

Oak Lawn Park District Comprehensive Plan

Maintenance Operations Management Plan

MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS

MANAGEMENT PLAN

STANDARDS: The level of attention is the amount of resources dedicated to a maintenance task to maintain a landscape according to the design and/or usage intent. The standard of maintenance of the parks and park facilities can cast either an exceptional or poor reflection upon the entire Park District. In order to encourage responsible and respectful use of our facilities, it is imperative to maintain a high standard of care.

LEVELS OF CARE: The optimum level of maintenance attention and the best methods to be used to attain them will vary within a given area, from one location to another, and from year to year. Deciding on what level of care will be assigned to each park or areas within a park is based on the unique character and nature of that park. The National Recreation and Park Association has established standards that identify levels of maintenance that vary from the highest (1) to the lowest (6). These standards have been benchmarked against current and past practices and acknowledge the unique nature and needs of each park.

Level 1 applies to parks or areas that require the greatest level of maintenance in the system. These parks and park facilities are typically highly -developed parks with multiple amenities that are heavily used.

Parks categorized at this level include Centennial Park, Wolfe Wildlife Refuge, Sullivan Park, Memorial Park, Worthbrook Park, and the park areas at the Oak View Center. Please see Addendum 1 for specific details on levels of care associated with specific areas.

Turf Care: Mowing and trimming once every 5 days. Aeration as required but not less than twice per year. Reseeding once per year in early Spring, other than in high traffic areas if bare spots appear.

Fertilizer: 2 to 4 times per year to ensure that all plant materials are healthy and growing vigorously. Rates should correspond to minimum requirements at least.

Irrigation (where applicable): Dependent upon weather conditions. Irrigation system and heads should be inspected monthly.

Litter Control: Minimum of once per day April-November. As needed during off-peak season.

Control of Vandalism: Locales of regular vandalism should be inspected weekly. Staff performing litter control should report all instances of vandalism immediately, so it can be removed as soon as possible.

Repairs: Should be done whenever safety, function, or appearance is in question.

Pruning: Usually done at least once per season. More often dependent upon species.

Disease and Insect Control: Usually done when disease and insects are inflicting noticeable damage, is reducing vigor of plant material, or could be considered a bother to the public. Some preventative measures may be used, such as systemic chemical treatments. Cultural prevention of disease problems can reduce time spent in this category. Some minor problems may be tolerated at this level. Pesticides to be applied by a licensed operator.

Weed control: Practiced when weeds present a visible problem or when weeds represent five percent of the turf surface.

Inspections: Inspection should be conducted by staff at least 2x/month.

Floral Plantings: Normally, no more complex than two rotations of bloom per year. Care cycle is usually at least once per week, but watering may be more frequent due to environmental conditions. Health and vigor dictate cycle of fertilization and disease control. Beds essentially kept weed free.

Level 2 maintenance is associated with well-developed public park areas. It is what one would normally expect to see on regular, recurring basis. It is the desired standard and recommended level for most organizations.

Parks categorized at this level include Columbus Manor, Dillon, Keeler, Lake Shore, Lawn Manor, Oak Meadows, Bailey's Crossing, Commissioners, Phillips, and Shubert.

Turf Care: Grass cut once every 7 to 9 working days. Aeration as required and as time and resources permit. Weed control is applied to problematic areas only. Pesticides to be applied by a person holding a Certified Operator's license.

Fertilizer: Adequate fertilizer level to ensure that all plant materials are healthy and growing vigorously. Amounts depend on species, length of growing season, soils and rainfall. Rates should correspond to at least the lowest recommended rates. Distribution should ensure an even supply of nutrients for the entire year. Nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium percentages should follow local recommendations.

Litter Control: Minimum of once per day, five days per week, April through November. As needed during off-peak season. Off-site movement of trash depends on size of containers and use by the public. High use may dictate more frequent cleaning.

Pruning: Usually done once per season unless species planted dictate more frequent attention.

Disease and Insect Control: Usually done when disease and insects are inflicting noticeable damage, is reducing vigor of plant material, or could be considered a bother to the public. Some

preventative measures may be used, such as systemic chemical treatments. Cultural prevention of disease problems can reduce time spent in this category. Some minor problems may be tolerated at this level. Pesticides to be applied by a licensed operator.

