



**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION**

The Collinsville Area Recreation District (CARD) announced today that it had filed suit in Madison County, Illinois against the City of Collinsville. The suit was filed to protect the parks from the City development. "It is unfortunate that it has come to this, but our parks cannot continue to be eroded away" said Patrick Collins, President of the Board of Commissioners for CARD. The subject of the suit is the City's proposal to expand its water plant into the Jaycee Sports Complex. In addition to land being leased to CARD, the same land was acquired through an Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) grant requiring that the property be kept as a public use park. The City has previously developed park land for non-park purposes while CARD has invested hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars in these lands for people to enjoy. Under the terms of the current lease agreement between CARD and the City, the City cannot develop certain park property and facilities whenever they want. CARD is seeking answers regarding the City's long term vision of the park properties, and what is going to remain park land and what is going to be used by the City for other purposes. CARD has filed certifications with the Illinois Department of natural resources (IDNR), the administrator of the OSLAD grants that the land is being used for public open space purposes.

CARD has attempted to privately negotiate with the City, to resolve the concerns that exist over the validity of the City's proposed taking of park property, but the City has not been willing to discuss these issues. CARD has an obligation to the residents of the district to operate and maintain their parks, and further has an obligation to the IDNR to protect the integrity of the OSLAD program.