

# **Elder and Centennial Park and Beach Project, Winnetka, IL**

## **Letters of Support**

Revised October 19, 2021

- Letter #1 from US Senator Richard Durbin
- Letter #2 from US Senator Tammy Duckworth
- Letter #3 from US Representative Jan Schakowsky
- Letter #4 from Illinois Representative Robyn Gabel and Illinois Senator Laura Fine
- Letter #5 from the Village of Winnetka
- Letter #6 from John Edwardson, neighbor immediately north of new park at 301 Sheridan Road
- Letter #7 from Dmitry Godin, neighbor at the second property north of new park at 319 Sheridan Road
- Letter #8 from Orchard 2020 Trust, neighbor immediately south of new park at 203 Sheridan Road
- Letter #9 from Leo Birov, neighbor at the second property south of new park at 195 Sheridan Road

**United States Senate**  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1304

October 13 2021

Colonel Paul Culberson  
Commander, Chicago District  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
231 S. LaSalle Street, Suite 1500  
Chicago, Illinois, 60604

Dear Colonel Culberson:

I am writing to in support of the Winnetka Park District's proposal to create a protected beachfront area encompassing Elder and Centennial Parks. If approved, this project will fulfill a major piece of the Park District's "Winnetka Waterfront 2030" Plan and provide meaningful beachfront recreational opportunities for individuals in the community.

Extreme weather and climate change have been key factors in the high water levels along Lake Michigan, and have contributed to erosion and destruction of the shoreline. In addition to the elimination of accessible beachfront, the impact to the shoreline creates significant safety hazards.

Winnetka Park District's plan will address both the erosion of the beachfront as well as the safety risks presented by the current waterfront. My staff visited the current parks and witnessed firsthand the need to improve safety and accessibility of these beaches moving forward.

Please give full and fair consideration to Winnetka Park District's proposal. If you require additional information, please contact my State Director, Clarisol Duque, at (312) 353-4952.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator

## United States Senate

October 8, 2021

Colonel Paul Culberson  
Commander, Chicago District  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
231 S. LaSalle Street, Suite 1500  
Chicago, Illinois, 60604

Colonel Culberson:

I write to express my support for the Winnetka Park District's Elder and Centennial Park Combined Park (the "Park") project. Understanding the importance of building sustainable beachfront infrastructure while handling Lake Michigan's high water levels and increasingly extreme weather conditions, Winnetka endeavors to prevent further erosion of their beaches and bluffs while accomplishing the long-stated goal of creating a unified park.

The Park is the culmination of the vision and strategy adopted by the Winnetka Park District in its Winnetka Waterfront 2030 Plan. It is my understanding that the Winnetka Park District's plan for this project includes combining two beach-front parks that are currently separated by a private residence into one contiguous parcel with nearly 1,000 feet of safe shoreline. Beyond generating significant new beach area, the Park plan aims to protect against further erosion of the beach, bluff and table land by including thoughtfully designed, soil protecting planting pockets and breakwaters with safety enhancements at the northern and southern boundaries of the Park. Additionally, the Park District has taken several measures to include ADA ramp access to the boardwalk and beach enabling recreational participation at the Park for individuals of all abilities.

As a U.S. Senator, I have made it a priority to support locally led projects that enhance public access to Illinois beaches, address potential safety concerns and sustainably protect against erosion. I believe the public's safe use of all parts of this park is of the utmost importance and I believe the Winnetka Park District is acting proactively to protect our residents and Park patrons.

In keeping with your existing rules and regulations, I urge you to give this proposal full and fair consideration. Should you have any questions, please contact my Chicago Director, Loren Harris, at (312) 886-3506.

Sincerely,



Tammy Duckworth  
United States Senator

JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY  
9TH DISTRICT, ILLINOIS

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE  
*Chair, Consumer Protection  
and Commerce*

Environment and Climate Change  
Oversight and Investigations

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

SENIOR CHIEF DEPUTY WHIP

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-1309

2367 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
Telephone: 202-225-2111  
Fax: 202-226-6890  
TTY: 202-224-3901

5533 N. BROADWAY, SUITE 2  
CHICAGO, IL 60640  
Telephone: 773-506-7100  
Fax: 773-506-9202

1852 JOHNS DRIVE  
GLENVIEW, IL 60025  
Telephone: 847-328-3409  
Fax: 847-328-3425

October 8, 2021

Colonel Paul Culberson  
Commander, Chicago District  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
231 S. LaSalle Street, Suite 1500  
Chicago, Illinois, 60604

**RE: Letter of Support for Winnetka Park District's recent proposal for a lake front project encompassing Elder & Centennial Parks**

Dear Colonel Culberson:

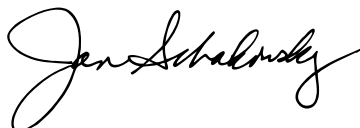
I am writing to share my enthusiastic support for the recent proposal submitted by the Winnetka Park District for an effort to create a protected beachfront area encompassing Elder and Centennial Parks. If approved, this project will fulfill a major piece of the Park District's "Winnetka Waterfront 2030" Plan and provide meaningful beachfront recreational opportunities for individuals in the community.

