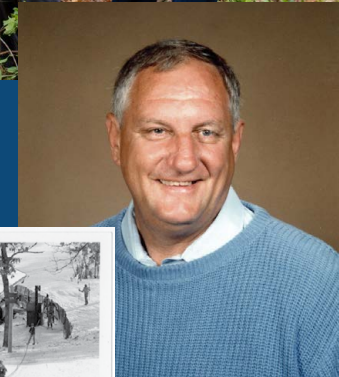
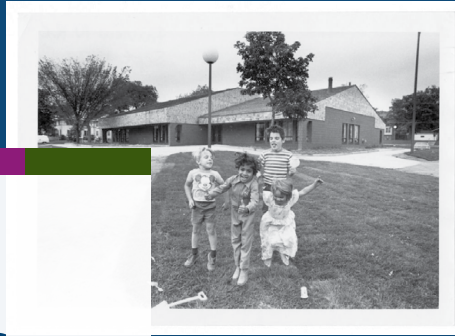


# Celebrating 140 Years

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023



**Minneapolis**  
Park & Recreation Board

### Contents






- Goal 1** Foster belonging and equity 3
- Goal 2** Steward a continuum of nature and recreation 5
- Goal 3** Provide core services with care 7
- Goal 4** Work from our strengths and determine our role in partnerships 9
- Goal 5** Expand focus on health equity 11
- Goal 6** Strengthen ecological connections 13
- Goal 7** Connect through communications and technology 15
- Goal 8** Cultivate a thriving workforce 17
- Goal 9** Operate a financially sustainable enterprise 19
- 2023 Employment and Budgetary Reports 21

### MISSION STATEMENT

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board permanently preserves, protects, maintains, improves, and enhances its natural resources, parkland, and recreational opportunities for current and future generations of our region including people, plants, and wildlife.

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board dismantles historic inequities in the provision of park and recreation opportunities for all people to gather, celebrate, contemplate, and engage in activities that promote health, wellbeing, community, and the environment.

### SOCIAL MEDIA

-  @MinneapolisParks
-  @MinneapolisParks
-  @MinneapolisParks
-  @MinneapolisParks
-  @MplsParkBoard

### PARKS FOR ALL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Progress on the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Comprehensive Plan, Parks for All, is tracked and shared through this Annual Report and an online dashboard.

For more details, visit [minneapolisparks.org/mission](https://minneapolisparks.org/mission).

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 Email [marketing@minneapolisparks.org](mailto:marketing@minneapolisparks.org)  
 Call 612-230-6400

### 2023 Commissioners

- President** Meg Forney, At Large
- Vice President** Alicia D. Crudup, At Large\*
- Billy Menz, District 1
- Becka Thompson, District 2
- Becky Alper, District 3
- Elizabeth Shaffer, District 4
- Steffanie Musich, District 5
- Cathy Abene, District 6\*
- Tom Olsen, At Large
- Charles Rucker, At Large\*



\*Vice President Crudup resigned in October due to a move outside Minneapolis. Commissioner Abene replaced her as Vice President in November and Charles Rucker was appointed to serve the remainder of Crudup's term in December.

Welcome from Superintendent Al Bangoura

April 3, 2023, marked the 140th year of Minneapolis Parks. I'm grateful to live in and serve a city that has consistently supported its parks and am excited to share how our work continued that impressive legacy in 2023.

Major facilities opened this year, including the Bde Maka Ska Pavilion, two Spark'd Studios locations, a stage at Father Hennepin Bluff Park, and the first dedicated pickleball courts at Lake Nokomis. Year Seven of the 20-Year Neighborhood Park Plan brought another round of new playgrounds, wading pools and repairs at neighborhood parks, plus we secured new funding for parkway repair and to better manage stormwater in our parks.



Unusual weather influenced by climate change continued to impact parks. We're adapting with urgency by planting nearly 10,000 new trees, conducting in-depth water quality testing, building stormwater management best practices into all construction projects, and training youth for the next generation of green jobs.

All youth programs are free at the 17 Minneapolis parks located within a Census-designated Area of Poverty. But we never turn anyone away, regardless of age, due to a lack of ability to pay thanks to a robust scholarship program. We hosted preschool programs, summer camps, youth sports leagues, swim lessons and teams, before- and after-school childcare, and teen mentorship programs.

We maintained beautiful beaches, pools, ice rinks, and trails cleared year-round, and offered an incredible variety of activities – huge festivals, concerts and movies, art, tech, fitness and music classes, community gardens, organized sports leagues, and golf at seven affordable courses.

There's no doubt over 140 years Minneapolis has developed one of the best park systems in the world, and it's all thanks to you. Thank you for your support, whether you volunteer, work, or play in our parks, I appreciate you! I'm proud of our parks and promise we will continue to work hard every day to make them better.

*Alfred Bangoura*  
 Superintendent Al Bangoura

FAST FACTS

**1883**  
 MPRB established

**32 million**  
 estimated park visits:  
 26 million regional parks  
 6 million neighborhood parks

**185** parks:  
 165 neighborhood parks  
 20 regional parks

**7,059** acres of  
 parkland and water

**600,000** estimated trees:  
 200,000 boulevard trees  
 400,000 park trees

**49** recreation centers:  
 47 operated by MPRB  
 2 operated by non-profits

**6** skate parks  
**121** play areas  
**147** basketball hoops  
**5** outdoor stages

**67** aquatic facilities:  
 1 natural swimming pool  
 2 indoor swimming pools  
 2 water parks  
 3 splash pads  
 59 wading pools

**12** authorized beaches  
**10** fishing piers  
**5** boat launches  
**7** canoe launches  
**397** sailboat buoys  
**596** canoe/kayak racks

**102** miles of  
 Grand Rounds trails:  
 51 miles walking  
 51 miles biking

**55** miles of parkways  
**8** dog parks  
**12** formal gardens  
**11** community gardens  
**2** bird sanctuaries

**13** golf facilities:  
 7 courses  
 3 driving ranges  
 3 disc golf courses

**1** winter recreation area  
**2** indoor ice arenas  
**45** outdoor ice rinks

## Goal 1: Foster belonging and equity

Creating a park system that is accessible, equitable and welcoming to everyone across age, culture, race, ability and gender

### Park Events

Citywide events brought communities together throughout the seasons. In the beginning of the year, the annual MLK Day Celebration at Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Park honored The Sanneh Foundation with the Living the Dream Award and the Lake Harriet Winter Kite Festival flew dozens of kites small and large above the frozen lake. In spring, the Minneapolis International Festival brought cultural exhibits, food and performances to Central Gym.

Over the summer, Juneteenth was commemorated at Bethune Park and Fourth of July was celebrated with a new laser light show at Boom Island Park. Fall featured Owámní Falling Water Festival spread across the downtown riverfront at Water Works and Father Hennepin Bluff Park.

In addition, our network of neighborhood parks hosted parties and gatherings all year to celebrate the community and the seasons, from winter carnivals and spring egg hunts to summer ice cream socials, back-to-school bashes, Halloween parties, and more.



### Community Connections and Violence Prevention

The Community Connections and Violence Prevention Department (CCVP) works to connect and inform park users of all ages. Its staff help address park safety with a proactive, collaborative, relationship-based approach.

Pop-up Parks accommodated 50 requests and served 2,000+ people in partnership with community groups and recreation staff. CCVP staff collaborated with park staff and community groups by educating people on ash tree removal, hosting youth and community dialogues, addressing unlicensed fruit vendors in parks, and contributing to neighborhood safety initiatives.

The StreetReach outreach team supported 50 requests and provided 790 unsheltered outreach visits. Staff continue to build their skillsets and connections to provide compassionate, transformative work so the park system continues to be safe and welcoming for everyone.



