



City of Highland Park

HIGHLAND PARK SENIOR CENTER RENOVATION AND TEMPORARY RELOCATION Q&A

9 February 2024

The purpose of this document is to provide information about the Highland Park Senior Center, and specifically pertaining to the Renovation planned at the property and the temporary relocation plans. Information about the temporary location site begins on page 8.

Regular updates of this document will be provided through the City's hard-copy newsletters, eNews, social media and direct communication with Senior Center members. This document will continue to be updated throughout the project and will be available at the Senior Center and posted to the City's web site. If individuals have questions, they are encouraged to contact the City Manager's Office or Senior Center Division at 847-926-1000 or 847-432-4110.

What is the Highland Park Senior Center?

The Highland Park Senior Center is a Division of the City of Highland Park created in 1976 to meet the needs of the community's 50+ population.

The Division of Senior Services provides health, recreational, cultural, educational and counseling services to the City's senior population. The Division also serves as a resource and advocate in areas of importance to the well-being of the senior community, with primary attention given to transportation, housing, and personal safety. All programs are available to individuals age 50 and older. A nominal membership fee is required for participation in many of the free programs; however, all residents are welcome to participate in fee-based programming.

Resident Individual: \$30

Resident Couple: \$50

Non-Resident Individual: \$50

Non-Resident Couple: \$90

The City of Highland Park's Senior Center offers a diverse array of more than 900 activities throughout the year and serves over 850 members. The City strives to be inclusive of the needs of all of our community members through thoughtful programming; and works with community partners such as the Art Center of Highland Park, Highland Park Public Library, Moraine Township, Park District of Highland Park and local businesses to offer a unique array of experiences for membership. The current program schedule is available in the most recent issue of the Shorelines Newsletter [HERE](#).

What is the history of Senior Center's operations at 1201 Park Ave W?

The City of Highland Park owns and operates the former Highland Park Country Club building, a 46,000 square foot facility which originally opened in 1969 as a private country club and golf course, and was subsequently purchased by the City of Highland Park in 1996. In 2017, as part of a larger library, youth, and senior needs assessment, a formal needs assessment of Senior Services and the Highland Park Country Club, including public feedback, was completed. The final assessment included a recommendation to relocate Senior Services from 54 Laurel Avenue to the Highland Park Country Club. The Senior Center operated at 54 Laurel from 1976 until 2021 when services relocated to the Country Club. The move allowed for greater access to on-site parking, room within the location to spread and meet together in a safer environment, and offered opportunity for continued growth in programming options and membership.

The building is fully accessible and features a grand ballroom, two salons, a large kitchen, and bathrooms on the main floor as well as an office suite, two flex rooms, a smaller kitchen, storage, and a medical equipment loan closet on the lower level. The building offers a dual purpose, housing the City's Division of Senior Services, as well as operating as a private event venue on evenings and weekends, through an exclusive agreement with the City's selected catering and event management firm.

In addition, the City and the Park District share use and maintenance of communal areas between the former Country Club and the adjacent Park District Recreation Center including but not limited to locker rooms, mutual hallways, elevator, mechanical equipment, and dumpster bay. The golf course property, which was sold to the Park District of Highland Park in 2018, was permanently closed after the 2017 golf season and currently operates as a natural area and passive-park known as The Preserve.

As part of the City's Capital Improvement Plan, dedicated funding has been earmarked for the renovation of 1201 Park Ave. W to better serve the functional needs of both Senior Services and private events, provide for needed facility updates including mechanical, engineering and plumbing, and renew the look and feel of the facility.

Why is the City renovating 1201 Park Ave W?

The City of Highland Park's Division of Senior Services offers a diverse array of more than 900 activities throughout the year and serves over 850 members. Over the past two years, Senior Center membership has increased with the growing aging population in Highland Park and more Baby Boomers coming into retirement annually. Membership, activity participation, and use of social services is expected to see continued growth in the years to come. Currently, a wide variety of activities and classes take place at 1201 Park Ave. W. in the salons, ballroom, and lower level flex rooms Monday through Friday.

The current space is used evenings and weekends for private events through an exclusive agreement with the City's selected catering and event management firm, including weddings, mitzvahs, meetings, birthday parties, company outings, tradeshow, receptions, showers, holiday parties, and training sessions.

