



Minneapolis
Park & Recreation Board



Innovation, Engagement, Advocacy

Superintendent's Annual Report 2015



3 Urban forests, natural areas and waters that endure and captivate

5 Recreation that inspires personal growth, healthy lifestyles and a sense of community

7 Dynamic parks that shape city character and meet diverse community needs

10 A safe place to play, recreate, contemplate and celebrate

11 Values guide Commissioners, staff and volunteers in their work

13 Organizational Overview

14 2015 Budget

Our Mission

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board shall permanently preserve, protect, maintain, improve, and enhance its natural resources, parkland, and recreational opportunities for current and future generations.

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board exists to provide places and recreation opportunities for all people to gather, celebrate, contemplate, and engage in activities that promote health, well-being, community, and the environment.



Superintendent

Jayne Miller

Secretary to the Board

Jennifer Ringold

Administrative Offices

2117 West River Road
Minneapolis, MN 55411
612-230-6400 *phone*
612-230-6500 *fax*
www.minneapolisparcs.org

2015 Commissioners

President

Liz Wielinski, District 1

Vice President

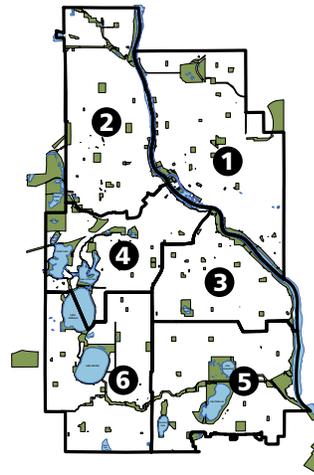
Scott Vreeland, District 3

Commissioners

Jon Olson, District 2
Anita Tabb, District 4
Steffanie Musich, District 5
Brad Bourn, District 6
John Erwin, At Large
Meg Forney, At Large
M. Annie Young, At Large

(front, left-right) Annie Young, Scott Vreeland, Liz Wielinski, Meg Forney
(back, left-right) Anita Tabb, Brad Bourn, Jon Olson, John Erwin, Steffanie Musich

Minneapolis Commissioner Districts



The park system was rated number one in the nation for the third year. It earned a perfect five “park bench” rating on The Trust for Public Land’s ParkScore® index for: Park Access, which measures the percentage of residents living within a 10-minute walk of a park; Park Size, which is based on median park size and the percentage of total city area dedicated to parks; and Facilities and Investment, which combines park spending per resident with availability of popular park amenities.

Farsighted Planning



Farsighted planning lays the foundation for every great parks system. Horace Cleveland delivered a blueprint of connecting parks and parkways to the Board of Park Commissioners just two months after it was created to develop a system of parks for Minneapolis in 1883. His initial proposal sparked a long line of visionary, comprehensive plans that shaped the best park system in America.

In 2015, we launched our most ambitious park planning effort in decades. "Closing the Gap: Investing in Neighborhood Parks" collected enormous amounts of data on the state of neighborhood parks after suffering years of funding reductions. We spent months hosting meetings throughout the city to inform the public about this issue and listen to different communities' needs and concerns regarding the parks in their neighborhood. In 2016, the Park Board will determine the best path forward.

While Closing the Gap focused on funding neighborhood parks, RecQuest assessed how recreation center programming and facilities can better serve a growing, diverse city. Residents also weighed in on initial drafts of the South Service Area and Downtown Service Area Master Plans that will eventually guide rehabilitation of every neighborhood park in those areas for decades. We have plans for regional parks too. Master Plans for Central Mississippi Riverfront, Nokomis-Hiawatha and Theodore Wirth regional parks were adopted.

Plenty of accomplishments celebrated in coming pages show our attention remains focused on the present as well. The Webber Park Natural Swimming Pool became the first public natural swimming pool in North America when it opened in July. The 21,000-square-foot pool uses cutting-edge biological treatments to clean its water in lieu of chemicals, creating an innovative, regional attraction. We also had a productive year along the Upper Riverfront, highlighted by a series of strategic purchases that netted more than eight new acres of future riverfront park land.

Meadowbrook and Hiawatha golf courses and West River Parkway are still recovering from the effects of a devastating 2014 flood. The Park Board passed a plan for Meadowbrook that will better protect the course during the next flood, but more data on water pumping at Hiawatha is needed before its future is determined, and a challenging repair of the landslide that closed a section of West River Parkway continues.

