potential to bond for some of the capital projects as identified in this master plan. If a future bond referendum is a possibility and a bond were passed for capital funds for the
improvements to Ackerman Park, it would be extremely important to identify additional funds beyond the construction to support operations and maintenance of the improved facilities.

Alternative Funding

Fundraising - Local fundraising is a mechanism that has worked effectively for park and recreation agencies around the country. Although a vast amount of local effort is involved, this mechanism typically generates a vast amount of support and publicity. Local businesses, organizations and private individuals can pledge funding over a specific period of time. Volunteers and Board Members often play an active role in fundraising for the parks and recreation agencies. Volunteers often play a vital role in providing guidance, expertise, advocacy, political support, fundraising efforts, and to represent the agency’s constituents. Volunteers can be involved through a variety of fundraising tasks, such as establishing a Friends of Glen Ellyn Parks nonprofit or collaborating with an existing nonprofit to send direct mail letters, promoting sponsorship of programs and naming rights, seeking in-kind donations, hosting special events (i.e. – golf tournaments, fundraiser dinners, events to honor volunteers, silent auctions, and themed socials).

Corporate Sponsorships - The opportunities for revenue generation and corporate sponsorships associated with special events are significant and could greatly supplement existing funding and revenue sources to the District. The District should put efforts into developing corporate sponsorship program and naming rights for the development of new amenities and programs at Ackerman Park to supplement gaps in service. These sponsorship opportunities should be offered with a tiered level of benefits, should quantify marketing exposure for each level, and bundle the assets of sponsors (i.e. - money, marketing, and product supply).

Grants - Grants are available to park and recreation agencies from both public and private sources. Grant opportunities exist for a wide variety of purposes including parks and recreation. Glen Ellyn should look for the alignment between its request and the objectives of the grant program. The request for funds should provide a solid basis for a positive response from the funder. There are numerous sources of information and assistance available to grant-seekers.

Initial efforts should be focused on Illinois-based foundations. After a link has been established to private foundations, a good base of support should be developed to request funds.

Federal Grant Funding

Land & Water Conservation Fund - For many years since the mid 1960’s, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) program provided funds for outdoor recreation acquisition and development. However, over the last few years the funding has been extremely limited. Land and Water Conservation Fund grants are available to municipalities, counties and special districts to be used for outdoor recreation projects. The program is administered through the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. http://www.dnr.state.il.us/ocd/newoslad1.htm

National Recreational Trails Program - The program was initiated through the National Recreational Trail Fund Act (NRTFA) as part of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) and re-authorized by the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU).. Funds are awarded for the construction of trails and support facilities. Emphasis is for the construction of multi-use trails such as biking, hiking, equestrian, motorized, etc. The program is administered through the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. http://www.dnr.state.il.us/ocd/newrtp2.htm

Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) – authorized through the MAP-21 Act, which extended the federal-aid highway program and cancels the Surface Transportation Program (STP). Transportation Enhancement (TE) activities offer funding opportunities to expand transportation choices and enhance the transportation experience related to surface transportation in 12 categories, including:

- Provision of facilities for pedestrians and bicycles.
- Provision of safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites (including historic battlefields).
- Scenic or historic highway programs (including the provision of tourist and welcome center facilities).
Funding Sources & Partnership Opportunities

- Landscaping and other scenic beautification.
- Historic preservation.
- Rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings, structures, or facilities (including historic railroad facilities and canals).
- Preservation of abandoned railway corridors (including the conversion and use of the corridors for pedestrian or bicycle trails).
- Inventory, control, and removal of outdoor advertising.
- Archaeological planning and research.
- Environmental mitigation--
  - to address water pollution due to highway runoff; or,
  - reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality while maintaining habitat connectivity.
- Establishment of transportation museums.

MAP-21 information - http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/MAP21/

EPA –Environmental Education Grants - projects that enhance public awareness about environmental issues and provide them with skills to take responsible actions.
Application Deadline is in December.
http://www2.epa.gov/education/environmental-education-ee-grants

State Grant Funding

Illinois Department of Natural Resources -

- The Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) Program - is a state-financed grant program that provides funding assistance to local government agencies for acquisition and/or development of land for public parks and open space.

