

## **CHAPTER 6**

# **MAINTENANCE PROGRAM**

### **Introduction**

With all park districts, the maintenance of grounds, buildings, and recreation facilities is a key operation of the agency. Most park districts consider this function as important as the recreation programming, and will have a staff management position for maintenance (usually with the title of Superintendent of Parks or Facilities) and of equal importance and responsibility as the Superintendent of Recreation. This very common, and almost universal organizational structure, establishes its importance in accomplishing the mission of a park district and satisfying its goals and objectives.

Maintenance is critical to parks – it impacts the image of the district, and results in whether people will use and enjoy the parks and feel

safe. Maintenance will determine whether the parks are useable for the intended purposes.

Facilities used by people require maintenance – facilities are not maintenance free. Use by people, climactic conditions, time, and natural processes will cause deterioration of materials and facilities. Therefore, preventive maintenance is one of the primary goals of a maintenance program. All facilities have a life cycle before partial or complete replacement or renovation is required. A well managed and aggressive maintenance program can extend the life cycle of a facility, and result in long-term financial benefits to the park district. Maintenance is an investment.

The general objectives of maintenance are to ensure the clean and orderly appearance of grounds, structures, and facilities, and to protect the health, safety, and convenience of the park user.

Specific objectives, however, must be formulated to suit each situation, facility, and function. Type and intensity of use will vary widely, some areas or facilities requiring thorough and frequent maintenance operations, while others less frequently used or partially left in their natural state can be maintained on a much less exacting schedule and level of effort.

Overall, the two existing parks have been maintained very well – evident by comments made during public meeting – “clean parks – the grass is cut.”

## Existing and Future Park Areas and Facilities

Presently, the Park District operates and maintains two park sites – Seyller (17.59 acres) and Bruce Ream Memorial Park (13.97) – totaling

31.56 acres. Within the past two years, 7 acres were added to the east of Seyller Park. Prior to this land being added, the District owned and maintained a little over 24 acres for the past 30 to 40 years.

Within the next year, the Park District will obtain, through land donation, a total of 31.55 acres – Tuscany Woods Park (28.4 acres) and Dorothy J. Schmidt Memorial Park (3.15 acres), thereby doubling the District’s acreage to 63.10 acres.

Over the next ten years, based on proposed developments (not including future developments) being approved and constructed, the Park District will receive through the Village's land donation program an average of 24 acres per year, or a total of 246.11 acres. With this new park land and development of recreation facilities, the District will own and maintain approximately 309 acres.

As a result of this significant expansion, a major change in the maintenance program and operations will be necessary by the Park District. The need to manage a maintenance program and budget accordingly, will require considerable planning and resources.

## Existing Park Area and Facilities Maintenance

Of the present 31.56 acres, the categories of facilities that require maintenance include those as identified in Table 6-1, and include the following:

**Community Recreation Building:** Located in Seyller Park, the Community Recreation Building contains 5,000 square feet and is the primary building in the District. The

building contains the administrative headquarters and space for recreation programs.

Primary maintenance operations include:

- Daily cleaning
- Trash removal
- Seasonal up-keep

**Maintenance Building:**

Located in Seyller Park, the maintenance building contains approximately 3,000 square feet. The building houses the District’s maintenance equipment, where limited repair of equipment

is performed. Space is provided for maintenance administration and storage of recreation program equipment, storage of tools, and common area for personnel use.

Primary maintenance operations include:

- Daily cleaning
- Daily trash removal

**Restroom Buildings:**

Two restroom buildings exist, one located in Seyller Park and the other in Bruce Ream Memorial Park. The restroom building in Seyller Park contains approximately 875 square feet and was constructed within the past eight years. The building is constructed of masonry and is in excellent condition.

The restroom building in Bruce Ream Memorial Park contains approximately 625 square feet and is estimated to be 20 years old or more. The building is constructed of concrete block masonry and is in satisfactory condition.