A thorough investigation concluded it was feasible for Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) trains to tunnel under the Kenilworth Channel, but was not prudent. Following this conclusion, we signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Metropolitan Council that allowed us to help design bridges that will cause the least amount of disruption possible for park users and to park land. Just as important, the MOU guarantees our place in planning future transit projects affecting park land. A renewed, vigorous debate regarding the name of Lake Calhoun resulted in new educational signage bearing the Dakota name "Bde Maka Ska" installed around the lake.

I'm always impressed by the amount of passion surrounding Minneapolis parks. Passion drives excellence, and our parks' excellence was recognized by The Trust for Public Land when it named the Minneapolis parks system best in the nation for the third consecutive year and by the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies when MPRB was reaccredited after a broad review of our practices. The history of Minneapolis parks began with thoughtful planning and fierce advocacy, and our gaze remains fixed forward to continue that monumental legacy.

Jayne Miller
Jayne Miller

- 1883**
Year MPRB established
- 15.4 million**
Estimated regional park visits
- 6 million**
Estimated neighborhood park visits
- 28 million**
Estimated miles traveled by trail users
- 179**
Parks
160 neighborhood parks
19 regional parks and trails
- 6,801**
Acres of parkland and water
- 600,000**
Estimated number of trees
200,000 boulevard trees
400,000 park trees
- 49**
Recreation centers
47 operated by MPRB (1 reopening in 2017)
2 operated by non-profit organizations
- 28**
Computer labs open to the public
- 6**
Skate parks
- 112**
Playgrounds
- 66**
Pools
1 natural swimming pool
2 water parks
63 wading pools
- 12**
Authorized beaches
- 10**
Fishing piers
- 5**
Boat launches
- 10**
Canoe launches
- 380**
Sailboat buoys
- 462**
Canoe/kayak racks
- 5**
Outdoor performance stages
- 55**
Miles of parkways
- 102**
Miles of Grand Rounds trails
51 miles walking; 51 miles biking trails
- 7**
Off-leash dog recreation areas
- 12**
Gardens
- 2**
Bird sanctuaries
- 13**
Golf facilities
7 golf courses (1 reopening in 2017)
3 golf driving ranges
2 disc golf courses
1 footgolf course
- 1**
Winter recreation area
- 2**
Indoor ice arenas
- 47**
Outdoor ice rinks
- 397**
Multipurpose sports fields

fast facts



Goal: Sound management techniques provide healthy, diverse and sustainable natural resources

Protect Our Lakes. Aquatic invasive species inspectors performed 8,506 inspections at public boat launches, which prevented outside plants, animals, water, and mud from entering the lakes 1,238 times. On 14 occasions, inspectors stopped zebra mussels from invading a city lake.

New Inspection Booths. New striking blue structures debuted to provide shelter for aquatic invasive species inspectors during inclement weather and as an information hub full of educational resources about aquatic invasive species and the Minneapolis park system.



Healthier Habitat. Significant progress was made in multiyear projects to control cattails at Loring Pond and buckthorn and other invasive shrubs in Theodore Wirth Regional Park. Mechanical cutting and targeted herbicide application will help create a more biologically diverse and welcoming habitat for native species within two of Minneapolis' most-visited parks.

Bountiful Harvest. Nearly 1,000 visitors and volunteers – including 775 children – engaged in hands-on programming at JD Rivers' Children's Garden that taught children how to plant, weed, water, mulch, harvest and prepare fresh produce from the orchard and garden. More than 650 pounds of produce was harvested from the garden.

Major Storm Cleanup. Forestry crews spent two weeks trimming, removing and disposing trees damaged during a mid-July storm that destroyed approximately 120 trees on public land in South and Southwest Minneapolis.



Tree Tubes. The MPRB partnered with the University of Minnesota on The Grow Tube Project, a new tree stewardship program created to help ensure young trees have a full opportunity to grow healthily. The project recruited volunteers to install special protective "grow tubes" around saplings, which helped them acclimate and set down roots.

Goal: Residents and visitors enjoy and understand the natural environment

Urban Birds. Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden hosted numerous bird watching expeditions during the annual Twin Cities Urban Birding Festival.

Epic Journey, Epic Party. The Monarch Festival/Festival de la Monarca celebrated the annual marathon migration of monarch butterflies to Mexico and highlighted Minnesota-Mexico cultural



connections. An estimated 8,000-10,000 butterfly lovers congregated at Lake Nokomis for a day of art, botany, dancing, education, food and music.