The existing space is dated, requires significant maintenance, and is lacking in intentional multi-use space designed with the needs of the 50+ community in mind. Renovation of the facility will assist the City in better meeting the goal of serving the needs of the 50+ community within Highland Park while

also transforming the existing banquet space into an exceptional private event space on the North Shore.

Both the upper and lower levels will be fully updated with refreshed interior finishes and furnishings. Plans include revised layout elements, such as a new, single level entrance to the east of the building that will be closer to new designated parking for Senior Center guests. Architectural plans, along with design boards will be available for viewing in the coming weeks.

What is the timing of the renovation?

The renovation timeline is still being finalized with the initial plan to complete renovation in phases, with the upper level banquet and activity spaces being completed first. The upper level is anticipated to be completed this summer and the lower level late summer early fall. Temporary relocation of the Senior Center at 770 Deerfield Rd is scheduled through the end of June 2024.

During the first phase of renovation, various Senior Center operations including classes, activities, and administrative offices have been relocated to 770 Deerfield Rd - Christ Our Hope Parish School (formerly Immaculate Conception) and will operate there through June, 2024. The Senior Center's Medical Equipment Loan Closet will continue to operate from 1201 Park Ave W.

Who is leading architectural, engineering, and interior design for the renovation?

On March 6, 2023, the City issued a Request for Proposals to provide professional services for renovation of the Highland Park Country Club, to include architectural, engineering, and interior design. In June 2023 the City engaged the firm Holabird & Root to provide these services following the RFP process.

Holabird & Root were selected to move forward with the project, due to the knowledge, experience, and passion of the designated project team members, their extensive work within the private club, municipal facility, and recreation spaces, and with strong consideration of their pricing. Holabird & Root has significant involvement in renovation of older facilities and recognizes the need to preserve what can be reutilized while incorporating updates that meet the demands of this flexible environment. Their portfolio of experience gives Holabird & Root a unique understanding of the needs of both the senior center and high end private event space. The firm is currently working with the Park District of Highland Park on the redevelopment of West Ridge Center, and recently completed Phase One, the vision, analysis, and conceptual phase. They are presently under negotiations for Phase Two, which will take them from design through construction.

Services contracted with Holabird & Root began with phase 1: preliminary programming and design utilizations study, moved into phase 2: building design renovation, and will conclude with phase 3: building renovation construction administration and closeout. The first two phases of the process included evaluation and assessment of the current building, a thorough understanding of needs for both the senior center and the catering and event management team, public engagement, ranking and prioritizing projects based on budget, preliminary and final plans, and preparing a detailed project estimate alongside the general contractor (to be selected by RFP at a later date). The planning process included multiple opportunities for public engagement, including a community-wide survey and in-person meetings where Senior Center and community members were invited to learn about the scope

of the project and share feedback, thoughts and ideas regarding the renovation project with the Holabird & Root team.

In the final phase Holabird & Root will bring the City through the renovation stages of the project including weekly onsite meetings and administration during construction.

Who is the Construction Manager for the renovation?

On December 28, 2023, the City issued a Request for Qualifications to contract for construction manager-at-risk (“CMR”) services in connection with the renovation of the former Highland Park Country Club (1201 Park Ave W.). The City requested statements of qualifications from construction management firms to provide CMR services for the project. For purposes of this project, the CMR is someone who will have substantial discretion and authority to plan, coordinate, manage, direct and construct all phases of the Project and who provides the City with a guaranteed maximum price. Qualified firms were asked to submit proposals.

Leopardo Construction was ultimately selected to move forward with the project due to their thoughtful approach to the project, dedicated Municipal project team’s knowledge and working with municipal facilities, their pre-construction and project timeline, and with strong consideration of their pricing. A contract is before Council for approval on February 12, 2024. Technical proposals were evaluated based on proposed staffing, subcontracting plan, estimating strategies, procurement strategies, value added suggestions, schedule, site logistics and safety plan, quality assurance/quality control plan, and their unique approach to challenges and finding solutions.