Maintenance requirements include:

- Daily trash removal
- Daily cleaning
- Seasonal shut-down and start-up of plumbing systems

**Shelters:**

Two picnic shelters exist, one in each park. The shelter in Bruce Ream Memorial Park covers an area of approximately 2,100 square feet. The structure is a steel frame with a wood roof and asphalt shingles and a concrete floor slab. The structure is in good condition. A large number of picnic tables exist within the structure. It is estimated that the structure is 20 to 30 years old.

The shelter in Seyller Park covers an area of approximately 1,700 square feet. The structure is a steel frame with a metal roof and a concrete floor slab. The structure is in good condition.

FACILITY	SEYLLER PARK	REAM PARK
Community Center	5,000 s.f.	
Maintenance Building	3,000 s.f.	
Restrooms Building	875 s.f.	625 s.f.
Shelter	1,750 s.f.	2,100 s.f.
Storage Building	250 s.f.	200 s.f.
Total Building/Structure	10,875 s.f.	2,925 s.f.
Parking Lots Paving	29,375 s.f.	41,000 s.f.
Paths	12,200 s.f.	2,500 s.f.
Tennis/Basketball Courts	20,000 s.f.	4,400 s.f.
Total Paving Areas	43,075 s.f.	47,900 s.f.
Playground Area	9,300 s.f.	3,500 s.f.
Horseshoe/Shuffleboard	600 s.f.	1,500 s.f.
Total	9,900 s.f.	5,000 s.f.
Baseball Fields	50,600 s.f.	61,300 s.f.
Softball Fields		75,600 s.f.
Soccer Fields		118,000 s.f.
Total Fields	50,600 s.f.	254,900 s.f.
Vegetation		
Benches	6	
Trash Receptacles		
Bike Racks		2
Bleachers	2	5
Picnic Tables		
Flagpole	1	
Memorials	2	
Drinking Fountain	2	3

Table 5-1: Site Facilities and Areas

It is estimated that the structure is 20 to 30 years old.

Maintenance requirements include:

- Daily trash removal
- General clean-up two or three times weekly

**Storage Concession Buildings:**

Two storage/concession buildings exist, one in each park. The storage building in Bruce Ream Memorial Park is located between the two baseball fields and contains approximate 200 square feet. The building is a wood framed structure and is in fair condition. The second storage/concession building is located next to the baseball field in Seyller Park and also contains approximately 200 square feet. The building is a wood framed structure and is in fair condition.

Maintenance requirements for both buildings include:

- Daily trash removal (during the season)
- General clean-up two or three times weekly (during the season)

**Parking Lots:**

Six parking lots exist in the two parks. Two lots are located in Bruce Ream Memorial Park and four lots are located in Seyller Park. The two lots in Bruce Ream Memorial Park are gravel surfaced with no curbing and drainage structures. Two lots in Seyller Park are also gravel surfaced and two lots are asphalt paved. The condition of the gravel lots is poor, and the asphalt lots are good.

Maintenance requirements include:

- Annual filling and grading of the gravel lots
- Snow removal
- General weekly clean-up of all lots
- Seal-coating and re-stripping of asphalt lots every 3-5 years

**Paved Walks:**

In Seyller Park, almost 2,500 linear feet of asphalt walks exists. The path provides a circuit around the northern portion of the Park linking a number of facilities. The walks are generally in good condition.

In Bruce Ream Memorial Park, approximately 500 linear feet of walks exists, which provide connection of the north parking lot to the shelter and restroom building. The walks are generally in good condition.

Maintenance requirements include:

- Patch and repairing as needed
- Seasonal cleaning
- Snow removal

**Basketball/Tennis Courts:**

In Bruce Ream Memorial Park, there is one basketball court occupying an area of 4,400 square feet. The court is asphalt paved with surfacing marking boundaries, and two basketball posts/backboards. The court is located in the center of the park with no path access provided. The asphalt paving is in relatively poor condition.

