



The Nature Conservancy in Illinois
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Chicago Park District
541 N. Fairbanks
Chicago, IL 60611

RE: Comment on Proposed Amendments to Chapter VII, Section C of the Code of the Chicago Park District

October 28, 2022

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed changes to Chapter VII, Section C of the Code of the Chicago Park District.

Since 2015, The Nature Conservancy in Illinois has worked in partnership with the Chicago Park District and local communities to support the stewardship of natural areas in parks throughout the city of Chicago. With the District and many partners, we have especially focused on improving community connections with natural areas in South and West Side parks, such as Garfield Park, Washington Park, and Ping Tom Park. Community leaders have campaigned for years to maintain access to parks and to keep these natural areas intact for the benefit of both people and nature.

Based on this experience, The Nature Conservancy encourages the Board of the Chicago Park District to support proposed changes giving the Board oversight of permits for large events, with the goal of bringing community voices into the decision-making process for events that could have a significant impact on park natural areas and other access. Events that influence the use of such vital spaces need direct input from affected communities and consistent transparency in decision-making, beginning in the earliest phases of the planning process.

The Nature Conservancy is committed to maintaining, expanding and conserving nature in Chicago Parks for sustaining healthy, resilient communities. We are called to take particular care when it comes to equitable access to green space. Chicago's parks and natural areas are spaces that foster connection between people and nature. We encourage the Chicago Park District to support community members who maintain and utilize our parks, which are critical to our health and well-being.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



Illinois Director
The Nature Conservancy