Services contracted with Leopardo will be to provide construction phase services. The construction phase services will generally involve working collaboratively with the City and Design Professional along with other consultants to provide a phased renovation schedule, construction schedule timeline with procurement lead times integrated into a Critical Path Schedule (CPM). The CMR will review prior cost estimates and budget reviews and offer scheduling input to develop a Guaranteed Maximum Price (“GMP”) proposal for the Project. The CMR will be expected to provide input on value engineering options and solutions for the Project so the City can achieve Project objectives within its budget. The construction phase services will involve building the Project pursuant to the Contract Documents according to the agreed upon schedule within a Guaranteed Maximum Price. The GMP will be established after full bidding of each trade at the end of the Construction Documents Phase. Once all competitive bids are reviewed then the GMP will be established using an open book method. At least three bids per trade is the objective to establish the GMP. Any and all buy-downs of the trades will be directed to the City of Highland Park. The City reserves the right to reject any proposed self-performed work by the CMR.

How did the City engage with the community about the renovation plans?

In 2017, as part of a larger library, youth, and senior needs assessment, a formal needs assessment of Senior Services and the Highland Park Country Club, including significant public feedback, was completed. The final assessment included a recommendation to relocate Senior Services from 54 Laurel Avenue to the former Highland Park Country Club (1201 Park Ave. W). The City planned for a future renovation of 1201 Park Ave W. designating funding in the Capital Improvements Budget for renovation to take place in FY2024.

The City established a Senior Center Task Force consisting of members of the community to obtain their insight on needs and plans for a future facility. Information was also sought from the general public

through various communication modalities such as the Shorelines newsletter, Highlander newsletter and eNews.

In June 2023, the City engaged the firm Holabird & Root to provide architectural, engineering, and interior design services, following an RFP process. The planning process included multiple opportunities for public engagement, including focus groups, a community-wide survey, and in-person meetings where Senior Center and community members were invited to learn about the scope of the project and share feedback, thoughts and ideas regarding the renovation project with the Holabird & Root team. This information was shared through all City communication modalities including direct email to Senior Center members.

What length of time is anticipated for the renovation of 1201 Park Ave W to last?

The renovation timeline is still being finalized with the initial plan to complete renovation in phases, with the upper level banquet and activity spaces being completed first. The upper level is anticipated to be completed this summer and the lower level late summer early fall. Temporary relocation of the Senior Center at 770 Deerfield Rd is scheduled through the end of June 2024.

What updates will the renovation include?

The entire facility will have updated furniture, fixtures, and equipment throughout. In addition the renovation plans call for significant demolition and renovation on the upper level to modernize the private event space, update restrooms, resize the existing kitchen, provide added security features, and create more usable space for operations. The upper level renovation will also include improved access to the existing West Terrace and a new stairway from the East Salon to The Preserve below.

The lower level renovation includes significant demolition, new staff office space, creation of four distinct multi-use rooms and a new dedicated entrance for Senior Center operations on the east side of the building where new reserved senior parking will be added on what is currently concrete pads. The current plan is to move all members through the new entryway on the east side of the building.

The new East Entry will serve as the main entry point to the Senior Center and provides indoor walking rather than having individuals walk the comparable distance outside to get to the current doorway and elevator. The entryway closest to the parking lot will be more convenient for seniors and provide greater accessibility, and easier access into the building to avoid weather elements. The entrance will include an overhang, double doors and the lobby area will be welcoming with a greeter. Currently, there is a large lobby area in the Senior Center and based on feedback from members there would not be an interest to have a large lounge area in the front lobby area. A smaller lounge will be part of the entry.

The hallway leading from the entry lounge area has breaks in it so it will not have service corridor look or feel, is designed for members to traverse with a care giver if needed, and provides handrails. While the Senior Center will use all of the building for activities the lower level itself holds four multi use rooms that will host a large amount of programming and be a primary location for those attending events.

Will the parking lot be improved as part of the renovation project?

The existing parking lot which includes parking for The Preserve, Recreation Center, and Senior Center will be redone in 2024. While this project is separate from the renovation of 1201 Park Ave W it is being informed by Holabird & Root working with the engineering firm and City staff in the parking lot redesign.

The redesign will include a new parking area with dedicated parking for seniors during the hours of operation of the Senior Center with additional accessible parking spaces. The parking area will reimagine the existing concrete pads, utilized previously by the former gold course and provide increased parking at the new main entry point for the Senior Center on the east side of the building.

Will there be a café in the renovated Senior Center?

When the Country Club operated as a golf course, there was a café in the lower level which did fairly well. However, without the golfers and after research, evaluation, and discussion by the design team and staff from the City and Park District, it was determined that it would likely not be sustainable, as this type of café is rarely successful in these types of environments. The facilities staff and the design team review included senior centers and park district facilities. One community example has a similar side-by-side situation, with a much larger facility and more people coming through the doors. They reported they had a hard time keeping their “café” operating and closed in recent years. Similarly, it has been a trend for park district rec centers to eliminate their juice bars because they were rarely used by members and not frequented by guests that are not using the facility.