In Seyller Park, there are two tennis courts and one basketball court combined on one asphalt paved area. The courts consist of two basketball posts/backboards, and two tennis nets with posts. The paved area is surrounded by a chain link fence and is lighted. Condition of the asphalt pavement is poor with numerous cracks.

Maintenance requirements include:

- Seasonal and monthly cleaning
- Annual repair of asphalt surfacing
- Annual marking of courts

**Playgrounds:**

Two playgrounds exist, one in each park. The playground in Seyller Park occupies an area of approximately 9,300 square feet. The play-

ground is relatively new and consists of a variety of play structures for 2-5 year olds and 6-12 year olds. The playground is surfaced with wood fiber.

In Bruce Ream Memorial Park, the playground occupies an area of approximately 3,500 square feet. The playground consists of several pieces of play equipment, and needs to be updated to meet current play standards and guidelines. The playground is surfaced with wood fiber.

Maintenance requirements include:

- Annual addition of wood fiber surfacing
- Daily trash removal and clean-up
- Weekly and monthly safety inspections and repair

**Horseshoe and Shuffleboard Courts:**

In Seyller Park, two horseshoe courts exist. Both courts are grass surfaced with pits defined and surfaced with clay. In Bruce Ream Memorial Park, there are four horseshoe courts with grass surface and pits defined with clay surfacing. Also in Bruce Ream Memorial Park are located two shuffleboard courts. The courts are concrete paved and marked.

Maintenance requirements include:

- Turf mowing
- Occasional clean-up
- Replacement of clay pit material
- Weekly cleaning of concrete surfacing
- Annual repairs and remarking of shuffleboard courts

**Baseball Fields:**

A total of three baseball fields exist, two in Bruce Ream Memorial Park occupy a total area of 61,300 square feet, and one in Seyller Park occupies an area of approximately 50,000 square feet. All three fields contain chain link baseline fencing and backstops, clay infields, player benches, and bleachers. Surface areas

around the bleachers and player benches are gravel. Grass turf is the primary surfacing of the outfields and areas surrounding the fields.

Maintenance requirements include:

- Turf mowing, fertilizing, weed and insect/disease control
- Annual supplementation of clay infield mix
- Daily and weekly maintenance of infield clay surfacing – dragging and smoothing
- Annual repair of benches and bleachers
- Daily and weekly lining of baselines

**Softball Field:**

One softball field exists in Bruce Ream Park and occupies an area of approximately 75,600 square feet. The field contains chain link baseline fencing, backstop, outfield fencing, clay infield, concrete dugouts with player benches, bleachers and field lighting. Surface areas around the bleachers and player benches are gravel. Grass turf is the primary surfacing of the outfield and areas surrounding the field.

Maintenance requirements include:

- Turf mowing, fertilizing, weed and insect/disease control
- Annual supplementation of clay infield mix
- Daily and weekly maintenance of infield clay surfacing – dragging and smoothing (during season)
- Annual repair of benches and bleachers
- Daily and weekly lining of baselines (during season)

**Soccer Fields:**

A total of five soccer fields exist in Bruce Ream Park occupying a total area of 118,000 square feet. Except for portable goal post nets, no additional facilities are present. The five turf grass fields do not overlap, but space is limited and cannot be moved to allow turf grass to recover from heavy use.

Maintenance requirements include:

- Turf mowing, fertilizing, weed and insect/disease control
- Annual reseeded
- Daily and weekly clean-up of field areas
- Daily and weekly lining of field boundaries

**General Turf Areas:**

Outside of the athletic field areas, turf grass is the major surfacing throughout both parks. Turf conditions vary throughout both parks based on specific conditions, such as drainage, use, and shade. Overall, because of its area, turf grasses require the most maintenance time.

Maintenance requirements include:

- Weekly turf mowing
- Annual fertilizing, weed and insect/disease control
- Annual reseeded
- Daily and weekly clean-up of turf grass areas

**Vegetation:**

Vegetation in the parks consists of a variety of deciduous trees, evergreen trees, and deciduous and evergreen shrubs. Vegetation in Seyller Park consists of a large number of mature oak trees. In Bruce Ream Memorial Park, vegetation consists of hedgerow deciduous trees and evergreen trees along the borders. Almost no trees exist within park area.