**Downtown Parks** Another year of increased programming at Downtown Parks brought weekly concerts, movies, pop-up dog parks, and a new fall festival to The Commons, special events and weekly concerts at Water Works, and a new bocce league at North Loop Park. A cart with numerous free activities was also available daily at Water Works and The Commons. Follow along on Instagram: @mplsdtparks.



**Parks for All Murals** Nine new murals highlight the goals of Parks for All, the new Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Comprehensive Plan. In 2023, murals debuted at seven locations: Bde Maka Ska Parkway, Boom Island Park, Franklin Steele Square, Lake Harriet, Van Cleve Park, West River Parkway, and Windom NE Park. Two more, at Powderhorn Park and Cleveland Park, are planned in 2024.



**Park Markets** New Minneapolis Park Markets connected creators and small businesses with park users during weekly events at high-profile park locations. Summer locations included The Commons, Water Works, Lake Harriet, and Minnehaha Falls, which also extended into fall. In December, Nicollet Island Pavilion hosted a popular pop-up Holiday Park Market.



**Eddie Manderville Chalet at Theodore Wirth Park** The chalet building at Theodore Wirth Regional Park was officially named “Eddie Manderville Chalet at Theodore Wirth Park.” Manderville was affiliated with Wirth Golf for 60+ years and widely renowned for his contributions to Minneapolis golf. A display celebrating his legacy will be built in the chalet next year.



**MEMORIALS AND TRIBUTES REVAMPED**

A new online process was created to streamline requests for memorials, tributes and making donations in memory of a loved one.

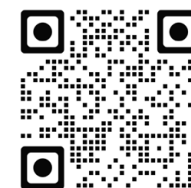
**INDIGENOUS RECONCILIATION**

Development of an Indigenous Reconciliation Action Plan launched in November. It will create guidelines to act on acknowledgement, truth, and reconciliation of historical and contemporary Indigenous land, people, and nations.

**MUSIC AND MOVIES IN THE PARKS**

190 concerts  
90 movies

**PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS AGES 55+**  
204 programs



**GOAL 1 DATA**  
Scan the QR code to browse the Dashboard

## Goal 2: Steward a continuum of nature and recreation

Implementing the detailed, system-wide vision recently developed for all neighborhood and regional parks that balances ecological well-being and recreational opportunities for all



### Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden

Thousands enjoyed a busy, beautiful season at the Wildflower Garden. A stellar staff, including 14 seasonal educators and gardeners, logged 49,688 interactions with visitors – an all-time high. Along with a popular Instagram account, @ebwgmpls, more than 350 Garden programs boasted 4,473 participants in activities like regular tours, special tours for Minneapolis Public Schools students, and birdwatching or Flower Hour sessions.

Volunteering increased as 206 volunteers contributed 1,990 hours in supporting visitors and caring for native plants in the Garden's collections. In autumn, additional volunteers joined partners Metro Blooms and Wilderness in the City to plant 11,600 native species for a new pollinator meadow at the Garden entrance off Theodore Wirth Parkway, funded by the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund.

### Riverfront Developments

**Father Hennepin Bluff Park** reopened in June after a major renovation project built a new performance stage and attached bathroom building and upgraded paths, lighting, landscaping and stormwater management.

**Graco Park** A groundbreaking ceremony was held in August for a new 9-acre regional park on the Northeast Minneapolis riverfront. Construction work is happening rapidly at the site, which is expected to open in 2024, with a new park building and trail underpass connection to Boom Island Park expected to open in 2025.

**Upper Harbor** A new regional park at the Upper Harbor site on the North Minneapolis riverfront is set to begin park construction in 2024 after building demolition and grading at the former shipping terminal in 2023. The 20-acre park is part of a 53-acre redevelopment of the site.





— **Environmental Education** MPRB naturalists connected residents of all ages with the natural world through Drop-in Discovery sessions at neighborhood parks, nature play groups, camps at regional parks and more. Experiences included snowshoeing, canoeing, guided walks, exploring for water creatures – even getting acquainted with cockroaches!



— **Cedar-Isles Park Plan** The Plan for Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles was adopted in July after three years of work. It outlines long-term strategies to maintain and improve Cedar Lake, Lake of the Isles, Dean Parkway and a portion of Cedar Lake Regional Trail. This was the final project in a decade-long process to create long-term plans for every park in the Minneapolis park system.



— **North Commons Plan** A renovated and expanded community center, a new fieldhouse – the park system’s first – and a rebuilt water park feature in the plans approved for North Minneapolis’ flagship park. The \$35 million project includes funds for expanded, community-based programs and is the largest neighborhood park investment in MPRB’s 140-year history.



— **Water Quality Monitoring** Environmental Management staff and partners developed and shared a resource to identify, investigate and ultimately mitigate sources of pathogens in urban aquatic environments. It also continued work on mitigation strategies for ongoing, sometimes toxic cyanobacteria blooms in Cedar and Nokomis lakes – both popular sites for swimming, fishing, and other recreation.



**CITYWIDE LAURI (LAKE AESTHETIC AND USER RECREATION INDEX) SCORES**



**AIS INSPECTIONS**

**6,155** watercraft inspections

**15,571** customer service interactions with non-boaters at Bde Maka Ska, Lake Harriet and Lake Nokomis

**AQUATIC PLANT HARVEST**

**186** truckloads of invasive milfoil and other aquatic plants removed at Chain of Lakes Regional Park via machine harvesters

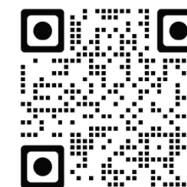
**16,405** lbs. removed by hand at Wirth Lake and Lake Nokomis

**GOLF**

**242,178** rounds played at seven courses

Francis A. Gross Golf Course was the most popular, with **47,627** rounds

**Extended Season:** Columbia, Gross and Hiawatha were able to stay open until mid-November thanks to a warm fall



**GOAL 2 DATA**  
Scan the QR code to browse the Dashboard

## Goal 3: Provide core services with care

**Focusing on key areas: capital investments, rehabilitation, and increased maintenance at neighborhood parks; racial equity; and youth**

### NPP20

Year Seven of the 20-Year Neighborhood Park Plan (NPP20) brought the first bouldering structure to the Minneapolis park system, an instant hit as part of an expanded playground at Keewaydin Park. Additional playgrounds opened at Corcoran and Hall parks, the latter with a bike skills course and butterfly sculpture designed and built by a Juxtaposition Arts youth group.

Construction began on a new playground at North Commons Park, and wading pool and lighting upgrades at Jordan Park. Sibley and Painter parks saw a new playground and skate park open by the end of the year, with final construction to resume in 2024.

NPP20 also funded drinking fountain replacements at 10 neighborhood parks, with plans to replace 8-10 more annually. These and updates like furnaces, air conditioning, and lighting for athletic fields and paths are steadily improving conditions at neighborhood parks and recreation centers.



2023 Minneapolis Park Police Officer of the Year Caleb Koecher

### Park Police

Minneapolis parks saw a significant reduction in overall crime in 2023. While violent crime remained steady in 2023, property crimes were reduced by 25%. Park Police Investigators had an impressive 70% charging rate on felony cases with the County Attorney, and a new Trespass Policy was created with the City Attorney to address repeat or violent offenders in the parks.

Officer Caleb Koecher is the 2023 Park Police Officer of the Year. Koecher received at least 13 letters of recognition, including work on major narcotics and firearms arrests. Officer Karl Zabinski survived a life-threatening assault when a suspect shot at him during an investigation of an unoccupied, suspicious vehicle at Lake Harriet and received an unrelated Distinguished Service Award for compassionately supporting a suicidal person on the Stone Arch Bridge.

Officer Peyton Lauber received an Excellence in Tactic & De-Escalation Award for his work to disarm a suicidal person at Lake Harriet. Officers Morris Dennis, Daniel McShane, Anna Davids, Christopher Rother and Sergeant Adam Swierczek each received Lifesaving Awards.