As a Member of Congress representing the 9<sup>th</sup> Congressional District for many years, I know that many of our community's proximity to Lake Michigan's shoreline is both a major benefit and a major challenge. High water levels along Lake Michigan in recent years have had a devastating impact on public spaces along its entire shoreline, and Winnetka is no exception. My staff were able to tour these parks firsthand and confirm that significant efforts are necessary to ensure safe and accessible use of these beaches moving forward.

It is my understanding that the Winnetka Park District's plan for this site encompasses the combination of these two parks in a way that ensure almost 1,000 feet of protected and safe shoreline for public use. According to Park District staff, this design will include dedicated and distinct swimming and paddleboat/kayak areas, a boardwalk, an event space, and more.

I am convinced that this proposed project will meaningfully benefit Winnetka and its residents. In keeping within your existing rules and regulations, I urge you to give this recent application full and fair consideration. If you need additional information and/or if you have questions, I encourage you to reach out to Mr. Andrew Goczkowski, the Grants Coordinator on my staff. He is available directly by telephone at 202-427-2176 or by email at [Andrew.Goczkowski@mail.house.gov](mailto:Andrew.Goczkowski@mail.house.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jan Schakowsky". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jan" being more prominent and the last name "Schakowsky" written in a continuous script.

Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress



**GENERAL ASSEMBLY**  
STATE OF ILLINOIS

United States Army Corps of Engineers  
Chicago District  
Regulatory Branch  
231 S. LaSalle Street, Suite 1500  
Chicago, IL 60604

October 7, 2021

Illinois Department of Natural Resources  
OWR Lake Michigan Management Section  
Michael A. Bilandic Building  
160 N. LaSalle Street, Suite S-703  
Chicago, Illinois 60601

**Re: Letter of Support for Elder and Centennial Park Project**

Dear Army Corps of Engineers and Illinois Department of Natural Resources:

Please accept this letter as evidence of our full support for the Winnetka Park District's plan to combine Elder Lane Park and Beach and Centennial Park and Beach to dramatically improve available lakefront recreation programming for Illinois residents to embrace and enjoy.

The Park District's work to create the new park is a wonderful culmination of the vision and strategy adopted by the Winnetka Park District in its Winnetka Waterfront 2030 Plan. We understand the plan is the product of numerous community engagement and planning sessions dating back to 2011 for the Park District and a Village of Winnetka strategy since the 1990s. We visited the two parks and beaches to gain significant appreciation for the design plan to combine the parks and beaches. It is a transformative plan for the benefit of the entire community and the public at large.

During the visit to Elder Lane Beach and Centennial Beach, we witnessed how Lake Michigan's high water levels and increasingly extreme weather conditions have deteriorated the steel groins currently on the site and how the conditions have significantly eroded the shorelines and bluffs at Elder Lane Park and Beach and



## **GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

### **STATE OF ILLINOIS**

Centennial Park and Beach. We also learned about how the Park District has designed a breakwater plan for the new, combined park to protect the shorelines and bluffs and provide a safe recreation environment. In our view(s), the most important component of this new park is that the plan has many thoughtful design features to prevent further erosion of the beaches and bluffs while accomplishing the long-stated goal of creating a unified park with unparalleled amenities for the community.

Importantly, this new Park as designed accomplishes the following key objectives:

- Combines two beach-front parks that are currently separated by a private residence (rendering the beach front impassable) into one contiguous parcel, with nearly 1,000 feet of safe shoreline;
- Creates distinct recreation activities including a swimming area, a non-motorized watercraft area, 800 feet of continuous boardwalk, a large "T-shaped" sunbathing pier, and a new beachfront event space; and
- Generates significant new beach area and protects against further erosion of the beach, bluff and table land by including thoughtfully designed, soil protecting planting pockets and breakwaters with safety enhancements at the northern and southern boundaries of the Park.

Individually and collectively, we fully support the way this park and beach, as designed, addresses potential safety concerns. The new park and beach are expected to attract thousands of visitors per year. The public's safe use of all parts of the park and beach is of the utmost importance, and we support the extra steps taken by the Winnetka Park District to proactively protect our citizens and patrons.



**GENERAL ASSEMBLY**  
STATE OF ILLINOIS

Thank you for your work and please feel free to contact us if you would like to discuss any aspect of this new Park further.