- Eligibility - Projects vary from acquisition of land for new park sites or park expansion, water frontage, nature study, and natural resource preservation to the development of small neighborhood parks or tot lots to large community and county parks and nature areas. The state program is financed by a percentage of the state’s Real Estate Transfer Tax. The federal program is financed nationally by revenue from OSOD leases. Under both programs, funding assistance up to 50% of approved project costs can be obtained. Grant awards up to $750,000 are available for acquisition projects, while development/renovation projects are limited to a $400,000 grant maximum. http://www.dnr.state.il.us/ocd/newoslad1.htm

- The federal Land & Water Conservation Fund program (known as both LWCF and LAWCON) - is a similar program with similar objectives. Both are managed in Illinois by the Department of Natural Resources with concurrent application due dates, equal grant maximums and similar general rules.

- The Park and Recreational Facility Construction Act (PARC) - was created by Public Act 096-0820 effective November 18, 2009 to provide grants to be dispersed by the DNR to eligible local governments for park and recreation unit construction projects. Park or recreation unit construction project means the acquisition, development, construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, improvements, architectural planning, and installation of capital facilities consisting, but not limited to, buildings, structures, and land for park and recreation purposes and open spaces and natural areas. Eligibility requirements mirror the OSLAD grant program.

- Units of local government that are authorized by Illinois law to expend public funds for the acquisition and development of land for public indoor/outdoor park, recreation or conservation purposes are eligible to apply for funding assistance. PARC funds may be used for “bondable” or “brick and mortar” projects for capital expenditures as well as land acquisition projects for public park recreation and conservation. All properties acquired with PARC assistance are required to have a covenant placed on the deed at the time of the recording that stipulates the property must be used, in perpetuity, solely for indoor/outdoor recreation purposes. http://dnr.state.il.us/ocd/newPARC1.htm

- IDNR Trails Grants - The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) administers five (5) grant programs that can provide funding assistance to acquire, develop and, in some cases, maintain trails for a variety of public recreation uses. These programs can also restore areas damaged by unauthorized trail use activity. The programs most applicable to Ackerman Park are:
  - Bike Path Program
  - Federal Recreational Trails Program (RTP)
These programs provide grant assistance on a wide variety of trail related projects in the state. Each program operates on an annual recurring grant cycle with funds awarded on the basis of a review and prioritization of written applications submitted to the IDNR. Projects are evaluated according to established trail objectives and priorities. Funds awarded and disbursed under these programs are on a reimbursement basis. This means that once a project proposal is submitted to the IDNR and approved for grant funding, the project sponsor is responsible for successfully completing the project and initially financing the entire project cost. Actual disbursement of grant funds to the project sponsor is made after the approved project is satisfactorily completed and a final project billing statement, verifying project costs, is submitted to the IDNR for reimbursement. Forty-five (45) days should be allowed after submittal of an acceptable billing request to the IDNR for receipt of actual grant reimbursement payment. http://www.dnr.state.il.us/ocd/newtrail2.htm

**Illinois Youth Recreation Corps** – grants to local governments and non-profit entities to provide wages to youth operating and instructing in recreational and conservation programs.

**Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Grant** - provides financial assistance to local units of government for the development of local urban and community forestry programs. These activities must help to establish, manage, conserve and preserve the urban and community forests from inner city to associated public lands.

Eligibility:
1. Local unit of government or a co-application between a local unit of government and a not-for-profit defined by the General Not-For-Profit Corporation Act of 1986.

2. The applicant must have an approved tree care ordinance or equivalent or must use Application A to ask for funding to create a tree care ordinance.

3. By law, the program is set up as a 50/50 cost share reimbursement, with no more than 5% of the total funds available to one unit of government.

4. Eligible Core Local Urban Forestry Program Projects include: tree care ordinances, tree board establishment, tree inventories, tree preservation ordinances, comprehensive urban forestry management plans, forest insect and disease mitigation plans, residual wood utilization, public education on urban forestry, training of city staff on tree care, tree planting/beatification, tree care demonstrations beyond routine maintenance, Tree and Utility Conflict Resolution, and Tree preservation/tree protection demonstration sites.

**Private/Non-Profit Grant Funding**

**The Coca-Cola Foundation** - was established in the U.S. as a registered 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Foundations grants are awarded throughout the year on business plan priorities, tax requirements, legal compliance and approval by the Foundation’s Board of Directors.

**Water Stewardship** - To support access to clean water and sanitation, watershed protection in water-stressed regions, utilization of water for production and or multiple use systems that do more than provide clean drinking water, education and awareness programs that promote water conservation within communities and industry.