**Bde Maka Ska Pavilion** The new Bde Maka Ska Pavilion opened in October. It features a new Jamaican restaurant, Pimento on the Lake, a year-round market, Pimento Market, and Dakota artwork throughout the site. The project nearly doubled public lakeside seating, added year-round bathrooms, rebuilt the boat launch, and upgraded landscaping, water fountains and trails in the area after the previous pavilion burned down in 2019.

**Nokomis Pickleball Courts** The first dedicated outdoor pickleball courts in the Minneapolis park system opened next to Lake Nokomis Community Center in June. There are six courts total, with benches and shade structures for people waiting to play. Two tennis courts were converted to create the pickleball courts, which were incredibly popular throughout summer and fall.

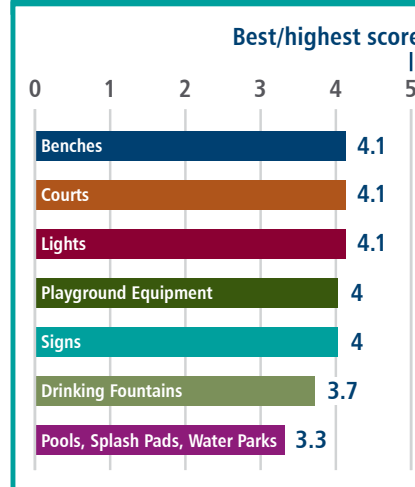


**Youth Day Camps** Hundreds of affordable day camps were offered throughout the summer and on every School Release Day during the school year. This year's highlights include art, cycling, outdoor exploration, gardening, cooking, drone and remote-control car operation, and swimming and water activities.



**Bandshell Repair** Lake Harriet Bandshell is in the middle of a major renovation. Work includes replacing roof shingles, upgrading windows and bathrooms, and, most notably, repainting the iconic structures a shade of blue that matches its color before it was painted brown as part of its last renovation in 2004. Work started in the spring, paused for summer Music and Movies events, then resumed in the fall.

### AVERAGE CONDITION OF PARK AMENITIES



### YOUTH SPORTS STATISTICS

9,069 kids and teens played on 752 sports teams

### PLOW TRACKER

A new interactive online map shows the real-time location of all park snow removal vehicles during snowfall and records when trails and parkways have been last cleared. It was used plenty during a winter that saw 90+ inches of snow.

### MINNEHAHA CREEK BRIDGE REPAIRS

Two Minnehaha Creek Bridges – Bryant Avenue and near 36th Avenue S – were repaired. On a snowy day in March, the 36th Avenue Bridge was removed for offsite repairs via helicopter!



### MARCY PARK RENOVATION

Marcy Park completed a renovation that built a new dog park, basketball court and hammocking grove.



### GOAL 3 DATA

Scan the QR code to browse the Dashboard

## Goal 4: Work from our strengths and determine our role in partnerships

Establishing well-defined partnerships with clear goals to increase our level of service

### Minneapolis Parks Foundation

Longstanding philanthropic partner the Minneapolis Parks Foundation launched a capital campaign to support transformational changes at North Minneapolis' flagship park and community center. Reimagine North Commons is dedicated not just to renovation and expansion of park's facilities, but also programming to meet the needs of Northside residents, especially youth and older adults.

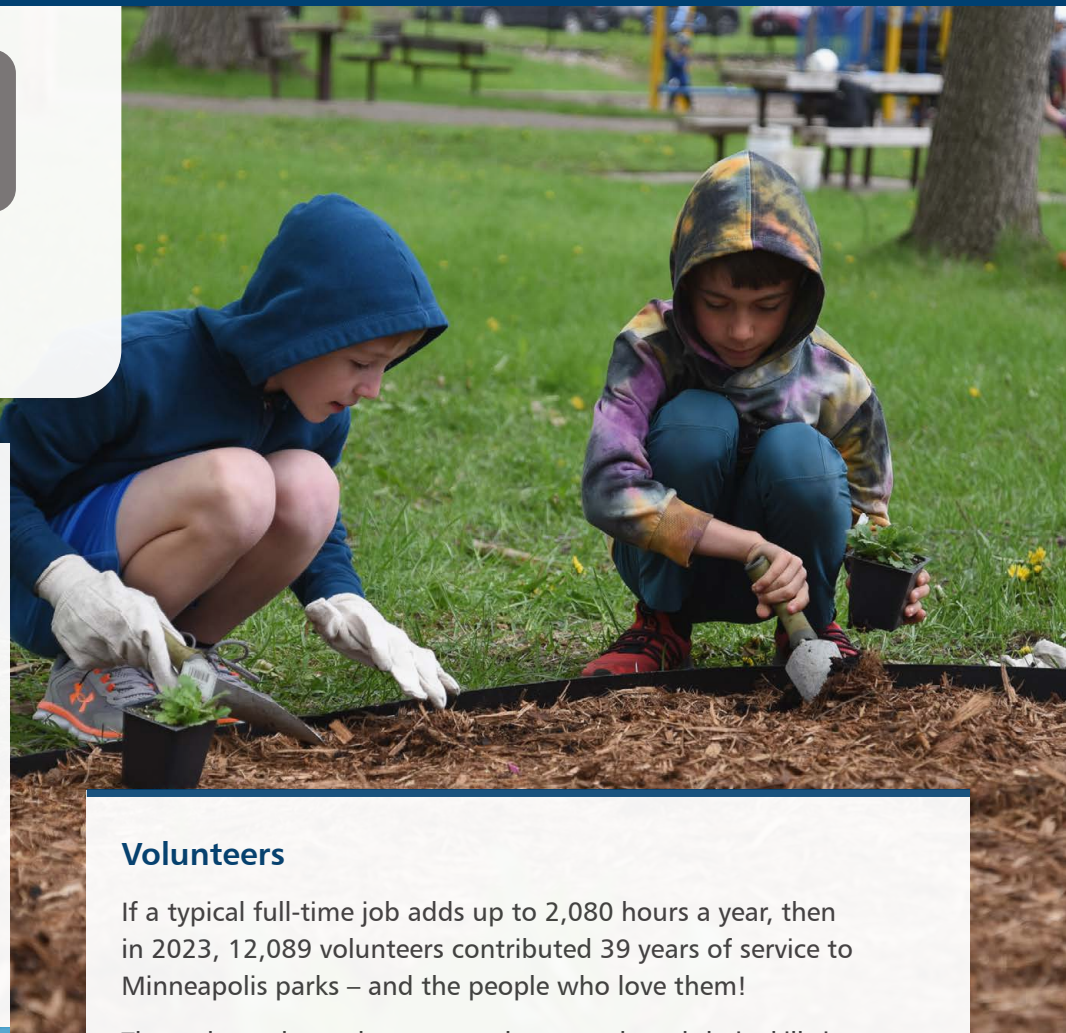
Consistent, robust, and innovative programs for mentoring, adult support, out-of-school activities, athletics, service, civic engagement and more are key to the campaign's goals. Ultimately, the Reimagine vision places North Commons at the center of an urban community campus, with resources and opportunities that complement nearby partners like the YMCA, North High School and Northpoint Health and Wellness.

### Volunteers

If a typical full-time job adds up to 2,080 hours a year, then in 2023, 12,089 volunteers contributed 39 years of service to Minneapolis parks – and the people who love them!

Throughout the park system, volunteers shared their skills in so many ways. Their legions included 1,474 coaches who spent 39,484 hours coaching youth sports teams, and 870 people who worked 6,979 hours greeting visitors and working at park, recreation center and citywide events like the Earth Day Cleanup.

Everyone also benefitted from the 29,372 hours that 7,638 people worked in stewarding gardens, planting beds, natural areas and other park environments. MPRB is grateful for each and every one of these folks! Follow the environmental volunteers' work on Instagram:





**Loppet Foundation** MPRB’s partnership with the Loppet continued to create community connections. For example, MPRB staff led a February event with Northside community artists for its Black to Nature series at the Trailhead: a well-attended celebration that set the stage for future program collaborations.