It is not recommended that we have a café that is open to the public and the Senior Center is not set up to be a community center. Consider the library space which has the greatest number of visitors than any other public building and they have a coffee machine for the public rather than a café. Similarly, other libraries that have renovated in recent years that have set up their libraries as community centers, have chosen to have a lounge area with coffee machines and snacks, but not a private business endeavor. As previously mentioned, flex space will better serve the members for general use.

Additional considerations on the choice not to add a café space include:

- Putting a disposable income based amenity (Café) in the Senior Center is likely counterintuitive to fixed income users.
- The café, if presented as a free amenity (or subsidized) may be well received but would be costly, and would still need foot traffic and daily revenue.
- The addition of a café takes valuable real estate away from needed multi-purpose activity space; this impacts the Senior Center’s ability to continue to grow their offerings and serve more members as well as the ability to rent space to private entities for corporate functions and private parties.
- In terms of security, both the Senior Center and Rec Center have security check-ins in place (the renovation allows for even greater security of premises), opening the site up to public dining negates these security measures which help all involved have a clear understanding of who is on property at any given time.
- The omission of a café space does not hinder the Senior Center from being able to offer cooking classes and other similar courses either utilizing the catering kitchen or in partnership with local restaurants.

A vending machine(s) and a coffee station accessible to membership will be planned. As we continue to grow we anticipate members may want to engage in more activities back to back and stay for longer periods of time and will either bring a lunch or want a snack while they are there. We don't recommend free coffee made from pots based on our past experience at 54 Laurel and are exploring other coffee station solutions.

What is the difference between the Senior Center and a Community Center?

The Senior Center is for programmed events and activities and as such offers a multitude of "drop-in" programs where there is designated space set aside for pick-up card games, and other activities such as puzzle making, and knitting, chess, and canasta in addition to card games. The center is not designed or operated to be a community center for unstructured meet-ups. However members may request use of un-programmed space to meet with fellow members by connecting with Senior Services staff.

After renovation will the upper level space be functional for the Senior Center or only used for private events?

The upper level spaces will continue to serve the seniors well during the week and the City anticipates using these upper level spaces more often, the more membership grows. The City will continue to utilize the upper level for activities such as our popular Brunch & Learn, Friday movies, lecture and music series, and other events with larger groups or requiring larger space for movement.

While Holabird & Root was charged to design a high end rental facility on the upper level they were also told first and foremost to keep seniors front of mind in design, in particular with selection of finishes, furniture, and equipment. They have taken great care to minimize risks such as trip hazards, are cognizant of colors and patterns selected, and upgrades to audio and light to better serve this population.

How long is the renovation of 1201 Park Ave W anticipated to last?

The renovation timeline is still being finalized with the initial plan to complete renovation in phases, with the upper level banquet and activity spaces being completed first. The timeline will be regularly revisited and revised as necessary. The upper level is anticipated to be completed this summer and the lower level late summer early fall. The full renovation is slated to take approximately six (6) to ten (10) months. Temporary relocation of the Senior Center at 770 Deerfield Rd is scheduled through the end of June 2024. Stakeholders will receive regular project updates.

Will renovation construction impact access to the shared elevator used by members of the Park District's Recreation Center?

The construction management team is aware of the need to keep this access point open and safe for users during the entirety of renovations. Any planned interruptions to service that may be required will be planned as far in advance as possible and well communicated. There is no planned long term interruption to access of the shared elevator; as work progresses any planned short term or unintended interruptions occur, both the City and Park District will use all available communication modalities to inform members of the Park District's Recreation Center and the public in a timely manner.

Will construction impact any of the programming provided by the Senior Center?

Senior Center operations will be temporarily relocated to Christ Our Hope parish school (formerly Immaculate Conception) located at 770 Deerfield Road – Highland Park. The move to this location allows for the vast majority of programs and activities to continue through the renovation. A few select activities have been paused during renovations. A list of paused activities is available on page 13 of the current newsletter [HERE](#).

Will any Senior Center programs or services remain at 1201 Park Avenue West during construction?

