

Highland Park

Highland Park began as a small farming village, grew to a bustling Lake Michigan shipping center known as Port Clinton in the 1850's and today is considered one of the most sought after suburbs on the North Shore. Officially incorporated as a city in 1869, the community enjoys a superb natural setting with a five-mile stretch of lakefront and beaches crowned by picturesque bluffs and ravines.

Residents can choose from a broad spectrum of civic, cultural and recreational activities. Highland Park is home to the world-famous Ravinia festival, the summer venue for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, as well as the Apple Tree Theater and two movie theaters. An active Historical Society operates a 12-room museum in a lovely Italianate home just east of the city center.

Highland Park boasts a sophisticated downtown retail and business center. Port Clinton Square, built in 1984, was the first of many projects to revitalize the downtown with a mix of name brand stores and one-of-a-kind local boutiques. The newer Renaissance Place is anchored by Saks 5th Avenue and contains a number of high-end shops. Highland Park also has two additional retail centers featuring cozy restaurants and an assortment of charming shops.

Parks and Recreation. The Park District of Highland Park was founded in 1909 to oversee a two and one-half acre parcel of land. Today the District owns and maintains 600 acres, offering over 40 parks, a wonderful bike path, several swimming beaches, Hidden Creek Water Park, an 18-hole golf course and a 97-acre nature preserve. Numerous facilities offer programs for residents of all ages including art, dance, theater, exercise, tennis, ice skating and nature classes. Seniors are served with great public transportation and a senior center. A new 55,000 square foot Community Center will feature an indoor pool, gymnasiums and a fitness center. The new Center is expected to open in 2005.

Schools. Highland Park's school system has won multiple regional as well as national awards. Three districts serve elementary students: North Shore district #112 with eleven schools, Deerfield district# 109 with six schools. High School students attend Highland Park High School in school district #113. A number of private education options for pre-school through high school are also available.

Housing. Homes in Highland Park range from lake front estates and ravine mansions to traditional Georgian and Tudors to smaller bungalows and Cape Cods and even include several homes by Frank Lloyd Wright. Popular newer condominium and townhome developments are also available, many of them conveniently located near downtown.

Transportation. Metra commuter trains stop at four Highland Park stations for the 40-minute trip to downtown Chicago. PACE suburban bus service connects Highland Park with other suburban communities as well as additional shopping and transportation options. The city is bisected by US 41, which becomes the Edens Expressway. The drive to downtown is approximately 30-50 minutes and to O'Hare Airport 25-35 minutes.

Highland Park online

www.cityhpil.com

www.highlandpark.org/

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www.highlandparkchamber.org

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