**Tree Removal Philanthropy** The Margaret A. Cargill Fund of the Saint Paul Minnesota Foundation contributed major funds to offset costs for removal of Emerald Ash Borer-infested trees on private properties in federally identified areas of economic hardship in Minneapolis. Federal grant funds will also assist in future EAB-infested tree removals.



**Restaurant News** A new restaurant called The Painted Turtle took over concessions at Lake Nokomis Main Beach after the previous vendor, Sandcastle, declined to renew its lease after 10 great years. An agreement with Minnehaha Falls restaurant Sea Salt was approved in December. Sea Salt has operated at the falls since 2005; the new agreement is through 2033.



**Carbon Offset Project** The second year of a partnership with Green Minneapolis helped obtain carbon credits for nearly 10,000 trees planted in parks and along city streets. Green Minneapolis applies for and finds buyers for carbon credits that pay for future tree planting and maintenance performed by Forestry. New trees are prioritized in areas where existing tree canopy coverage is low to address environmental equity.



**DOORS OPEN MINNEAPOLIS**

MLK Recreation Center and the Theodore Wirth Home and Administration Building participated in Doors Open Minneapolis, an event that offered free tours of dozens of Minneapolis buildings.

**FREE FOOD FOR YOUTH**

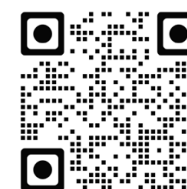
Free healthy snacks and meals are offered year-round at 28 recreation centers through a partnership with Minneapolis Public Schools Culinary & Wellness Services.

**HENNEPIN SPORTS GRANTS**

Hennepin County awarded nine youth sports grants that funded tons of new sports equipment – everything from futsal and foosball, archery and ice skating, basketball, baseball and more!

**LAKE HIAWATHA TRASH COLLECTION**

In June, MPRB, the City of Minneapolis and Freshwater, a nonprofit, installed floating booms to intercept trash from a storm sewer that empties into Lake Hiawatha. In total, 140 pounds of trash and recyclables were collected.



**GOAL 4 DATA**  
Scan the QR code to browse the Dashboard

## Goal 5: Expand focus on health equity

Considering proactive and reactive approaches to public health and reducing health disparities



### Community Gardens

In its fifth season, the Community Gardens program flourished like zucchini in August. More than 160 applicants were awarded plots at 11 garden sites, including new sites at Peavey and Lyndale Farmstead parks, while volunteers cared for a new site for all community members at Mueller Park. Priority for seasonal plots goes to Minneapolis residents who don't have access to land outside the parks and plan to grow food.

In May, gardeners celebrated planting season with seed swaps, plant giveaways and volunteer garden cleanups; they also shared ideas for connecting with racially diverse communities. Data from the previous season – including voluntary responses about race/ethnicity – showed that the racial diversity of MPRB community gardeners has grown to largely reflect citywide demographics.

### Youthline

More than 4,000 youth ages 12-16 engaged with program specialists and participated in 400+ adventurous and inspiring programs. Leadership and mentorship were key to all experiences.

A slate of on-site activities, camps and clubs throughout the year included sports, arts technology, gardening, and baking. Youth were connected with mentors and learned life, health and wellness skills, and more. In addition, field trips took youth outside their neighborhoods to focus on career exploration and personal development.

Youthline participants discovered destinations like the all-wheel pump track course at Perkins Hill Park, participated in team challenges and training at Basecamp, toured barber schools and took in exhibitions at the Minneapolis Institute of Art.





**Phillips Aquatics Center** The only indoor swimming facility in the Minneapolis park system offered six levels of youth swim lessons, adult swim lessons, six pods of youth swim clubs, and regularly scheduled open swim times for families and adults. Phillips Aquatics Center also hosted its annual “Thanks-Swimming 5K,” in which 43 people swam a 5K in the pool on Thanksgiving morning.



**Cycle the Summer** In its third year, Cycle the Summer continued to showcase biking as a fun and functional activity. Events included a series of drop-in workshops for people to learn bike maintenance know-how and youth-focused bike skills rodeos with BMX demos. A passport program allowed folks to track their progress biking the trails of 51-mile Grand Rounds Scenic Byway.



**Rec Plus** From balloon rockets to Black history, hundreds of kids enjoyed before- and after-school activities through the Rec Plus School-Age Childcare program offered at 14 parks. The program marked its 35-year anniversary with 177 children limbo-ing, dancing, crafting and more at the end-of-summer citywide party.



**Adult Sports** Organized adult sports leagues featured 15 different sports in 2023. Most sports offered multiple competitive levels and divisions that included Men’s, Women’s, Co-ed, and Open. New programs included expanded pickleball lessons, a volleyball clinic, and a new league for individual volleyball players.



**FORMAL GARDENS**

12 beautiful formal garden spaces delighted visitors throughout the seasons – follow their work on Instagram @mplsgardens.

**SWIM STATS**

2,001 youth swim lessons given

50% were free

6% were discounted through scholarships

588 Youth Swim Club members

1,218 Adult Open Swim Club members

83 certified American Red Cross Lifeguards

5 certified American Red Cross Lifeguard Instructors

**CANOE/KAYAK RACKS**

596 at 15 locations

**PLOWED TRAILS**

139 miles



**GOAL 5 DATA**

Scan the QR code to browse the Dashboard

## Goal 6: Strengthen ecological connections

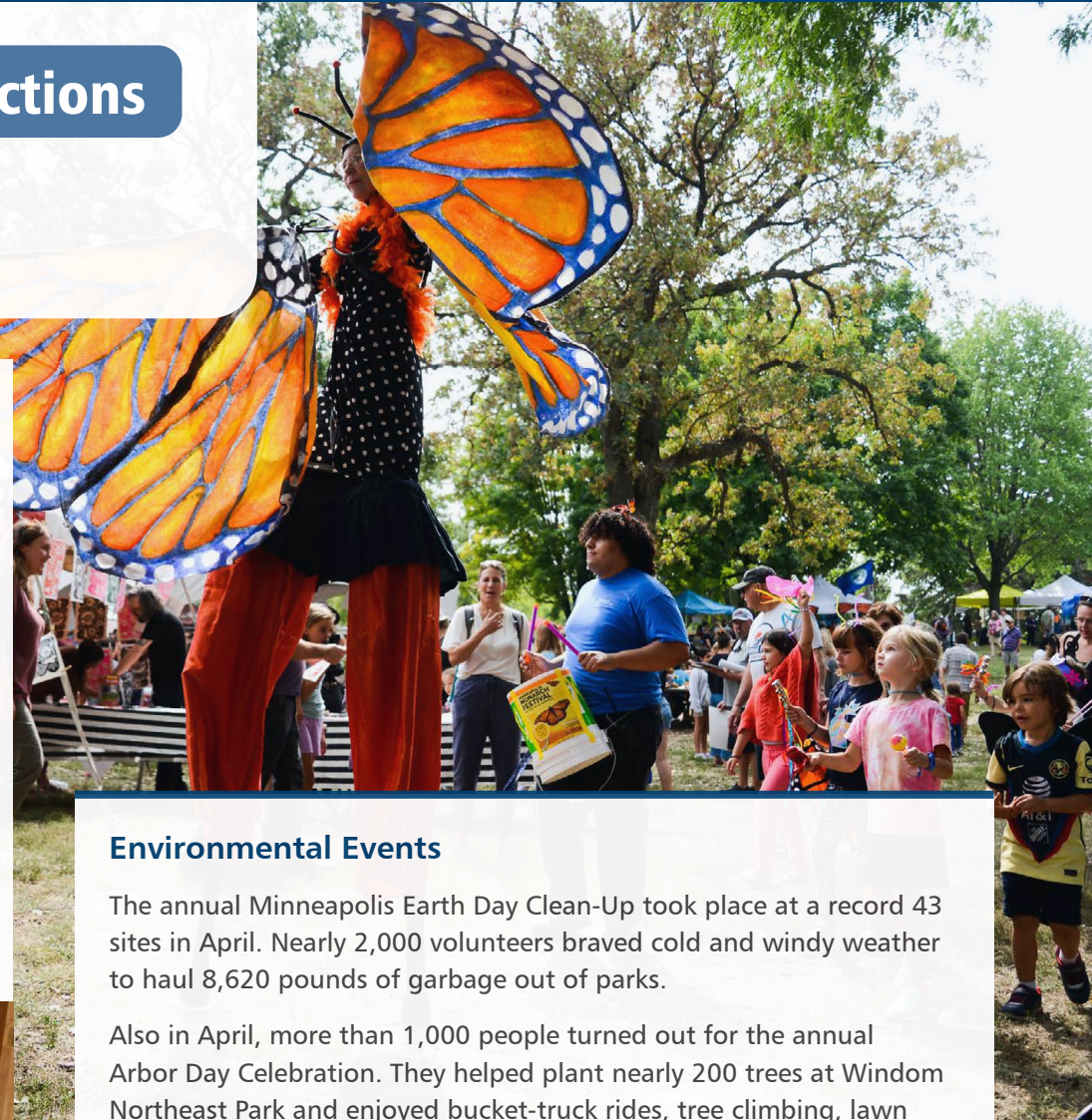
Being a responsible steward of our water, air, trees, plants, soil, habitat, and wildlife