Maintenance requirements include:

- Annual trimming and pruning of all trees and shrubs
- Mulching of base areas around trees and shrubs
- Daily and weekly clean-up shrub plant beds
- Annual spraying for insect and disease control

**Site Amenities:**

Throughout both parks, a number of site amenities exist. These include benches, trash receptacles, bicycle racks, and picnic tables. In addition, there are two drinking fountains in Bruce Ream Memorial Park and three in Seyller Park. The age and conditions of all these site amenities varies, and the type and style also varies.

In Seyller Park there are located several specialty items, including a flagpole, a cannon memorial, and time capsule memorial.

Maintenance requirements include:

- Annual repair and replacement of component materials
- Daily removal of trash from receptacles
- Seasonal start-up and shut-down of drinking fountains

**PARK MAINTENANCE FACILITY AREAS**

Of the present 31.56 acres of park land, Table 6-2 summarizes the areas of major facility categories that require maintenance. The areas of each facility category for each park and the total for the two parks are included.

According to this summary, the greatest facility area is general grass turf areas with 21.46 acres, or 68% of the total area of park land. Athletic fields represent 7.01 acres, or 21.92% of total park land. Combined, these two facility areas represent 28.47 acres or 89.92 % of the total park land. As a result, this facility area requires the most time and generally the most intense maintenance operations.

Buildings and structures represent a total of 0.32 acres, or 1.11% of total park land, while paved areas - parking lots, tennis/basketball

Facility	Seyller Park			Ream Park			Total Parks		
	Acre	Square Feet	% of Park Area	Acre	Square Feet	% of Park Area	Acre	Square Feet	% of Total Park Land
Total Park	17.59 ac.	766,220 s.f.	100%	13.97 ac.	608,533 s.f.	100%	31.56 ac.	1,374,753 s.f.	100%
Building/Structure	0.25 ac.	10,875 s.f.	1.42%	0.07 ac.	2,925 s.f.	0.50%	0.32 ac.	13,800 s.f.	1.11%
Parking Lots	0.67 ac.	29,375 s.f.	3.81%	0.94 ac.	41,000 s.f.	6.73%	1.61 ac.	70,375 s.f.	5.11%
Paths	0.28 ac.	12,200 s.f.	1.60%	0.06 ac.	2,500 s.f.	0.43%	0.34 ac.	14,700 s.f.	1.17%
Tennis/Basketball Courts	0.46 ac.	20,000 s.f.	2.61%	0.10 ac.	4,400 s.f.	0.72%	0.56 ac.	24,400 s.f.	1.77%
Playground/Courts	0.23 ac.	9,900 s.f.	1.31%	0.03 ac.	1,500 s.f.	0.21%	0.26 ac.	11,400 s.f.	0.92%
Athletic Fields	1.16 ac.	50,600 s.f.	6.58%	5.85 ac.	254,900 s.f.	41.88%	7.01 ac.	305,500 s.f.	21.92%
General Turf Areas	14.54 ac.	633,270 ac.	82.64%	6.92 ac.	301,308 s.f.	49.52%	21.46 ac.	934,578 s.f.	68.00%

Table 6-2: Facility Areas and % for Parks and Total Park Land Requiring Maintenance

courts, and paths – represent 2.51 acres, or 8.05% of total park land area.

## Present Maintenance Operations

### MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS PERFORMED BY DISTRICT PERSONNEL

Based upon interviews with maintenance staff personnel, the following maintenance operations are performed by Park District personnel:

#### Turf Mowing:

Maintenance staff mows all turf areas, including general turf and athletic fields. This one activity occupies the greatest amount of time. Turf areas are mowed at least once per week during the spring, summer, and fall seasons.

#### Clean and Maintain Restrooms:

Maintenance staff clean and maintain both restroom buildings on a daily basis when the facilities are open.

