



It is the mission of the Urbana Park District to:

- Improve the quality of life of its citizens through a responsive, efficient, and creative park and recreation system,
- Pursue excellence in a variety of programs, parks, and special facilities that contribute to the attractiveness of neighborhoods, conservation of the environment, and the overall health of the community.

**NOTICE AND AGENDA OF MEETING  
URBANA PARK DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (UPDAC)  
TUESDAY, JUNE 24, 2025  
7:00 PM  
PLANNING & OPERATIONS FACILITY  
1011 E. KERR AVENUE  
URBANA, IL 61802**

- I. Call to Order
- II. Public Comment  
*Any member of the public may make a brief statement at this time within the public participation rules of the Board.*
- III. Approval of the Minutes of the May 27, 2025 Meeting
- IV. New Business
  - A. UPD Strategic Plan/Climate Action, Resilience, Education, and Sustainability (CARES) Plan
- V. Reports
  - A. UPDAC Chair
  - B. Board Representative
  - C. Director's Report
  - D. Capital Projects Report
- VI. UPDAC Member Comments and Open Discussion
- VII. Adjourn

***Upcoming meetings:***

***July – NO MEETING  
August 26, 2025  
September 23, 2025  
October 28, 2025  
November 18, 2025  
December – NO MEETING***

**\*\*This month's Secretary is Kelsey Beccue\*\***

Note: The Meeting Agenda and Supporting Materials are on the UPD website at <https://www.urbanaparks.org/urbana-park-district-advisory-committee-updac>.

**MEETING MINUTES  
 URBANA PARK DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (UPDAC)  
 TUESDAY, MAY 27, 2025  
 6:30 PM  
 PERKINS ROAD PARK SITE  
 1501 E. PERKINS ROAD  
 URBANA, IL 61802**

The meeting of the Urbana Park District Advisory Committee (UPDAC) was held Tuesday, May 27, 2025 at the Urbana Park District (UPD) Perkins Road Park Site at 6:30 PM. The notice and agenda of the meeting were posted at the park district administrative office and at the location of the meeting. Copies of the notice and agenda were received by each member of the committee and by local newspapers, radio, and television stations at least forty-eight hours before the meeting in compliance with the Open Meetings Act of the State of Illinois. A copy of the notice and agenda is attached to the minutes. Also available for inspection are all documents that were reviewed or approved at the meeting.

UPDAC Members	PRESENT	ABSENT
Hannah Sheets, Chair	X	
Eusebio Briseño	X	
Lauren Chambers	X	
Lori Choquette		X
Kanittha Fay	X	
Sylena Harper		X
Lauren Karplus		X
Lucia Maldonado	X	
Martha McSims	X	
Rachel Spencer		X
Ashley Sims		X
Michael Stevenson	X	
Myra Stevens	X	
Brittany Tammen	X	
Gretchen Madsen Webb	X	
Darius White		X

Others Present:

- Cedric Stratton, Commissioner;
- Tim Bartlett, Executive Director;
- Derek Liebert, Superintendent of Planning & Operations;
- Kelsey Beccue, Development Manager;
- Matt Balk, Natural Areas Coordinator;
- Rachel Lenz, Incoming Executive Director;
- Members of the UPD Natural Areas Committee

**I. Call to Order**

UPDAC Chair, Hannah Sheets, called the meeting to order at 6:36 PM.

**II. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**III. Approval of the Minutes of the April 22, 2025 Meeting**

Hannah presented the minutes of the April 22, 2025 UPDAC Meeting for discussion and approval.

*Lauren Chambers made a motion with a second from Michael Stevenson to approve the minutes of the April 22, 2025 UPDAC Meeting. A vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.*

**IV. New Business**

**A. Perkins Road Park Site Tour**

The UPDAC site visit began with a warm welcome from Tim, who expressed his appreciation for the committee’s ongoing support and interest in the park district's initiatives. Derek Liebert followed with an introduction to Matt, an employee of the park district and our guide for the tour. Matt plays an active role in overseeing Perkins Road Park and its daily operations.