### Kroening Nature Center

During nine-plus weeks of summer camps, Kroening naturalists granted Junior Ranger Badges to campers who explored North Mississippi Regional Park's wonders and the "Nature in the City" exhibit at Kroening Nature Center.

They also guided 1,300 pre-K-4th grade students on field trips and hosted public programs for all ages, which included family fun days, birdwatching outings, nature challenges, nature art activities and more. Northside community artists continued curating successful Black to Nature programs, grounded in their vision for Black people and healthy relationships with natural environments.

In addition, five high school students served as summer interns, a Statewide Star Party drew 54 stargazers in August, and 105 people celebrated Winter Solstice with a luminary walk in December.



### Environmental Events

The annual Minneapolis Earth Day Clean-Up took place at a record 43 sites in April. Nearly 2,000 volunteers braved cold and windy weather to haul 8,620 pounds of garbage out of parks.

Also in April, more than 1,000 people turned out for the annual Arbor Day Celebration. They helped plant nearly 200 trees at Windom Northeast Park and enjoyed bucket-truck rides, tree climbing, lawn games, nature play and a great lineup of entertainment. Festival favorite The Arborators, a band comprised of Forestry professionals, returned to play a set on songs from high atop a tree.

In June, the Lake Hiawatha community celebrated a cleaner lake with the installation of floating booms to capture trash from a large storm sewer. A seasonal sensation, September's Minneapolis Monarch Festival/Festival de la Monarca showcased support for monarchs and their incredible migration between Minnesota and Michoacán, Mexico.



— **Native Plant Restoration** Natural Resources staff, volunteer stewards and Conservation Corps crews planted and watered 600 native shrubs across six managed natural areas throughout the growing season. In fall, they sowed native seed over 26 acres at 36 parks and natural areas where buckthorn was cleared.



— **Extreme Weather Impacts** Major weather impacts affected the park system as climate change continues to accelerate. The third-snowiest winter on record led to significant spring flooding, then drought allowed Minnehaha Creek to run dry for the second straight year. Programs were modified or canceled due to extreme heat, blizzards, and poor air quality from Canadian forest fires.



— **JD Rivers' Children's Garden** A fun and fruitful growing season unfolded at Theodore Wirth Regional Park's one-acre urban farm. Summer youth crews tended new crops like okra, leeks, watermelon, and cantaloupe and helped with activities for a steady stream of visitors: weekly campers, field trippers from a host of organizations, curious explorers and customers for the four-days-a-week produce market.



— **Little Seed Libraries** National Gardening Day (April 14) saw Little Seed Libraries debut at 11 locations, stocked with all types of seeds, plus information and tips from park gardeners. Take and/or leave some at Bryant Square, Creekview, Loring, Lynnhurst, Matthews, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Nokomis, Powderhorn, Phillips, Sibley, and Van Cleve.



**PROTECTING TURTLES**

During a third year of research, MPRB continued to develop and refine best practices for protecting turtles, especially as they move between nests and water.

See a turtle? Share at [bit.ly/ReportATurtle](https://bit.ly/ReportATurtle).

**TREES PLANTED**

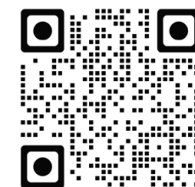
**9,600** in 2023

**DROP-IN CANOEING**

**28** drop-in canoe sessions at Wirth, Loring and Powderhorn parks

**PLANT DONATION**

**2,500** native plugs planted by volunteer groups in fall at **15** parks and gardens, thanks to a generous donation from Minnesota Native Landscapes.

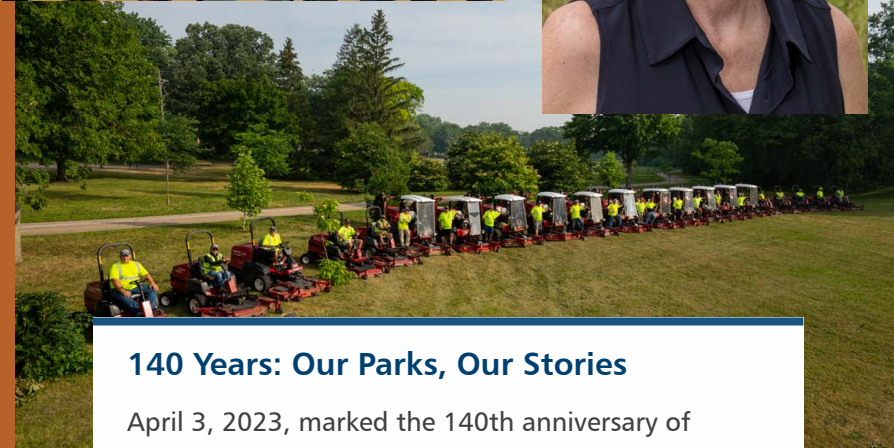


**GOAL 6 DATA**

Scan the QR code to browse the Dashboard

## Goal 7: Connect through communications and technology

**Building capacity throughout our organization for information sharing and storytelling**

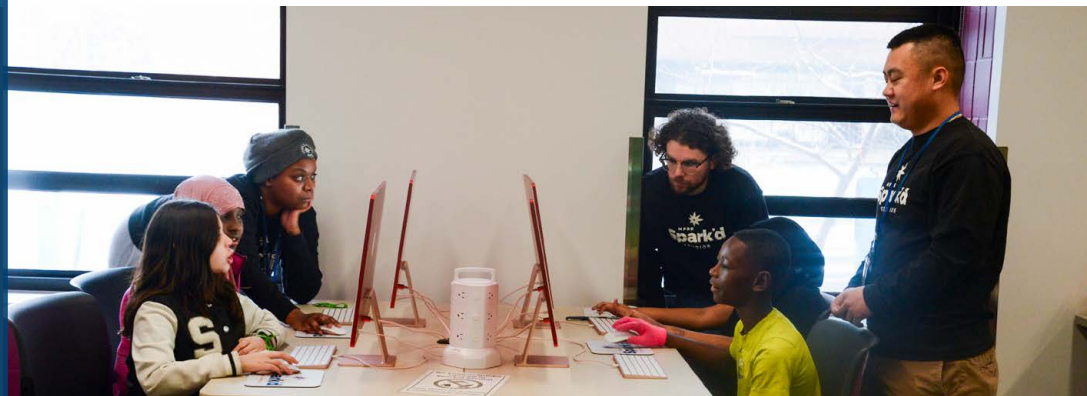


### Spark'd Studios

Spark'd Studios are new spaces in park buildings that help young people build creative skills through free multimedia arts programs and access to technology. Two new locations opened in 2023, joining the Powderhorn location that opened in 2021.

