



# Frequently Asked Questions

## Project Overview

1 **What is the Evergreen Project?**

**The Evergreen Project** is a community-led effort to reimagine and renew Evergreen Park & Pool into a modern, safe, inclusive, and welcoming space for Bellaire. The vision includes:

- A new community pool complex
- An inclusive playground for all abilities
- Shaded seating and gathering areas
- Flexible green space for recreation and events

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2 **Why is Evergreen Park so important to Bellaire?**

**For nearly 70 years, Evergreen Park has been a place where families gather, children learn to swim, and neighbors connect.**

Today, it remains:

- One of the most-used parks in Bellaire
- A daily gathering place for all ages
- A key resource for nearby neighborhoods, especially in the southeast area of the city

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3 **What is the We Are Evergreen Committee?**

**We Are Evergreen is a City-established, community-driven committee focused on supporting the renewal of Evergreen Park.**

- Formally created on September 16, 2024 through Bellaire City Ordinance No. 24-070
- Approved unanimously by City Council
- Established as an ad hoc advisory committee

**The committee's role is to:**

- Support community engagement and input
- Help shape the vision for the park
- Lead fundraising efforts through donations, grants, and partnerships
- Work alongside the City and design team

The committee does not control City funds or make final decisions—those remain with the City.

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## Project Overview

4 **Why is a public-private partnership important for this project?**

At this time, **there is no dedicated funding in the City budget to fully redevelop Evergreen Park and Pool.**

That means:

- The project cannot move forward at the needed scale through public funding alone
- Community-led fundraising is essential

Bellaire has a strong track record of this approach:

- The original Evergreen playground (1981) was community-built with volunteer labor
- The Elaine Wood Therapy Pool was made possible through years of community fundraising led by the Bellaire Wellness Club
- Ongoing park improvements have been supported by Patrons for Bellaire Parks

These are not new ideas—this is how Bellaire has historically delivered meaningful park improvements.

**Public-private partnerships allow the community to:**

- Move projects forward without increasing taxes
- Deliver higher-quality amenities
- Accelerate timelines that might otherwise take decades

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5 **Why is fundraising necessary?**

**Fundraising is necessary because:**

- There is no current City budget allocation for a full park and pool redevelopment
- Large-scale improvements require multiple funding sources

**The committee is working to secure:**

- Grants (federal, state, and private)
- Corporate sponsorships
- Community donations

Without fundraising, improvements would likely be limited to incremental repairs over time.

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# Frequently Asked Questions

## Why Now?

- 6 **Why is this project being proposed now?**
- Evergreen has been thoughtfully maintained over the years—but the core infrastructure has reached the end of its natural lifecycle.**
- The pool was built in 1957 and is now 69 years old
  - The playground is nearing the end of its expected lifespan
  - Repairs are becoming more frequent, more costly, and less effective
- At this point, continued repairs can no longer deliver the level of safety, accessibility, and experience the community expects.
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- 7 **What happens if nothing is done?**
- If no action is taken:**
- Maintenance costs will continue to rise
  - Facilities will become less reliable
  - There is increased risk of partial or full closure over time
  - The site will fall into a state of disrepair and affect neighboring home values
- This project is about planning ahead rather than reacting later.



# Frequently Asked Questions

## Repair vs. Rebuild

8 **Why can't the park and pool just be repaired?**

**Repairs can help in the short term, but they do not address the underlying issues.**

- The pool is operating at nearly double its intended lifespan
- Playground equipment is aging and no longer manufactured
- Safety and accessibility standards have evolved significantly

Over time, repairs become temporary fixes rather than lasting solutions.

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9 **What does a rebuild accomplish that repairs cannot?**

**A full renewal (rebuild):**

- Resets the lifecycle for the next 40–50 years
  - Improves safety and accessibility
  - Creates a space that serves today's families and future generations
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# Frequently Asked Questions

## Project Features

10 **What will the new Evergreen complex include?**

**The renewed Evergreen Complex will feature:**

- A modern pool with both recreational and lap swim areas
- A therapy pool
- An inclusive playground designed for all abilities
- Shaded seating and gathering spaces
- Improved pathways and accessibility
- Flexible open space for everyday use and community events

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11 **What is an inclusive and multigenerational playground?**

**An inclusive playground is designed so that children of all abilities can play together.**

It includes:

- Multiple ways to play (climbing, spinning, sensory, imaginative)
- Accessible pathways and entry points
- Features that support a wide range of physical and cognitive abilities

**Multigenerational design:**

- Allows **grandparents, parents, and children to be together in the same space**
- Encourages longer visits and deeper community connection
- Supports caregivers of all ages and abilities
- Creates a more welcoming, shared environment

Examples include:

- Smooth, accessible pathways
- Shaded seating near play areas
- Clear sightlines for supervision
- Spaces that encourage interaction across age groups

The goal is not just to visit the park—but to **stay, connect, and participate together.**

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# Frequently Asked Questions

## Tree Preservation

12 **Will existing trees be removed?**

**This is a preserve-and-enhance approach, not a clear-and-rebuild project.**

- A comprehensive tree survey has been completed
- Each tree has been evaluated for species, size, and health
- The design and plan will retain as much natural shade as possible through its existing inventory of healthy trees.

**Trees will be incorporated into the design.**

- Play and seating areas will be placed to take advantage of existing shade
  - Mature trees will help define gathering spaces
  - Construction will be planned to protect root systems
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# Frequently Asked Questions

## Community Impact

13 **How will this benefit the community?**

**For families**

- Safe, modern play spaces
- Opportunities for connection and activity

**For seniors and caregivers**

- Accessible design
- Comfortable places to gather and observe

**For the community as a whole**

- A stronger neighborhood gathering space
- More opportunities for events and programming
- Improved quality of life

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14 **How will this affect nearby property values?**

**Well-designed parks are widely associated with:**

- Increased neighborhood desirability
- Stronger property values
- Long-term community investment

The greatest benefit is typically seen within a few blocks of the park.

Expected impact on nearby property values are as follows:

Directly adjacent/fronting homes: about 0% to +2%

About 1 block away: about +2% to +4%

About 2–3 blocks away: about +4% to +7%

About 4–6 blocks away: about +1% to +3%

That translates to an illustrative range of roughly:

\$0 to \$23K for directly adjacent homes

\$23K to \$46K about 1 block away

\$46K to \$81K in the peak 2–3 block zone

\$12K to \$35K in the broader surrounding area

- *info is based on Evergreen Park's location at 4500 Evergreen St, the current Bellaire home-value benchmark*



# Frequently Asked Questions

## Funding & Phasing

15      **How will the project be funded?**      **The project will be funded through a combination of:**

- Private donations
- Grants
- Corporate partnerships
- Community fundraising

**This approach helps:**

- Reduce taxpayer burden
- Increase community ownership of the project

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16      **Why is the project being built in phases?**

**A phased approach allows the community to:**

- Begin improvements sooner
- Build momentum and visibility
- Align funding with each stage of the project

The project is intentionally starting with the playground due to **available funding and grant support.**

- A **\$600,000 federal HUD grant**, secured through Representative Lizzie Fletcher, is designated to support the playground
- Additional funds have been raised through **Patrons for Bellaire Parks**, reflecting strong community support

Starting with the playground allows the project to:

- Deliver an immediate benefit to families
- Activate the space early
- Build momentum for the full park and pool redevelopment

Following the playground:

- The project will move into **pool redevelopment**
- Additional amenities and enhancements will be completed as funding allows

Each phase builds toward a **fully renewed, cohesive park experience.**

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