The group toured the Perkins Road Park Site, a natural area that is currently not open to the public. Matt led the tour along one of the park’s primary walking trails, where he pointed out a variety of native plant species. Notably, Foxglove was abundant, lining the trail and stretching into adjacent fields. He provided valuable insight into the ecological management of the park, explaining that while many native plants thrive, there are also invasive species present. These are managed through a combination of manual removal, trimming, and, when conditions allow, controlled burns which is an effective strategy to mitigate their growth ahead of the spring season.

In addition to the plant life, the group had the opportunity to observe and hear some of the park’s resident wildlife. Deer, bullfrogs, and cricket frogs were encountered during the visit. Matt also mentioned that over the years, there have been occasional sightings of more elusive species such as snakes, skunks, bobcats, and even otters, indicating a healthy and diverse ecosystem.

Matt emphasized that while there are future plans to open Perkins Road Park to the public, the Park District is proceeding cautiously. There are some concerns that increased foot traffic and human activity could potentially disrupt the habitat and behavior of local wildlife. The committee appreciated the opportunity for this exclusive look into a site that showcases the park district’s commitment to conservation and responsible land stewardship.

## **V. Reports**

### **A. UPDAC Chair**

No report.

### **B. Board Representative**

Cedric introduced incoming UPD Executive Director Rachel Lenz, who is in her beginning steps into transitioning into the position. Along with that, he also mentioned that the park district is very excited to welcome two more incoming commissioners.

### **C. Director's Report**

Tim Bartlett closed out his last director's report by thanking UPDAC for their involvement with the park district and how amazing it has been to be a part of a community that truly cares about their parks. He spoke about Rachel and how she will be taking over his position.

Rachel was able to give a couple of words about how excited she is to be a part of the board with the Urbana Park District and how amazing our community truly is.

### **D. Capital Projects Report**

Derek gave an update on a couple of projects which are underway, one being the exciting news that they have officially broken ground on the Kickapoo Rail Trail Trailhead Pavilion. This is a project the UPD and the UPDAC members are thrilled to see as it will be a path that connects from Urbana all the way to Danville and possibly further.

## **VI. UPDAC Member Comments and Open Discussion**

Lauren Chambers brought up that she has received great feedback in regards to our aquatic facilities and how happy the community has been with it so far, the only concern was that the showers seem to be running cold water only in the showers. Derek informed the group that it is something that is being actively looked into.

Lucia mentioned that some students who are from abroad but studied at the Urbana high school this past year had an amazing time at an end of school year park event to wrap up their time here. She mentioned how amazed they were at the free things the park has to offer to the community.

## **VII. Adjourn**

Hannah Sheets adjourned the meeting at 7:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Eusebio Briseño



# Climate Action, Resilience, Education, and Sustainability Plan 2025 Report - CARES Plan Year 4

Welcome to the Year 4 CARES Plan Report! In this document, we are reflecting on our achievements from this past CARES year (April 2024-April 2025). It is very important to reflect on our achievements and progress so that we are better equipped to address the action items still to come. This report is also a tool to keep the Urbana Parks community informed as to our progress and the roles that everyone plays when it comes to Climate Action, Resilience, Education, and Sustainability!

The full plan can be found at: <https://www.urbanaparks.org/about-us/green-initiatives/>

## Urbana Park District CARES Plan

### Climate Action, Resilience, Education and Sustainability

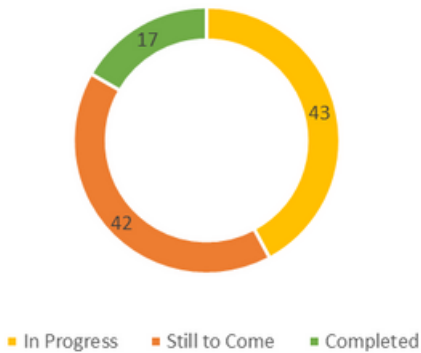
Acceptance date: April 13, 2021



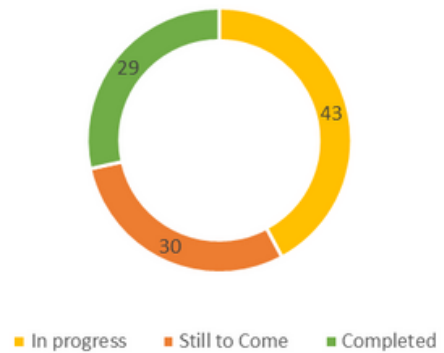
## Introduction

The Urbana Park District CARES Plan has three overarching pillars: Communicating Climate Action, Protecting & Strengthening Our Natural Environment, and Conserving Resources. This document compares the progress for Year 1, Year 2, and Year 4 on the plan's action items. A report was not completed for Year 3. These are described as Completed, currently In Progress, and those which are Still to Come. As shown in the below pie charts, 52 action items have been completed (up from 29 in Year 2), 41 are currently In Progress, and 9 are still to come (down from 30 in Year 2). 91% of our action items are either Completed or In Progress!