The Harrison Recreation Center location opened in February. It features a professional sound recording booth and engineering station alongside awesome equipment found at other locations, like Mac computers and laptops, musical instruments, 3D printer, gaming stations and photo/video cameras.

The Whittier Recreation Center location opened in December. That location is highlighted by green screen technology and professional video editing software. Spark'd Studios offered hundreds of free youth programs in 2023 and youth completed incredible multimedia projects like podcasts, videos, art, songs, and much more! Check out their Instagram page @sparkdmpls for updates.

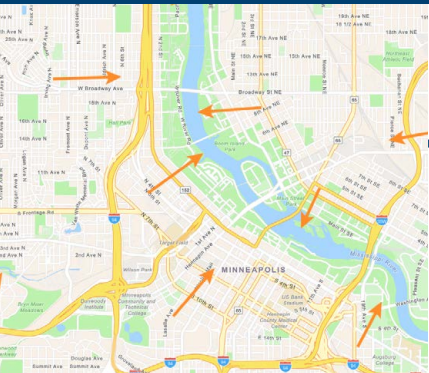


### 140 Years: Our Parks, Our Stories

April 3, 2023, marked the 140th anniversary of the Minneapolis Park Board. To commemorate the milestone, a year-long storytelling initiative was created, "140 Years: Our Parks, Our Stories."

Personal park stories and memories were collected from park archives, staff and communities who regularly use the park system. These stories included features on a long-running art project, new youth sports organization, memories collected from cultural events and older adults, historical images, and park staff histories.

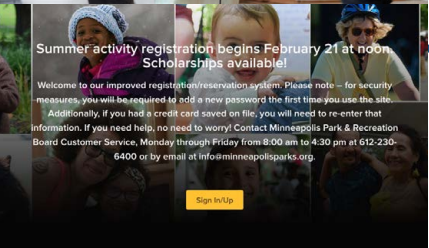
These features were shared on social media and online at [minneapolisiparks.org/140years](https://minneapolisiparks.org/140years). An exhibit featuring a selection of stories was on view at the Minneapolis Institute of Art, Feb 3-25 2024.



— **Ecological System Plan Maps** A new interactive mapping tool allows anyone to explore maps included in the Ecological System Plan. This customizable online resource can display 60+ layers of information across four main topics: water, air, land, and life. The plan outlines how and where to address environmental consideration in work done across the park system.



— **Multicultural Regional Park Ad Campaign** A Metropolitan Council Equity Grant funded a summer multicultural and multilingual advertising campaign to promote regional parks and programs to BIPOC, Latinx and Somali communities. The campaign reached more than 620,000 people through MLatino Media, ShelettaMakesMeLaugh, and Somali TV.



— **ActiveNet Upgrade** The park program registration and reservation system rolled out a major upgrade in October. Enhancements to the ActiveNet software system included a simpler and more intuitive customer experience, new and improved ways to find classes, activities and events, and the ability to check available room rentals at recreation centers and submit requests.



— **Board Meeting Upgrades** New flatscreen monitors were installed in the Board Room at Mary Merrill MPRB Headquarters to better display presentation materials during Board Meetings. All Board Meetings are now streamed on the MPRB YouTube channel ([youtube.com/minneapolisparcs](https://youtube.com/minneapolisparcs)) and archived instantly for anyone to view. These meetings are typically held on the first and third Wednesday of each month.



**DRONE PHOTO/VIDEO**

Park photographers drastically increased photos and videos taken by drone in 2023, capturing compelling depictions of dozens of park locations.

**WEBSITE STATISTICS**

**4.3 million** visits to [minneapolisparcs.org](https://minneapolisparcs.org) in 2023.

The top five most popular pages were the Homepage, Music and Movies, Minnehaha Regional Park, Meadowbrook Golf Club, and Theodore Wirth Golf Club.

**SOCIAL MEDIA STATS**

**17,893** Instagram Followers

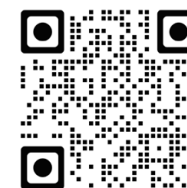
**25,475** Facebook Followers

**12,093** X Followers (formerly known as Twitter)

**EMAIL MARKETING**

**136,221** subscribers through the GovDelivery mass email service

**587** total emails sent in 2023



**GOAL 7 DATA**

Scan the QR code to browse the Dashboard

## Goal 8: Cultivate a thriving workforce

### Fostering safe, welcoming, and diverse workplaces and reducing barriers throughout the organization

#### Superintendent's Office

##### *Leadership, vision, direction*

The Superintendent's Office is responsible for the executive management of the highly diverse services and operations of the MPRB. The Superintendent provides leadership, vision, and direction to MPRB's service areas, implements Board policy, and works with the Board and leadership staff to craft strategic and financial planning objectives. The Superintendent serves in a highly visible capacity as an ambassador to the community and other governmental agencies. The Superintendent provides expertise and leadership in general MPRB administration, organizational development, community relations, intergovernmental relations, grant and donation administration, Board support/relations, MPRB budget and financial strategic planning, communications and marketing, community connections and violence prevention, and park safety and security.

#### Deputy Superintendent's Office

##### *Supporting organization service delivery*

The Deputy Superintendent's Office is responsible for the coordination of the day-to-day operations of the support services group of the MPRB. The Superintendent provides leadership and direction for the entire MPRB, while the Deputy is responsible for cross-departmental coordination and leadership. The Deputy Superintendent provides oversight of MPRB's information technology, finance, visitor services, and human resources departments as well as records management, archives, data practices, and safety and risk management.

#### Environmental Stewardship

##### *Caring for the park system*

The Environmental Stewardship Division provides expertise for the care and maintenance of the Minneapolis Park system. The division oversees maintenance of the park system's physical infrastructure; equipment and fleet services; management of natural areas and water resources; care of boulevard trees and wooded areas; environmental education; volunteer stewardship coordination; and youth employment and training.

#### Planning Services

##### *Developing the park system*

The Planning Division provides expertise to lead, advise and guide the development and redevelopment of the Minneapolis Park system. The division oversees park system analysis and master planning; capital program development; property administration; parkland acquisition; design and engineering; physical development and redevelopment; and construction permitting.

#### Recreation Services

##### *Providing visitor activities*

The Recreation Division provides expertise to lead, provide and create affordable recreational, cultural, educational, and leisure opportunities to benefit and enhance the lives of all Minneapolis residents. The division oversees recreation facility operations, including recreation centers; golf courses; aquatic facilities and beaches; ice arenas; and recreation and education programming.



**Teen Teamworks** Shout out to the more than 260 young people who joined park’s youth employment program for the busy summer season. Crews worked with forestry, maintenance, and horticulture staff to rejuvenate nature play areas, repair park facilities, and spruce up formal gardens. Others supported recreation centers and Rec Plus childcare staff.



**Employee Recognition** Highlights from the annual Employee Recognition event included honors for Rhonda Thornton for community-building and conflict de-escalation; Victor Oyesile, for saving a park patron’s life; MaryLynn Pulscher, for workplace innovation in environmental education and youth employment; and Ed Droege, the first-ever MPRB MVP for amazing service to his coworkers and the organization.



**Internal Influencers** Employees who influence and advance racial equity work across the MPRB continued quarterly gatherings to share information and learn from each other. This included learning about and sharing feedback on issues with a racial equity component, like removal of Emerald Ash Borer-infested trees and brainstorming new approaches for their work in 2024.