Surfaces: Should be cleaned, repaired, repainted, or replaced when their appearances have noticeably deteriorated.

Repairs: Should be done whenever safety, function, or appearance is in question.

Inspections: Inspection should be conducted by staff at least 2x/month.

Floral Plantings: Normally, no more complex than two rotations of bloom per year. Care cycle is usually at least once per week, but watering may be more frequent due to environmental conditions. Health and vigor dictate cycle of fertilization and disease control. Beds essentially kept weed free.

Level 3 maintenance associated with these locations is at low levels of development or visitation, or with operations that, because of budget restrictions, cannot afford a higher level of maintenance. It is just below the norm.

Parks in this category include Harker, Lewandowski, McVickers and Williams.

Turf Care: Grass cut once every 7 to 9 working days. Normally not aerate unless turf quality indicates a need or in anticipation of an application of fertilizer. Reseeding done only when major bare spots appear.

Weed control: Normally used when 50 percent of small areas are weed infested or when 15 percent of the general turf is infested with weeds.

Fertilizer: Applied only when turf vigor is low.

Litter Control: Minimum service of once per week. High use may dictate higher levels during the warm season.

Pruning: When required for health or reasonable appearance. With most tree and shrub species, pruning would be performed once every two to three years.

Disease and Insect Control: Done only to address epidemics or serious complaints. Control measures may be put into effect when the health or survival of the plant material is threatened or when public comfort is an issue.

Surfaces: Should be cleaned, repaired, repainted, or replaced when their appearances have noticeably deteriorated.

Repairs: Should be done whenever safety or function is in question.

Inspections: Inspections are conducted by staff at least 2x/month.

Floral Plantings: Only perennials or flowering trees or shrubs.

Level 4 is associated with locations requiring moderately low-level maintenance.

Areas in this category include the Oak Lawn (Chicago Ridge) Prairie, and the banks along the Lake Shore park channel.

Turf Care: Low frequency mowing scheduled based on species. Low-growing grasses may not be mowed. High grasses may receive periodic mowing. Weed control limited to legal requirements for noxious weeds.

Fertilizer. Not fertilized.

Irrigation. No irrigation.

Litter Control. Once per week. Complaints may increase level above one servicing.

Pruning. No regular trimming. Safety or damage from weather may dictate actual work schedule.

Disease and Insect Control. None except where the problem is epidemic and the epidemic condition threatens resources or the public.

Surfaces. Should be done whenever safety or function is in question.

Inspections. Inspections are conducted by staff on a monthly basis.

Floral Planting. None. May have wildflowers, perennials, flowering trees or shrubs in place.

Level 5 is associated with locations requiring minimum-level maintenance.

There are currently no parks or areas categorized as Level 5.

Level 6 is associated with natural areas that are not developed.

There are currently no parks or areas categorized as Level 6.

Addendum 1 – Standards for Care of Parks/Properties

I. Athletic Facilities: Competitive Fields

A. Turf

1. Turf has a healthy dense stand of grass and coverage is no less than 95% of playable area. Reseed bare areas as needed using a sports field blend.
2. Play area has a uniform surface and well drained.
3. Turf is mowed once every 5 working days (subject to weather and growing season) using a multi-blade rotary mower.
4. Turf should be cut using a routinely alternated cutting pattern.
5. On a weekly basis, string grass trimmers shall be used for trimming around buildings, walkways, parking lots, etc. Care should be taken to not damage the bases of trees and shrubs.
6. Fertilize 2 to 3 times per year (spring and fall applications) for increased turf health and vigor. When available, the park district is committed to using natural biosolid fertilizers as supplied by MWRD.
7. Aerate turf areas of playable surfaces twice annually (spring and fall).
8. Weekly inspections of turf areas.