- Healthy and Active Lifestyles - To support access to exercise, physical activity and nutritional education programs, programs that motivate behavior modification, and programs that encourage lifestyle/behavioral changes

- Community Recycling - increase litter abatement efforts, advance recovery and reuse, increase community recycling awareness, and support research and innovation

- Education - To support scholarships, school drop-out prevention, access to education programs, and other education initiatives, per local business unit priorities
http://www.thecoca-colacompany.com/citizenship/foundation_coke.html

**Finish Line – Youth Foundation Grants** – focus on funding organizations that provide opportunities for youth participation in youth athletic programs and camps with an emphasis on sports and active lifestyles. http://www.finishline.com/store/youthfoundation/guidelines.jsp

**The Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD)** - provides a comprehensive list of grant opportunities:
http://www.ilparks.org/?page=grants
Ones that may be particularly helpful in funding Ackerman Park
Improvements include:

- The Chicago Community Trust – includes funding opportunities to prevent and reduce obesity. http://cct.org/about

**Openlands**

- ComEd Green Region Program – grants will support existing open space projects that focus on conservation, preservation and improvements to local parks and recreation resources. http://www.openlands.org/greenregion

- Land Acquisition and Planning – Openlands serves as an open space land acquisition consultant, providing technical assistance to acquire natural areas, parks and recreation, stream corridors and trails and parcel-by-parcel assemblages. http://www.openlands.org/land-acquisition-and-planning

**Partnerships**

Even more important than unsolicited funding opportunities are the relationships between people. Board members and employees of the District, the Village, supporters of the sports leagues and users of the park are all valuable resources to tap into in order to make the improvements to Ackerman Park a reality. When developing the list of sponsors and funding opportunities, rely on the connections between people to develop a network that may assist in sponsorship or grant funding. In addition to the “connection” resources available through people, the following are a few additional partnership ideas:

**Strengthen existing partnerships:**

- Public/private partnerships

- Partnerships with other jurisdictions and government agencies

- Work with alternative providers

- District and Glen Ellyn Lakers (GETSO)

- School District

**Find additional local organizations and businesses to supplement resources and provide sponsorships:**

- Partner with organizations that support youth activities and services such as boys and girls club, YMCA, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts and similar organizations.

- Work with the Glen Ellyn Chamber of Commerce to generate sponsorship opportunities for local businesses. This may include but is not limited to sponsorship of initial construction or sponsorship of the ongoing maintenance/use of a field.
Appendix A

TURF FIELDS

The feasibility of adding two turf soccer fields at the north end of Lower Ackerman Park is currently being evaluated by the Park District and its user groups. The two fields would be sized to accommodate two 110 yd x 70 yd soccer fields or four 80 yd. x 55 yd. sized soccer fields (See Figure 19). These fields will be used primarily for games (or practices when games aren’t scheduled) to drastically reduce the demand for high quality natural grass athletic fields within the park. Fields would be lighted by new sports field lighting and would increase the capacity of soccer fields at Ackerman Park, decreasing the demand for natural grass fields which require rest to regenerate damaged turf. Demand for artificial turf can increase outside usage for tournaments, camps, and house/travel soccer leagues, along with any extended use by Glenbard West High School.

If turf fields are installed at Ackerman Park, depending on the sequencing of improvements, they may decrease the need to improve the grading and drainage at Upper Ackerman to generate game quality soccer fields, which comes at a significant cost. Should the turf fields be installed prior to improvements of Upper Ackerman, then Lower Ackerman would serve as the primary game field area, with Upper Ackerman remaining in its existing condition and being used primarily for practices, camps, and periodic regional tournaments.

While the up front costs of installing a synthetic turf field are higher than natural grass turf, there are several benefits to turf fields which include:

- Lower Maintenance Costs
- Pesticide-free
- Increased playability
- Fewer injuries
- Water savings

Opinion of Probable Cost:
$1,700,000 - $1,900,000 (Includes 2 fields as proposed)

- Dependent on Park Board approval and non-Park District funding for the entire project. Cost is based on quantity and size of field(s).
Appendix B

INDOOR AQUATIC STUDY

Recently, the Glen Ellyn Aquatics Initiative, a volunteer organization, was established to bring awareness and support for an indoor aquatics facility in Glen Ellyn. Money was raised to perform an indoor pool feasibility study where the Ackerman Sports & Fitness Center has been identified as a potential site for the facility. With both the pool feasibility study and the Ackerman Park Master Plan are being planned concurrently, the Park District requested that the impact of the pool addition be studied and illustrated as shown in (See Figure 20).