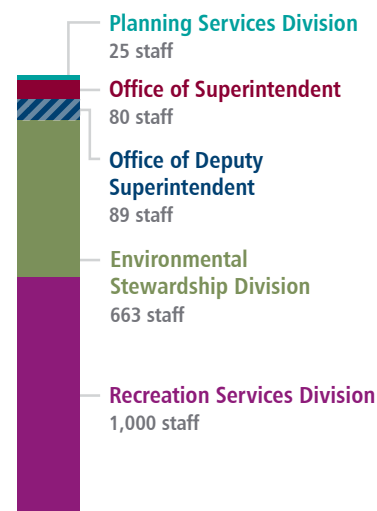


**Commissioner Rucker Appointed** Charles Rucker was appointed to replace Alicia D. Crudup as an At-Large Commissioner in December. Crudup resigned in October due to a move outside Minneapolis. Rucker is a lifelong Minneapolis resident and long-time volunteer coach who works for the Minneapolis Fire Department. He will serve the remainder of the term, until Jan. 2, 2026.

### AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PARKS AND RECREATION ADMINISTRATION

MPRB Superintendent Al Bangoura was inducted into the American Academy of Park and Recreation Professionals in October. The AAPRA is comprised of 137 distinguished leaders in American parks and recreation.

### FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME STAFF BY DIVISION



### EMPLOYEES

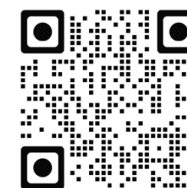
**632** Full-Time staff budgeted in 2023

**1,225** Seasonal and Temporary staff; **376** rehired in 2023

**93%** Certified and Appointed staff have been at MPRB for more than 1 Year

### LABOR MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Labor Management Committee is comprised of Labor and Management employees who work on mutually agreed upon problems and solutions affecting the work environment. In 2023, this included hosting informational sessions on the Safe and Sick Leave Policy and developing an organization-wide volunteer day.



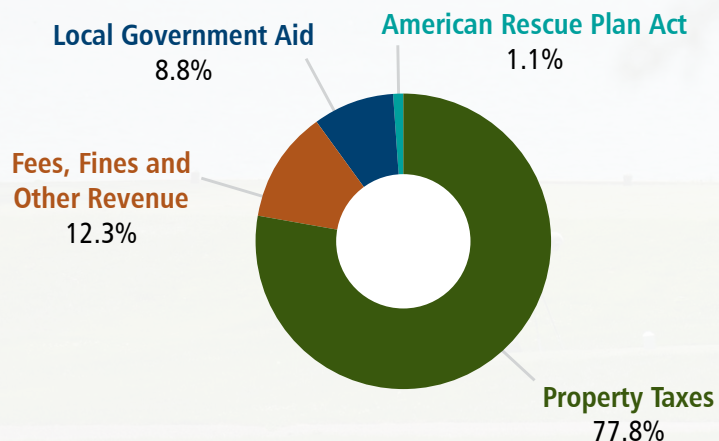
### GOAL 8 DATA

Scan the QR code to browse the Dashboard

# Goal 9: Operate a financially sustainable enterprise

Developing diverse, flexible, and innovative funding sources and allocating the budget using data-driven, transparent, and equitable processes

## 2023 GENERAL FUND REVENUE BY MAJOR SOURCES

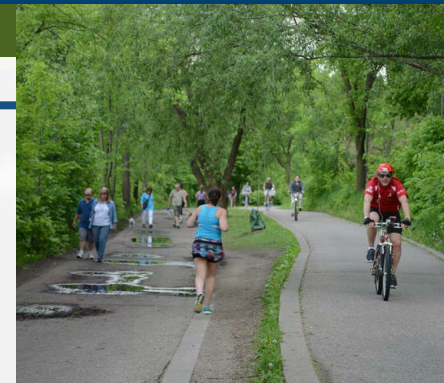


**State Infrastructure Bill** Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz signed the largest infrastructure bill in state history into law during an event held on West River Parkway in June. The bill contains funding to support the Grand Rounds Missing Link project and a new recreation center in Cedar-Riverside neighborhood, along with much-needed improvements to the Minneapolis regional trail system.

**Parkway Funding Agreement** After two decades of stagnant funding for repairs, the MPRB produced a thorough analysis of declining conditions on its 55 miles of parkways. It indicated these roadways, a key feature of the park system, would be largely impassable in 15 years. Negotiations with City officials resulted in increased, dedicated funding starting in 2025.

**Stormwater Funding Agreement** In a legacy moment, longstanding concerns were addressed regarding a chronic lack of funding to operate, maintain or improve aging stormwater infrastructure on parkland. After a Board resolution and negotiations with Mayor Frey and City staff, new funding was secured to assess and eventually support management of stormwater infrastructure, starting in 2024.

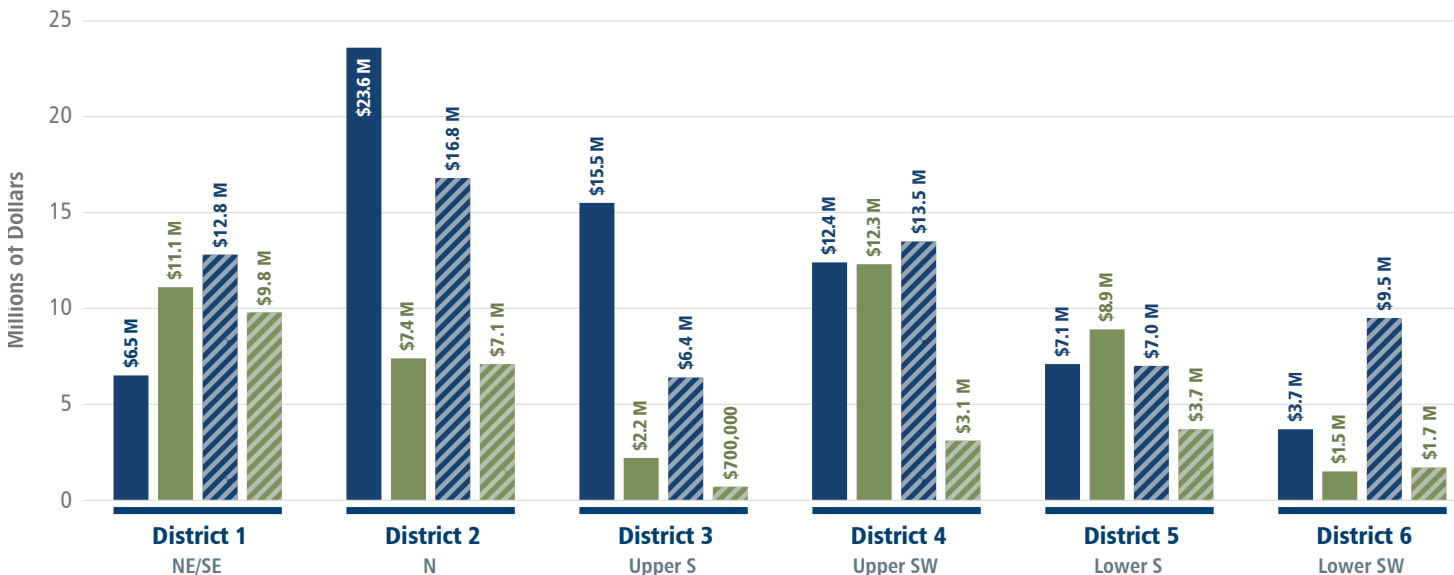
**CCVP Grants** Work done by the Community Connections and Violence Prevention Department was supplemented by successfully securing three grants in 2023: one for culturally responsive outreach from the US Department of Justice, and two grants from Hennepin County.