#### Trash and Debris Removal:

Maintenance staff removes trash and debris daily at both parks. This activity varies during the week and season depending upon use of the facilities by residents.

#### Maintain Ballfield Diamonds:

Up to 2005, the Park District maintained the three baseball field diamonds. As of the 2005 Little League season, the affiliate organization will maintain the baseball infields. Park District staff will mow all turf areas, line baselines, and clean-up areas.

The softball field is maintained by District personnel during the season, and includes mowing, clean-up, and infield maintenance operations.

#### Snow Removal:

Maintenance staff snow plow parking lots and paths within the parks during the winter season.

#### Clean and Maintain Buildings:

Maintenance staff clean and maintain both the Community Recreation Center and the Maintenance Building. Daily operations include trash removal, cleaning restrooms, and cleaning of general use areas.

**Equipment Cleaning and Minor Maintenance and Repair:**

Maintenance staff cleans and performs minor maintenance and repair of equipment.

- renovation work in buildings and structures;
- repair of pavements; and,
- equipment servicing and repair.

**MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS PERFORMED BY CONTRACTED SERVICES**

The following maintenance operations and services are contracted to private firms.

**Plumbing Repairs and Service:**

The District contracts for plumbing repair and service. This work is primarily related to work in buildings and is performed on an as-needed basis.

**Electrical Repairs and Service:**

The District contracts for electrical repair and service. This work is primarily related to work in buildings, and is performed on an as needed basis.

**Weed Control:**

Weed and insect/disease control services are contracted to private firms. This service needs to be performed on at least an annual basis, and possibly more frequently if necessary. However, in the past, this service has not been regular due to maintenance budgets.

**Tree Trimming and Pruning Services:**

Tree trimming and pruning services are contracted to private firms. This service needs to be performed on at least an annual basis, and possibly more frequently if necessary. However, in the past, this service has not been regular due to maintenance budgets.

Other services normally contracted out include:

- painting of buildings and structures;

**MAINTENANCE STAFF**

Presently, the Park District employs three people year round and one seasonal (summer) person. All four employees are part-time. One person is in charge of supervising maintenance operations. This person was formerly employed by the Elgin Parks and Recreation Department as a Maintenance Supervisor and is very familiar and knowledgeable of maintenance practices and procedures. Maintenance personnel and their working hours, length of time, and average hours per week are identified in Table 6-3.

Staff Person	Responsibility	Length of Time	Average Hours per Week
1	Supervisor and Maintenance Operations	Year-Round	18 hrs.
2	Maintenance Operations	Year-Round	25 hrs.
3	Building Maintenance	Year-Round	25 hrs.
4	Maintenance Operations	Seasonal (summer)	25 hrs.

Table 6-3: Present Park District Maintenance Staff

**MAINTENANCE EQUIPMENT**

No inventory of maintenance equipment was performed; however, it appears that existing equipment is satisfactory in terms of numbers, conditions, and types to perform the maintenance operations. The District recently did purchase a pick-up truck and new riding mower. Maintenance staff expressed a need for a

a ballfield tractor and a field line marking machine.

## Recommendations

Based upon review and evaluation of the present maintenance operations of the Park District and the projected growth of the District in the next ten years, a number of recommendations have been developed in order for the Park District to meet the future maintenance challenges.

### I. CREATE A FULL-TIME SUPERINTENDENT POSITION AND HIRE A QUALIFIED PERSON

The District needs to reorganize the maintenance of parks into a department on equal level with the Department of Recreation. A new full-time position of Superintendent of Parks should be created and filled by an individual with a background in planning, design, construction, and maintenance of park facilities. As with the Superintendent of Recreation, the Superintendent of Parks would be a manager and administrator, and would be responsible for developing goals and objectives; establishing facility improvement programs; scheduling operations; assigning and coordinating personnel; and establishing budgets for improvements, operations, and maintenance.

This position should be created as soon as possible in order to manage the donation of new park land and to develop a long-range maintenance plan.