The expansion, proposed to be approximately 35,000 square feet, is located north of the existing Ackerman Sports & Fitness Center. The addition would warrant the reconfiguration of the soccer field layout of Upper Ackerman, which may require the elimination of one 60 yd. x 40 yd. and one 80 yd. x 55 yd. soccer field. Potential additions to the Ackerman Sports & Fitness Center may change the direction and recommended sequence of improvements elsewhere within the Park.

Additional parking northeast of the proposed includes approximately 150 parking spaces to accommodate the proposed use. This parking lot would also help to reduce the parking demand for large tournament events and typical weekend traffic in the spring and fall when soccer field usage is at its peak.
Figure 21 - Upper Ackerman Pool Addition Layout Plan
Invasive Species List

Following is a list of common Exotic/Invasive Species typically encountered during ecological restoration efforts. This list is not representative of the site and should not be considered an inventory. The list is separated into typical native plant communities that the exotic/invasive species are commonly associated with, however any of the listed species can grow in and may be found in any of the plant communities listed. The listed species shall at no time be allowed to establish or dominate any portion of the project site, regardless of which typical plant community it is listed under.

Exotic/Invasive Species List:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Woodlands/Savannas</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Acer platanoides</td>
<td>NORWAY MAPLE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Aegopodium podagraria</td>
<td>GOUTWEED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Alliaria petiolata</td>
<td>GARLIC MUSTARD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Celastrus orbiculatus</td>
<td>ORIENTAL BITTERSWEET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Euonymus alata</td>
<td>BURNING BUSH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Fallopia japonica</td>
<td>JAPANESE KNOTWEED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lonicera spp.</td>
<td>HONEYSUCKLE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Hesperis matronalis</td>
<td>DAMES ROCKET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Microstegium vimineum</td>
<td>JAPANESE STILT GRASS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Rhamnus cathartica</td>
<td>COMMON BUCKTHORN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Rhamnus frangula</td>
<td>GLOSSY BUCKTHORN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Robina pseudo-acacia</td>
<td>BLACK LOCUST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Rosa multiflora</td>
<td>MULTIFLORA ROSE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Wetlands</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Agrostis palustris</td>
<td>CREEPING BENTGRASS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lythrum salicaria</td>
<td>PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Phalaris arundinacea</td>
<td>REED CANARY GRASS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Phragmites australis</td>
<td>COMMON REED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Salix interior</td>
<td>SANDBAR WILLOW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Typha angustifolia</td>
<td>NARROWLEAF CATTAIL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Typha latifolia</td>
<td>COMMON CATTAIL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Prairies/Dunes

- **Bromus tectorum**
- **Cirsium arvense**
- **Cirsium vulgare**
- **Dactylis glomerata**
- **Daucus carota**
- **Dipsacus laciniatus**
- **Dipsacus sylvestris**
- **Elaeagnus umbellata**
- **Elytrigia repens aristata**
- **Euphorbia esula**
- **Hesperis matronalis**
- **Lolium multiflorum**
- **Lotus corniculatus**
- **Lotus x hybridus**
- **Lythrum salicaria**
- **Medicago sativa**
- **Melilotus alba**
- **Melilotus officinalis**
- **Pastinaca sativa**
- **Poa pratensis**
- **Setaria spp.**
- **Solidago sempervirens**
- **Verbascum blattaria**
- **Verbascum Thapsus**
- **Bromus inermis**
- **Centaurea maculosa**

*DOWNY BROME*
*CANADA THISTLE*
*BULL THISTLE*
*ORCHARDGRASS*
*QUEEN ANNE’S LACE*
*CUTLEAF TEASEL*
*COMMON TEASEL*
*AUTUMN OLIVE*
*QUACK GRASS*
*LEAFY SPURGE*
*DAMES ROCKET*
*ANNUAL RYE/ITALIAN RYEGRASS*
*BIRDS FOOT TREFOIL*
*RED CLOVER*
*TALL FESCUE*
*BLACK MEDIC*
*WHITE SWEET CLOVER*
*YELLOW SWEET CLOVER*
*WILD PARSNIP*
*KENTUCKY BLUEGRASS*
*FOXTAIL/MILLET*
*SEASIDE GOLDENROD*
*MOTH MULLEIN*
*COMMON MULLEIN*
*SLOUGHY BROME*
*SPOTTED Knapweed*