Sincerely,

*Robyn Gabel*

Robyn Gabel  
State Representative  
**District Office Address**  
2100 Ridge, Suite 2600  
Evanston, IL 60201

*Laura Fine*

Laura Fine  
State Senator  
**District Office Address**  
1812 Waukegan Road, Suite A  
Glenview, IL 60025



October 8, 2021

United States Army Corps of Engineers  
Chicago District  
Regulatory Branch  
231 S. LaSalle Street, Suite 1500  
Chicago, IL 60604

Illinois Department of Natural Resources  
OWR Lake Michigan Management Section  
Michael A. Bilandic Building  
160 N. LaSalle Street, Suite S-703  
Chicago, Illinois 60601

**Re: Letter of Support for Elder and Centennial Park Project**

Dear United States Army Corps of Engineers and Illinois Department of Natural Resources:

Please accept this letter as the Village of Winnetka's support for the Winnetka Park District's plan to combine Elder Lane Park and Beach and Centennial Park and Beach to dramatically improve available lakefront recreation programming, which Illinois residents will embrace and enjoy.

The Park District's work to create the new park is a wonderful culmination of the vision and strategy adopted by the Winnetka Park District in its Winnetka Waterfront 2030 Plan. The plan is the product of numerous community engagement and planning sessions dating back to 2011 for the Park District. The concept also has been part of the Village of Winnetka's current Comprehensive Plan. While we have visited the parks and beaches many times, we most recently visited the two parks and beaches October 5 and October 6 to, again, gain significant appreciation for the design plan to combine the parks and beaches. It is a transformative plan for the benefit of the entire community and the public at large.

We have witnessed how Lake Michigan's high-water levels and increasingly extreme weather conditions have deteriorated the steel groins currently on the site and how the conditions have significantly eroded the shorelines and bluffs at Elder Lane Park and Beach and Centennial Park and Beach. The Park District has designed a breakwater plan for the new, combined park to protect the shorelines and bluffs and provide a safe recreation environment. The most important component of this new park is that the plan has many thoughtful design features to prevent further erosion of the beaches and bluffs while accomplishing the long-stated goal of creating a unified park with unparalleled amenities for the community.

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- Generates significant new beach area and protects against further erosion of the beach, bluff and tableland by including thoughtfully designed, soil protecting planting pockets and breakwaters with safety enhancements at the northern and southern boundaries of the Park.

We fully support the way this park and beach, as designed, addresses potential safety concerns. The new park and new beach are expected to attract thousands of visitors per year. The public's safe use of all parts of the park and beach is of the utmost importance, and we support the extra steps taken by the Winnetka Park District to proactively protect our citizens and all patrons.

Thank you for your work and please feel free to contact either of us if you would like to discuss any aspect of this new park further.

Sincerely,



Christopher D. Rintz  
Village President  
**Village of Winnetka**  
510 Green Bay Road  
Winnetka, IL 60093



Robert M. Bahan  
Village Manager  
**Village of Winnetka**  
510 Green Bay Road  
Winnetka, IL 60093

October 8, 2021

Mr. Soren Hall  
United States Army Corps of Engineers  
Chicago District, Regulatory Branch  
231 South LaSalle Street, Unit 1500  
Chicago, Illinois 60604

James P. Casey, Chief  
Lake Michigan Management Section  
Illinois Department of Natural Resources  
Office of Water Resources  
160 N. LaSalle Street, Suite S-703  
Chicago, IL 60601

**RE: Letter of Support for Elder Lane Park and Beach + Centennial Park and Beach Project**

Dear United States Army Corps of Engineers and Illinois Department of Natural Resources:

Please accept this letter as evidence of my support for the Winnetka Park District's plan dated September 9, 2021 to combine Elder Lane Park and Beach and Centennial Park and Beach, which will improve available lakefront recreation programming for Winnetka residents and the community at large to enjoy for decades to come.

The Park District's work to create the new park is a wonderful culmination of the vision and strategy adopted by the Winnetka Park District in its Winnetka Waterfront 2030 Plan. I understand the plan is the product of numerous community engagement and planning sessions dating back to 2011 for the Park District and a Village of Winnetka strategy since the 1990s. As a Winnetka resident and a neighbor to the north of Elder Lane Park, I often visit the two parks and beaches. I have significant appreciation for the design plan to combine the parks and beaches; it is a transformative plan for the benefit of the entire community and the public at large.

As a resident along the shoreline, I am keenly aware of Lake Michigan's high water levels and damage resulting therefrom. The recent water levels and severe storms have deteriorated the steel groins currently on the Elder and Centennial shorelines and have significantly eroded the shorelines and bluffs at Elder and Centennial. I support the Park District's breakwater plan for the new, combined park to protect the shorelines and bluffs and provide a safe recreation environment.

