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Media Contact: maura@boycepossley.com

**TINLEY PARK-PARK DISTRICT & SUPPORTERS APPLAUD GOV. PRITZKER'S
SIGNING HOUSE BILL 3743 INTO LAW**

***New Law Sells Former Mental Health Center Site to Park District for \$1 to Create Hub of
Fully Accessible Athletic & Recreational Opportunities, Green Space for Entire Southland
Region & Save Taxpayers***

TINLEY PARK, Ill. – The Board of Commissioners of the Park District of Tinley Park today applauded Gov. JB Pritzker's signing into law House Bill 3743 to transfer the site of the former Tinley Park Mental Health Center to the Park District to finally begin cleanup and redevelopment of the long-vacant land.

Gov. Pritzker's signature of HB 3743 begins the process of transferring the blighted property to the Park District for \$1, saving Tinley Park taxpayers over \$4.5 million to purchase the site, which the Village of Tinley Park had previously offered, in addition to an estimated \$12-\$15 million in cleanup costs to be provided by the state. Now that the bill is signed into law, the Park District can work with the state in the coming weeks to begin the process of effectuating the land transfer to officially own the property.

"After many years of inaction, we are incredibly grateful for Gov. Pritzker's support to finally begin the process of remediating and revitalizing this eyesore in our community," said Lisa O'Donovan, Park District Board Commissioner and Chair of a new committee being established to oversee the project. "We are excited and ready to move forward with the many steps it will take to clean up the property and redevelop the site. We look forward to engaging with Tinley Park residents, schools, community organizations, and all stakeholders to create new opportunities for our community and the entire southland area to love our Tinley parks."

"Transferring the Tinley Park Mental Health Center to the Tinley Park-Park District was one of the best decisions the State of Illinois made this year," said Sen. Michael Hastings, Senate bill sponsor. "They have a track record of working together with everyone in our community and the south suburban region. More importantly, they are capable and have a plan ready to demolish and redevelop the property when it is ultimately transferred to them."

"Today is a great day for Tinley Park and all of our southland communities," said Rep. Robert Rita, House bill sponsor. "I'm proud to have sponsored this bill to allow the Tinley Park-Park District to turn this eyesore into a destination for people across the region, and I thank Gov. Pritzker for his support."

With today's action by the governor, the Park District is now taking its first steps as part of the process of cleaning up the property. The Park District is engaging Tetra Tech, which will conduct an updated environmental assessment of the site to determine the extent of remediation



needed. Tetra Tech previously conducted a similar study in 2014. In addition, the Park District is working to enter into a grant agreement with the state of Illinois to unlock up to \$15 million in grant funding provided to the Park District in this year's fiscal year budget to remediate the property. Security will continue to be provided at the site as part of that grant funding.

"We are thrilled that we can now move forward and redevelop this land for the benefit of all Tinley Park residents and surrounding communities," said Marie Ryan, Park District Board President. "Our thanks to Gov. Pritzker, our legislators and all of our supporters."

"For far too long, the Mental Health Center property has languished without any progress until today," said Ashley Rubino, Park District Commissioner. "I'm grateful to Gov. Pritzker and legislators for their support of our leadership to finally clean up the land and create premier park and recreation opportunities for all of Tinley Park and neighbors."

Last November, the Park District formally bid on the property, 7400-7600 W. 183rd St., and laid out its Phase 1 vision for redevelopment to meet the needs of Tinley Park residents and the entire south suburban area. Phase 1 includes a playground and sports facilities fully accessible through universal design for people living with special needs, multipurpose athletic fields, a domed sports complex with a full-size soccer field, a stadium with a track, a splash pad, concession stands, spectator stands, lighting, ample parking, as well as a pond, picnic areas and open green space. Since the plan was released to the public, it has gained widespread community support and private developer interest. Importantly, under this new law, all forms of gaming are prohibited at the site, which supports the feedback of residents.

"The Park District's vision to build a fully accessible sports complex on this property will significantly benefit people living with special needs across the Chicagoland area," said Lisa Drzewiecki, executive director of the South Suburban Special Recreation Association.

"Recreational space for individuals with special needs is very limited across entire northern Illinois region. With the Park District's plans for fully accessible facilities, we can open up a host of athletic opportunities for people living with special needs that promote dignity, success, and fun."

"With ever-growing numbers of athletes joining our organizations, youth athletic organizations are face increasing needs for athletic fields and space," said Marcia Kissane, Commissioner of the Tinley Park Athletic Club. "We are thrilled with the Park District's plan to create more opportunities right here in Tinley Park, which will benefit the entire south suburban region."

More information and updates about the Park District's Phase 1 plans can be found on its [website](http://www.tinleyparkdistrict.org).