The Medical Equipment Loan Closet will continue to operate from 1201 Park Avenue W. on Mondays and Thursday, from 2 – 3 PM. For Loan Closet details, please click [HERE](#).

In addition, all Day Excursions will continue to depart from the North East corner of the 1201 Park Ave W. parking lot.

Will construction impact any programming at the Park District’s Recreation Center?

There is no planned interruption of services at the Park District’s Recreation Center, and every effort is being made to be mindful of their operational hours. The City will be in regular communication with the Park District to keep them apprised of the work happening and any potential interruption to service, access to parking limitations, access to the shared elevator or other potential disruptions so that the Park District’s Recreation Center membership can be informed with as much lead time as possible.

How can I stay up to date about renovation progress?

Regular updates will be provided to members and individuals in the Senior Center’s database. To join the Senior Center’s database, please click [HERE](#). Periodic updates will be provided via the City’s other communication modalities including but not limited to the website, eNews, and social media outlets.

How is the disposition of unused items at 1201 Park Avenue W being handled?

The project itself has been designed with reuse of materials in mind whenever possible. The City, working in conjunction with the construction manager, is creating a plan for efficient and sustainable disposition of any materials, equipment, furnishings, and supplies that will not be used within the City, post renovation.

How can I make a donation to the Senior Center?

Donations to the Senior Center in any amount may be made by contacting Laura Frey at the Senior Center via telephone at 847.432.4110 or via email.

TEMPORARY RELOCATION TO 770 DEERFIELD RD

How will Senior Center services change during the construction period?

Senior Center operations will be temporarily relocated to Christ Our Hope parish school (formerly Immaculate Conception) located at 770 Deerfield Road – Highland Park. The move to this location allows

for the vast majority of programs and activities to continue through the renovation. Senior Center operations will take place at 770 Deerfield Rd through June, 2024.

The Medical Equipment Loan Closet will continue to operate from 1201 Park Avenue W. on Mondays and Thursday, from 2 – 3 PM. For Loan Closet details, please click [HERE](#).

In addition, all Day Excursions will continue to depart from the North East corner of the 1201 Park Ave W. parking lot.

Will operating hours change at the temporary location?

Senior Center hours at 770 Deerfield Rd. will remain the same.

- Mondays – Thursdays, 9 AM – 4 PM, and Fridays, 9 AM – 1 PM.

Will any programs be paused?

The vast majority of our activities will continue throughout the renovation, however a few select activities have been paused. A list of paused activities is available on page 13 of our current newsletter. For a copy of the Shorelines Newsletter, please click [HERE](#).

If programs are paused during construction, will they return once the facility at 1201 Park Ave W. reopens?

Any paused programs will be reinstated, as planning, schedules, and staffing permits.

Will the Senior Center be increasing the number of virtual programs?

The majority of in-person activities will continue to be held in person. The Barry Bradford lectures however will be held virtually during renovation. Other current online programs/activities that will continue to be offered virtually include: Art Around the World, News & Views, and Book Club.

How will the HP Connector schedule be affected?

The HP Connector has added a stop at 770 Deerfield Rd, the rest of the schedule remains the same. For a copy of the current HP Connector schedule, please click [HERE](#).

Will the HP Connector continue to stop at 1201 Park Avenue W?

Yes, the HP Connector will continue to stop at 1201 Park Avenue West throughout the renovation process, as many riders utilize the Park District's Recreation Center.

How can I connect with Senior Center staff during renovation?

Senior Center staff will be available via telephone at **847.432.4110**, via email, and in-person at 770 Deerfield Rd. during regular business hours.

What can I expect to find at the temporary location?

The temporary home of the Highland Park Senior Center at 770 Deerfield Rd (Christ Our Hope/former Immaculate Conception parish school) is a single story, handicapped accessible building which offers many wonderful amenities including onsite office space for check-in, registration and general customer

service, as well as social services, and space for the Manager and Program Coordinator on site. It also offers three (3) multi-use general classrooms, a gymnasium for movement classes, bathrooms, and ample parking.

Instructors, Members, and guests will find majority of the furniture has been moved from 1201 Park Ave W. so participants will be comfortable in familiar chairs and using familiar equipment. We encourage participants to bring their filled water bottles to classes, carry a sweater along if they tend towards being chilly, and check-in with staff in the customer service office located directly off of the parking lot when entering if they are unsure where to head for their program or activity.