2023 Park Funding Facts <i>Comparison by Geographical Area and Commissioner District</i>	NE/SE District 1	N District 2	Upper S District 3	Upper SW District 4	Lower S District 5	Lower SW District 6
Parks	41	39	20	37	22	24
Total Acres – Land/Water	798/309	1,080/289	333/167	753/579	1,062/456	662/563
Population per ESRI Community Analyst Population Profile	82,790	73,180	68,337	79,035	64,996	65,908
Capital investments – average annual per capita 2017-2022/slated for 2023-2028	\$35/\$46	\$71/\$55	\$43/\$17	\$52/\$35	\$41/\$27	\$13/\$28
Youth/family programs and services per capita, 2022	\$40	\$50	\$65	\$20	\$41	\$43
Maintenance and operations per capita, 2022	\$66	\$89	\$58	\$51	\$93	\$78
NUMBERS BELOW IN MILLIONS						
Youth/family programs and services – funds invested in 2022	\$3.2 M	\$3.6 M	\$4.4 M	\$1.6 M	\$2.7 M	\$2.9 M
Maintenance and operations – funds invested 2022	\$5.4 M	\$6.5 M	\$4.0 M	\$4.0 M	\$6.0 M	\$5.2 M

### Capital Improvement Funds

*Allocations by District, 2017–2028*

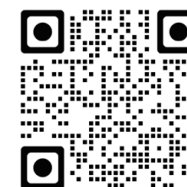


#### Funds Allocated 2017–2022

- Neighborhood Parks (Allocated)
- Regional Parks (Allocated)

#### Funds Slated for 2023–2028

- Neighborhood Parks (Slated)
- Regional Parks (Slated)



#### GOAL 9 DATA

Scan the QR code to browse the Dashboard

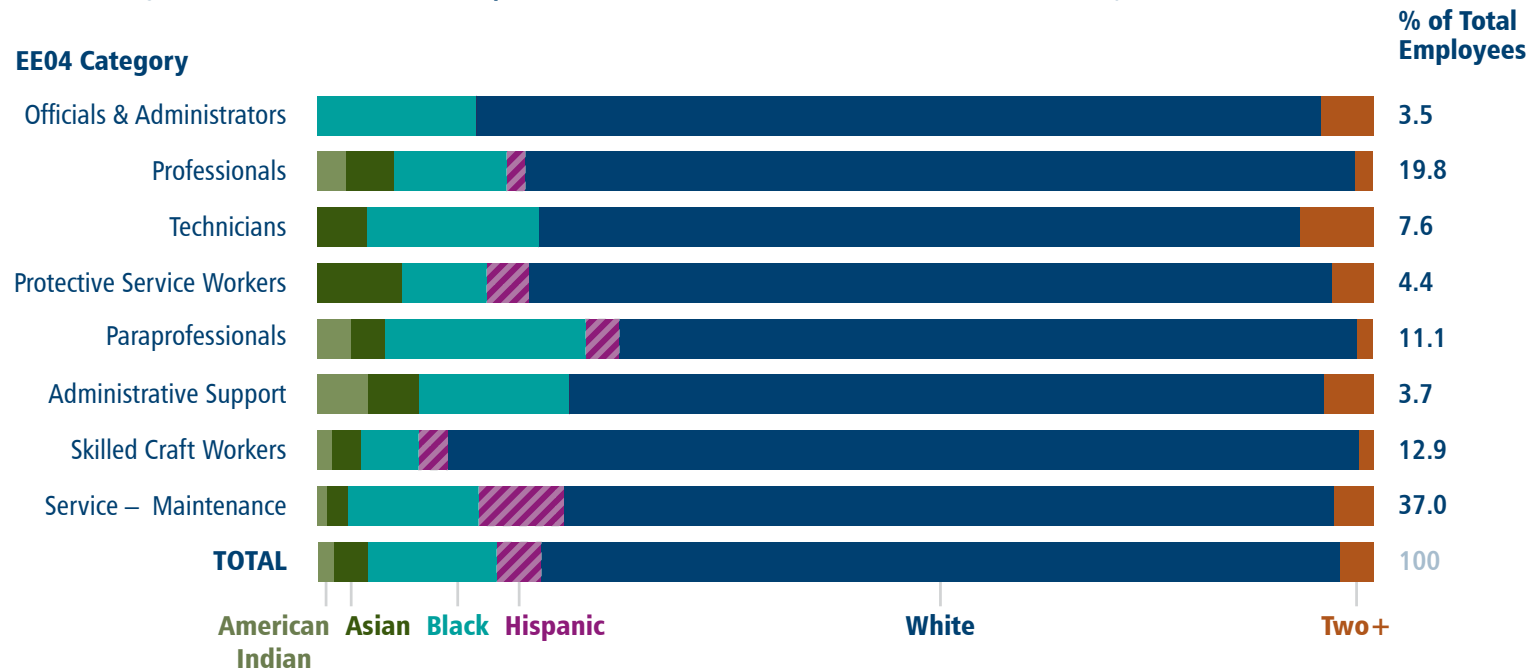
Created October 2023 using financial and other information from 2022. Investment figures reflect pandemic-related effects and funding from local, county, state and federal sources.

### Building an Inclusive Workforce

The MPRB continues to put systems in place to build a more inclusive workforce that better represents communities that use parks. Today slightly more than 24% of fulltime certified and appointed employees are people of color. City of Minneapolis demographics show approximately 41% of Minneapolis residents are people of color and an estimated 27% of all residents are of people color and of working ages 18-64 based on 2022 American Community Survey data. Below is a summary of the MPRB workforce as of December 31, 2023. The MPRB still has work to do and remains committed in this effort.



### Summary of MPRB Workforce | Appointed and Full-Time Certified Employees



# 2023 Park Board Budget

## Revenue

Property Taxes	\$77,671,722
Enterprise	\$14,504,744
Capital Projects	\$22,247,741
Local Government Aid	\$8,788,509
Other Revenue	\$13,874,898
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$137,087,614</b>



## Expenditures

<b>Superintendent's Office</b>	
Superintendent's Office	\$1,024,135
Board of Commissioners	\$805,406
Communications & Marketing	\$1,084,194
Community Connections & Violence Prevention	\$1,209,748
Park Police	\$6,921,613
<b>Environmental Stewardship</b>	
Asset Management	\$32,663,305
Environmental Management	\$5,246,861
Forestry	\$11,263,650
<b>Deputy Superintendent's Office</b>	
Deputy Superintendent's Office	\$1,514,197
Visitor Services	\$4,091,567
Finance	\$1,451,738
Human Resources	\$1,509,973
ITS – Copy Center	\$72,942

<b>Planning Services</b>	
Design & Project Management	\$2,088,622
Strategic Planning	\$1,578,538
<b>Recreation Services</b>	
Athletic Programs, Aquatics & Ice Arenas	\$11,908,998
Youth & Recreation Center Programs	\$22,746,839
<b>Other</b>	
Capital Projects	\$27,526,551
City Mgmt Fee, Contributions & Other	\$2,315,721
Debt Service	\$1,284,375
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$138,308,973</b>

Expenditures exceed budgeted revenues due to the programmed use of Enterprise Fund reserves for capital projects and Special Revenue Fund reserves for tree planting. See [minneapolisparcs.org/budget](http://minneapolisparcs.org/budget) for more details.

# 2023 Distinctions

**Minneapolis: #3 park system in the nation**

—Trust for Public Land, May

**Minneapolis: #1 best city for biking**

—People for Bikes, June

**Minneapolis: #1 city for bikeability**

—thrillist, August

**Minneapolis: 11th most dog-friendly city in the U.S.**

—Hepper, February

**Minneapolis: 10th best city for summer jobs**

—WalletHub, May

**Minneapolis: 4th fittest city in the U.S.**

—American College of Sports Medicine Fitness Index, July

**Minneapolis: 10th greenest city in America**

—WalletHub, October

For a full list of 2023 awards and distinctions, visit [www.minneapolisparcs.org/awards](http://www.minneapolisparcs.org/awards).



**Minneapolis**  
Park & Recreation Board

**Administrative Offices**

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