### 2. PREPARE A LONG-RANGE MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE PLAN

Following the creation and hiring of a full-time Superintendent of Parks, a long-range Management and Maintenance Plan. This Plan should address at a minimum the following elements:

#### A. Goals and Objectives:

Goals and objectives should be established for the maintenance department addressing, maintenance practices and procedures, staffing, budgets, level of maintenance, quality and appearance of facilities, environmental impacts, and development of new facilities.

#### B. Establish Maintenance Practices:

The Maintenance Plan should establish maintenance practices for operations based upon accepted maintenance procedures. Practices should document how facilities are to be maintained.

#### C. Develop Park Maintenance Management System:

The ability to effectively and efficiently maintain and manage the land and buildings within the financial resources of the District is and will continue to be a challenge. As the Department of Parks faces the challenge of responding to increased demands with limited resources, it is critical that a Park Maintenance Management System (PMMS) be developed. Components of this system include a comprehensive listing of work tasks, labor distribution

of work tasks, work tasks for each park site, and scheduling of work tasks (seasonal, monthly, weekly). Such a system will provide data for developing unit costs, determining standards of service, developing budgets, and determining personnel needs and skills. The system needs to be computerized.

**D. Establish Maintenance Job Descriptions:**

With reorganization and addition of staff, the District needs to review and update, and create job descriptions for both full-time and part-time maintenance staff to clearly define responsibilities, performance criteria, and qualifications for each position. Salaries should be reviewed and pay scales updated to properly equate with qualifications and responsibilities.

**E. Establish Maintenance Staff Training Programs:**

As an integral part of upgrading personnel policies and procedures, it is important that maintenance staff receive adequate training — both in-house and continuing education. The Department should establish an annual training plan, which defines policies, procedures, and a budget for maintenance staff training. The plan should have specific objectives and identify actual training experiences. Dedicated funds for training should be included in the Department’s annual operating budget. The training should be targeted for both existing and new technical skills, in addition to personal development skills.

**3. STAFFING**

In addition to hiring a full time Superintendent of Parks, the District needs to evaluate the need for additional full-time and part-time maintenance staff. This should be one of the initial responsibilities of the new Superintendent.

The policy of utilizing both full-time and part-time maintenance staff is valid and necessary because of seasonal needs and budgetary resources. All park districts employ this practice. How many staff is a difficult question to resolve. There are no widely accepted standards available since there are too many variable factors. However, with the development of the PMMS, projected needs can be adequately established.

Based on present total maintenance staff hours during the summer season, 2.32 persons (40 hours per staff per week) perform maintenance operations for 31.56 acres of park land. If one assumes that this is adequate and the increase in staff is directly proportional to the increase in land, then approximately 4.83 persons (40 hours per staff per week) would be needed to perform maintenance operations for 63.11 acres. The 4.83 persons could represent any combination of full-time and part-time positions, such as three full-time positions and four to five part-time positions.

**4. STAFF VERSUS OUT-SOURCING OPERATIONS**

The Park District utilizes contract services of private firms to perform specific maintenance operations versus employing staff. This policy is fiscally responsible and is a

wise use of limited resources. The Park District should continue this policy, but as it grows and with the development of the Management and Maintenance Plan, the use of out-sourcing versus District staff should be continually evaluated.

## **5. CERTIFICATION OF STAFF FOR PLAYGROUND SAFETY**

With playgrounds required to meet ADA standards and CPSC guidelines, the Park District should have one staff personnel who is certified by the Playground Safety Institute to inspect and maintain playground safety. The Park District should institute a playground safety program, which establishes minimum inspection procedures, schedules, and maintenance repairs

## **6. DEVELOP FACILITY INVENTORY**

As part of the Management and Maintenance Plan, the Park District should develop and maintain a computerized inventory of all facilities. The inventory should include plans and details of facilities; maintenance operations performed and when; maintenance procedures needed to be performed weekly, monthly, and annually. This facility inventory system will greatly assist in the planning of capital improvements and budgets.