In my opinion, the most important component of this new park is that the plan has many thoughtful design features to prevent further erosion of the beaches and bluffs while accomplishing the long-stated goal of creating a unified park with unparalleled amenities for

the community. Importantly, this new Park as designed accomplishes the following key objectives:

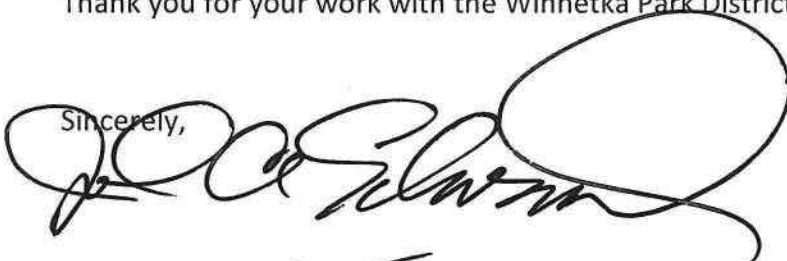
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- Generates significant new beach area and protects against further erosion of the beach, bluff and tableland by including thoughtfully designed, soil protecting planting pockets and breakwaters with safety enhancements at the northern and southern boundaries of the Park.

I support the way this plan for Elder and Centennial, as designed, addresses potential safety concerns. The new park likely will attract thousands of visitors per year. The public's safe use of all parts of this park is of the utmost importance, and I support the extra steps taken by the Winnetka Park District to proactively protect Winnetka residents and all park patrons.

This letter of support does not grant any easements to the Park District.

Thank you for your work with the Winnetka Park District.

Sincerely,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John A. Edwards".

JOHN A. EDWARDS  
301 SHERIDAN ROAD  
WINNETKA, IL  
60093

October 7, 2021

Mr. Soren Hall  
United States Army Corps of Engineers  
Chicago District, Regulatory Branch  
231 South LaSalle Street, Unit 1500  
Chicago, Illinois 60604

James P. Casey, Chief  
Lake Michigan Management Section  
Illinois Department of Natural Resources  
Office of Water Resources  
160 N. LaSalle Street, Suite S-703  
Chicago, IL 60601

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As a resident along the shoreline, I am keenly aware of Lake Michigan's high water levels and increasingly extreme weather conditions. The water levels and severe storms have deteriorated the steel groins currently on the Elder and Centennial shorelines and have significantly eroded the shorelines and bluffs at Elder and Centennial. I have come to learn about how the Park District has designed a breakwater plan for the new, combined park to protect the shorelines and bluffs and provide a safe recreation environment.

In my opinion, the most important component of this new park is that the plan has many thoughtful design features to prevent further erosion of the beaches and bluffs while accomplishing the long-stated goal of creating a unified park with unparalleled amenities for the community.

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Thank you for your work with the Winnetka Park District.



Sincerely,

Dmitry Godin  
319 Sheridan Road  
Winnetka, IL 60093

Re: Letter of Support for Elder and Centennial Park Project

10/5/2021

Dear Winnetka Park District,

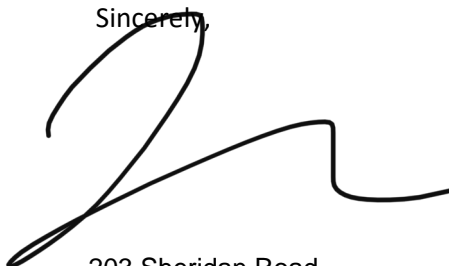
My family and I would like to express our complete support for the pending combination of Elder and Centennial Park into one large lakefront park and beach system. We are in full support of the combined park in its current design.

We are excited about the many opportunities and amenities the project offers to all Winnetka residents and their guests. We appreciate the Park District's effort to support infrastructure improvements which are required due of high lake water levels, and address erosion and bluff deterioration through the project.

Additionally, we fully encourage the Park District's priority of safety with its addition of an accessible walking path to the beach, the new driveway allowing emergency vehicle access to the beach and the inclusion of the breakwater guard rails - which will double as dog fencing when the neighborhood's four-legged friends are enjoying the beach.

Thank you to the Winnetka Park District for their planning, hard work, and perseverance to bring these unbelievable new amenities to the shores of our Village.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'S' or 'Z' shape with a horizontal line extending to the right.

203 Sheridan Road  
Winnetka, IL 60093

Re: Letter of Support for Elder and Centennial Park Project

10/5/2021

Dear Winnetka Park District,

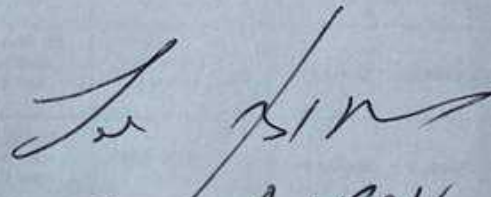
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Sincerely,



CEO BIRD

195 SHERIDAN RD  
WINNETKA, IL, 60093