Pollination Celebration. More than 800 people paid tribute to bees during the annual Pollinator Party at Lyndale Park Gardens. During the festivities researchers captured a male and female *bombus terricola* – a bumble bee species not seen in the Twin Cities metro area since the 1990s!

Pollination Education Station. MPRB naturalists pedaled a bike trailer full of pollination education resources to various park events throughout the summer. The pop-up exhibit taught park users about bees, monarchs and sustainable habitat. In the fall, it was featured in the concourse gallery at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design.

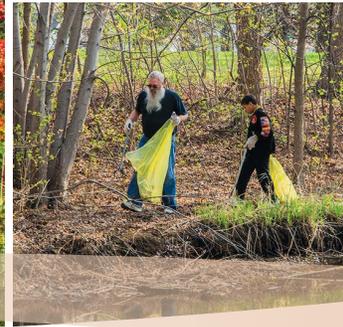
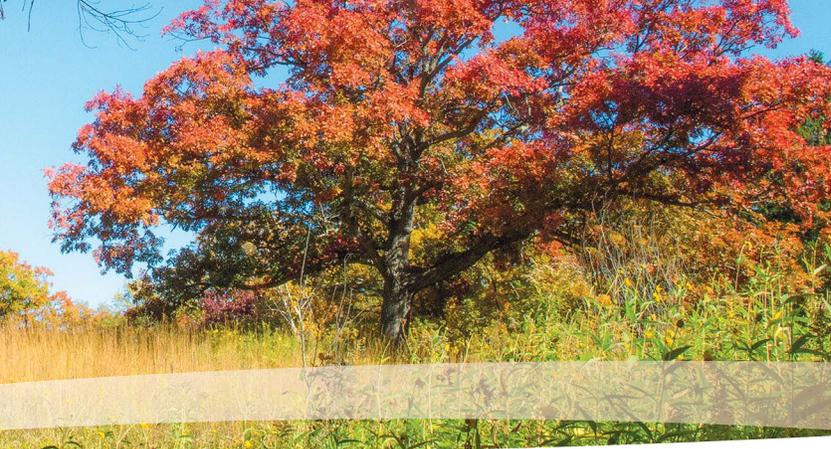
Florilegium on Display. A beautiful collection of biologically accurate watercolor paintings that depicted vegetation found in Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden was featured in an art exhibit hosted at Macalester College and highlighted in Minnesota Conservation Volunteer magazine.

Window into Outdoor Careers.

Outdoor Career Exploration Internships offered high-quality, hands-on experiences for youth interested in outdoor careers. The new program fostered basic understanding of outdoor career fields, education and experience requirements to get into those fields and the scope of possibilities available to those who wish to work outside.



Education through Exploration. More than 600 fourth-graders experienced the wonders of the natural world through naturalist-guided programs at Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden and the Quaking Bog. Students learned about different types of habitat, plant identification and how use tools to spot and identify birds.



Goal: People and the environment benefit from the expansion and protection of natural resources

Ending Ground Water Pumping into Lake Calhoun. The MPRB and City of Minneapolis settled a dispute with a developer over a new apartment building pumping ground water into the lagoon north of Lake Calhoun. The owner of the 1800 Knox building agreed to seal off a level of underground parking, which will eliminate the need to pump water away from the site.

Goal: Healthy boulevard trees connect all city residents to their park system

Emerald Ash Borer Infestation Grows. The presence of Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) was confirmed in three more Minneapolis neighborhoods: CARAG, Central and Morris Park. EAB has spread to at least 14 Minneapolis neighborhoods and Fort Snelling Golf Course since it was first detected in Prospect Park in March 2010.

Urban Canopy Investment. The MPRB's Ash Canopy Replacement Plan completed its second successful year as a proactive plan to protect the urban forest by responding to EAB and planting new trees after storms. The ambitious strategy began in 2014 and will replace 40,000 ash trees on boulevards and in parks by 2022, before the invasive beetle can overwhelm the urban canopy. Funds to remove ash and plant and care for the thousands of new saplings established each year come from the Tree Preservation and Reforestation Levy, which raised \$1.475 million in 2015.

Future Forest. Forestry planted 8,700 new trees throughout Minneapolis' public boulevards and park land in 2015. The new trees included a carefully curated, diverse mix of approximately 100 different species and varieties.