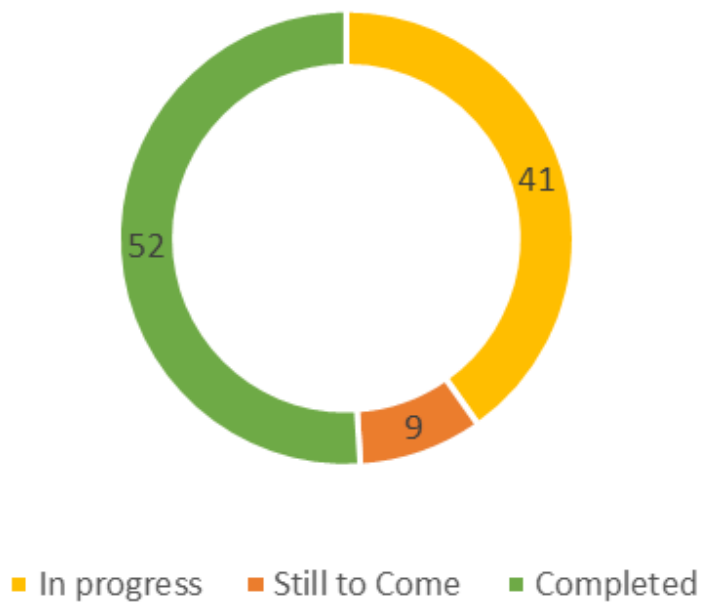
CARES Plan Progress Year 1  
(April 2021-April 2022)



CARES Plan Progress Year 2  
(April 2022- April 2023)



CARES Plan Progress Year 4  
(April 2024 - April 2025)



## Goal Achievements by Planning Pillar

The action items of the CARES Plan are separated into three planning pillars, each with a unique purpose. Listed next are key examples of practices utilized and undertaken by the Urbana Park District and its community relative to each pillar. These items effectively demonstrate the significant extent to which we are implementing our CARES Plan, and our commitment to Climate Action, Resilience, Education, and Sustainability through all our activities and endeavors.



**Communicating Climate Action** underscores the Urbana Park District's commitment to serve as a community leader and role model for climate action—through internal practices, public outreach & programs, and collaborative partnerships.

- Working with kids and teens on climate action through summer camps and the FRESH Stewardship Program
- Launched a new climate-related event, Bat Festival in 2024
- Developing CARES Plan awareness through promotion at community events
- Communicating climate action through art exhibits and installations
- Created new staff position: Environmental Services & Outreach Coordinator



**Protecting & Strengthening Our Natural Environment** reinforces the Urbana Park District's responsibility to care for the health of humans, plants, animals, ecosystems & the climate—by reducing our carbon footprint, stewarding biodiversity & natural areas, and improving air & water quality.

- Planting more trees in park district properties each year
- Installing more bike racks in public parks each year
- Improvement of water quality through smarter salting practices
- Continued focus on new green infrastructure in park development projects, such as raingardens and bioswales



**Conserving Resources** highlights the Urbana Park District's dedication to the sustainability of natural resources—through conserving energy & water, using clean energy, reducing waste, and increasing recycling & reuse.

- Reduction in energy use through installation of energy efficient fixtures like auto light switches, LED lights, and variable frequency drives
- Implementation of paperless timekeeping system
- Water conservation through rainwater harvesting at the Health & Wellness Center and leak testing and reducing running showers at both pools
- Expansion of solar at park district facilities
- Expansion in use of electric hand tools in Planning & Operations

## What's Next?

Here are a few things we are looking into for next year and beyond:

- The role of climate action in the next strategic plan
- Sustainable procurement and purchasing practices
- Increasing the proportion of electric and hybrid vehicles in the district's fleet