B. Skinned Infields

1. Infields have uniform surface and are free of lips, holes and trip hazards.
2. Infields are well drained with no standing water.
3. Softball infields shall be properly crowned.
4. When removing water from infields, no brooming shall be allowed. Water shall be pumped off using hand pumps.
5. Infield mix shall consist of 60% clay, 40% sand with surface added as needed.
6. Alternate dragging patterns shall be used so as to not to create build-up or materials in unwanted areas.
8. A ball field checklist should be conducted weekly.
9. Fine drag and top dressing of fields should occur at a minimum of once per week (more frequent as indicated by schedule).
10. Holes at batter's box, pitcher's mound and bases shall be filled, tamped and hand raked each day.
11. Keep infields free of weeds, grass, rocks and debris.
12. Bases, plates, mounds properly installed, level and are at the proper distances and anchored properly in accordance to manufacturer's specifications and league requirements.

C. Soccer Goals

1. Goals are properly installed and anchored in accordance with Adam's law.
2. Goal frames show no excessive bending.
3. Nets are in good condition and free of holes, tears and fraying that would allow a soccer ball to pass.

D. Bleachers

1. Hardware intact.
2. Bracing is tightly connected.
3. Seating surface is clean, smooth, free of protrusions and have no exposed sharp edges or pointed corners.
4. Bleacher areas have clean trash receptacles.

E. Lights

1. Electrical systems and components are operational and in compliance with appropriate building codes.
2. 90% of lamps for each field operational.
3. No electrical conducting wires are exposed.
4. Ballast boxes and components properly installed and maintained.
5. Lights provide uniform coverage on facilities and fixtures to eliminate dark or blind areas.

F. Fencing

1. Fencing material is galvanized chain link and is appropriate gauge wire for specified use.
2. Fencing material is properly secured to support rails and posts.
3. Support rails are properly connected and straight.
4. Fencing is free of holes and protrusions.
5. Fabric is straight and free of bending or sagging .
6. Gates and latches are operational.

II. Playgrounds

A. Play Equipment

1. Play equipment and surrounding play areas meet ASTM and National Playground Safety Institute standards.
2. Play equipment and hardware is intact.
3. Play equipment is free of graffiti.
4. Inspections to occur two to three times each week.
5. Age appropriate play equipment is noted with proper signage.
6. Equipment shall comply with ADA requirements.

B. Surfacing

1. Fall surface is clean, level and free of litter and debris.
2. Fall surface meets ASTM, ADA and National Playground Safety Institute standards.
3. Fall surface is well drained.

C. Benches

1. Slats are smooth and structurally sound.
2. Hardware is intact and structurally sound.
3. Nails, bolts and screws are flush with the surface.
4. Seats and backing are smooth with no protrusions and have no exposed sharp edges or pointed corners.

III. Pavilions/Shelters

A. Pavilions and Shelters

1. Pavilions and shelters comply with ADA requirements.
2. Are clean, sanitary and free of graffiti.
3. Lights and electrical outlets are operational and meet building codes.
4. Pavilions are structurally sound, cleanly painted with no rotten lumber or rusted metal and no loose siding or loose shingles.

B. Picnic Tables

1. Tables are clean, free of rust, mildew and graffiti.
2. Table hardware is intact.
3. Table seats and tops are smooth with no protrusions and have no exposed sharp edges or pointed corners.

C. Grills

1. Grills are operational and free of rust and metal deterioration.
2. Grills are clean and free of grease build up.
3. Grill racks are operational and secure to main body.

D. Trash Receptacles

1. Receptacles are clean.
2. Metal cans shall be replaced if showing signs of excessive dents or rust.
3. Area around trash receptacles is clean and free of debris.

E. Porta-potties

1. The porta-potties in heavy use areas without permanent bathrooms are to be serviced 2x per week by an approved contractor (i.e. Wolfe).
2. The porta-potties in less-used areas are serviced 1x per week (i.e. Community Garden).

IV. Tennis Courts/Basketball Courts

A. Surfacing

1. Surface is smooth, level and well drained with no standing water.

2. Surface is free of large cracks, holes and trip hazards.
3. Surface is painted and striped in accordance with the United States Tennis Association court specifications.
4. Surface is free of litter, debris and graffiti.
5. Worn painted surfaces do not exceed 20% of total court surface.

B. Nets

1. Nets are free from tears and frays.
2. Nets are properly secured to support poles.
3. Nets are installed at the regulated height.
4. Support poles have hardware intact and properly installed.

