

Legislative Update

IAPD
Illinois Association of Park Districts



THE LATEST LEGISLATIVE ISSUES AFFECTING PARKS, RECREATION and CONSERVATION

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TO: IAPD Members

**FROM: Peter Murphy, JD, CAE, IAPD President and CEO
Jason Anselment, IAPD Legal/Legislative Counsel**

SUBJECT: OSLAD and PARC Grants Released

We have some very exciting news to share with the IAPD membership!

We have learned that agencies with suspended OSLAD and PARC grants are now receiving letters from the IDNR **restoring their projects to pre-suspension status to allow them to proceed**. This includes the 2015 OSLAD and PARC grants!

IAPD has been working behind the scenes for many months to protect these dedicated special funds from fund sweeps and to secure the necessary appropriation authority to allow all committed projects to move forward. **We would like to thank Governor Rauner and the members of the General Assembly for recognizing that OSLAD matching grants**, which are funded through dedicated, non-General Revenue special funds, are important long-term investments for the State.

The full release of these funds will allow park districts and other local governments to complete their pending projects, obtain reimbursement of the dedicated matchings funds, and avoid further unnecessary costs and expenses.

While we recognize that the State continues to face challenges in its general operations budget, it is important to note that the OSLAD and PARC programs are used by local communities to offer essential human and social services programs like those the State is struggling to fund. For example, park districts provide facilities and services for persons with special needs, senior services, afterschool and summer programs, and child care for working families, to name just a few.

Furthermore, convenient and affordable access to fitness facilities promotes health and wellness that will help reduce Medicaid and other physical and mental health care expenses that are also major cost drivers in the State budget.

Unlike many State-funded programs and services, once the State makes the initial matching investment of these dedicated dollars to park districts and other local agencies, it does not bear the future burden or cost of maintaining those facilities. In other words, the OSLAD and PARC grant programs are truly a win-win partnership.

This recent announcement is an important achievement. We would like to **thank all IAPD members** for all of your advocacy on behalf of the OSLAD and PARC programs and for the important work that you do to improve the quality of life of citizens throughout Illinois.