C. Lights

1. Electrical systems and components are operational and in compliance with appropriate building codes.
2. 90% of lamps for each court are operational.
3. Timers are properly set for specific hours of operation.
4. No electrical conducting wires exposed.
5. Lights give uniform coverage on facilities and fixtures are adjusted to eliminate dark or blind spots.

D. Fencing

1. Fencing material is galvanized chain link and is appropriate gauge wire for specific use.
2. Fencing material is properly secured to support rails.
3. Support rails are properly connected and straight.
4. Fencing is free of holes, protrusions and catch points.
5. Fabric is straight and free of sagging or bends.
6. Gates and latches are operational.
7. Windscreens are tightly secured to fencing and are free of tears and holes.

E. Basketball Goals and Backboards

1. Goals and backboards are level with hardware intact.
2. Goals and backboards are painted.
3. Nets are properly hung and not torn or tattered.
4. Support poles are secure in ground and straight.

V. Sand Volleyball Courts

A. Nets

1. Nets are free from holes and are not torn or tattered.

2. Nets are hung tightly at the specified height.
3. Nets are securely attached to support poles.
4. Support poles are secure in ground and straight.

B. Surface

1. Court surface is loose sand.
2. Surface is smooth with good drainage and no standing water.
3. Surface is free of weeds, grass, litter and debris.

C. Borders

1. Borders are well defined and intact.

VI. Ponds

A. Water

1. Aerators are operational.
2. Pond surface is at least 90% clear of vegetation.
3. Water is free of trash and debris.
4. Ponds are stocked with appropriate species of fish.

B. Fishing Piers/Decks

1. Planks are intact, smooth, structurally sound, free of splinters and not have cracks greater than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch.
2. Nails, bolts, screws and rivets are flush with the surface.
3. Planks are level with no excessive warping.
4. Handrails are present and structurally sound.
5. Piers and decks comply with ADA requirements.

VII. General Standards

A. Grounds

1. Grounds are mowed and trimmed every 7 to 9 days (subject to weather and growing season)
2. Aerate turf as needed. Fertilize as necessary to promote dense turf and healthy vigor.
3. On weekly basis, string trimmers shall be used for trimming around buildings, walkways, parking lots, etc. Care should be taken to not damage the bases of trees and shrubs.

4. Park is free of litter, debris and hazards. Litter to be picked up once per day, seven days a week or as use necessitates in the off season. Receptacles should be plentiful enough to hold all trash usually generated between servicing without overflowing.
5. Control of diseases and insects shall utilize sound Plant Health Care principles. Controlling objective is to avoid public awareness of problems. Problems will either be prevented or observed at an early stage and corrected immediately.
6. Parking lots are clean and striped.
7. The bags in the dog poop stations are to be checked weekly to insure availability.

B. Drinking Fountains

1. Fountains are accessible and operational.
2. Fountains are in appropriate locations.
3. Fountains are installed on solid surfaces and free of standing water.

C. Signage

1. Park identification signs are secure and properly installed in a noticeable location.
2. Handicap parking signs are secure, visible and up to code.
3. Signs are clean and free of protrusions.

D. Ornamental Planting Beds

1. Plants shall be healthy.
2. Plant beds are free of litter, debris and weeds.
3. Plant selection is appropriate for season and usage.
4. Fertilizers and pesticides shall be applied only when needed and applied at the suggested rates.
5. Watering shall be done weekly or as environmental conditions merit.
6. Trees shall be pruned in accordance with ISA pruning standards.
7. Planting and beautification measures (including mulching) should be completed seasonally (spring and fall).

E. Walkways

1. Walkways have a uniform surface and are level with ground and free of trip hazards.
2. Walkways are free of litter and debris.
3. Walkways have unobstructed accessibility, i.e. free from low and protruding limbs.
4. Walkways are free of weeds and grass in cracks and expansion joints.

F. Vandalism

1. Property damage should be immediately reported and made safe for the public.
2. Graffiti should be immediately removed so as to not attract additional graffiti.

G. Repairs

1. Repairs to all elements of the design should be done immediately when problems are discovered, provided replacement parts and technicians are available to accomplish the job.
2. When disruption to the public might be major and the repair is not critical, repairs may be postponed to a time period that is least disruptive.