Cleanup on Aisle Tree. New equipment helped highly-skilled arborists remove thousands of ash trees in accordance with the Ash Canopy Replacement Plan. Five new small articulated loaders gave arborists a versatile, powerful tool to help clean up tree debris. The machines mechanized what had been a very manual process to increase efficiency and safety.



Brewing a Better Forest. The MPRB, People for Parks and local breweries and coffee shops partnered in "Brewing a Better Forest," a new program that encouraged volunteers to adopt newly-planted trees. Hundreds of volunteers agreed to water a young tree once a week in exchange for a token that could be exchanged for a free beverage at participating businesses.

Goal: Knowledgeable stewards and partners generously support the system's natural resources

Green Team. The Mississippi River Green Team engaged 20 teenagers from North and Northeast Minneapolis to perform habitat restoration along the Mississippi River and learn more about environmental careers.

Arbor Day at Stewart Park. A group of 1,300 students from Andersen United Community School celebrated Arbor Day at Stewart Park in South Minneapolis. The students learned about trees and received hands-on experience when they helped plant 150 new trees throughout the park.

Get Outdoors. National Get Outdoors Day at Powderhorn Park gave park users a chance to try a litany of outdoor activities for free. Outdoor educators



offered instruction on archery, canoeing, fishing, geocaching, mountain biking, mountain climbing, paddleboarding and much more. Live music and marshmallow roasting added to the fun.

Earth Day Cleanup. Earth Day events at 37 sites across Minneapolis enlisted 1,800 volunteers to collect 2,100 pounds of recycling and 8,500 pounds of trash.

Track the Urban Ecosystem. Members of Conservation Corps Youth Outdoors and naturalists from the Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden established 20 permanent monitoring plots that cover 20 acres in Theodore Wirth Regional Park. Data collected will be entered into a software application called iTree Eco, which analyzes urban tree data to measure the environmental benefits provided by urban forests. Additionally, MPRB staff tailored data collection to track invasive species and the spread of forest floor vegetation in each of the 20 plots.



Bee Lawn Research. Eleven MPRB-owned sites (and one City-owned site) hosted a University of Minnesota research project that monitored bee diversity and abundance on turf grass. The baseline data collected will be used in the development of different seed combinations to identify a lawn mix that is friendlier to bees.

With Friends Like These... Minneapolis parks benefitted from 116 volunteer groups that spent a total of 7,550 hours to clean up and improve park land.



Goal: People play, learn and develop a greater capacity to enjoy life

Indoor and Outdoor Activities.

Hundreds of kids enjoyed specialty camps that featured dozens of activities. Campers canoed, swam and biked through the outdoors, while indoor adventures examined diverse topics like urban art, video production and language and culture studies.



Teen Teamworks Turns 30. Summer marked Teen Teamworks's 30th year. Over the last three decades, the highly-successful program provided job training and development for more than 9,750 youth aged 14-18 through daily, hands-on work experiences and work readiness workshops.

Come Sail Away. MPRB provided sailing lessons for 362 youth and 93 adults. Another 30 people participated in a free rowing program.

Goal: Residents, visitors and workers enjoy opportunities to improve health and fitness

Kids Compete. Nearly 8,000 children and teenagers played on an MPRB sports team. With nearly 1,700 participants, basketball overtook soccer as the most popular sport by about 150 players. Baseball and football were the two other sports that registered more than 1,000 athletes, while a number of others tried track, volleyball, hockey, softball, wrestling, tennis and gymnastics.



Exemplary Teamwork. The following teams were awarded Youth Sportsmanship Awards: Armatage-Kenny 11U Basketball, Pearl Lynx 11U Basketball, North Commons Bulldogs Wrestling, Linden Hills 15U Hockey, Corcoran Track and Field, Lake Hiawatha Lakers Softball and Police Activities League 10U Baseball. Congratulations to each team for completing an excellent season and setting a fine example for their peers!

Individual Awards. The Sandy Peterson Most Improved Player Award was given to three inspiring youth softball players: Taleah Jones, Pershing/Linden Hills 10U; Sofie Edevold, Kenwood Park 12U; and Shanelle White, Bottineau Park 14U. The Jordan Holt Most Improved Player Award was presented to four promising basketball players: Caylon Redd, Creekview Knights; Damien

Cudd, Longfellow Bulldogs; Estelle Harsh, Van Cleve Park; and Sophie Breck, Pershing/Linden Hills. Most Improved Player Awards in hockey were awarded to Andy Lorenzo, DinoMights Squirrels; Bennett Schrader, Linden Hills Purple 13U; Carter Bursinger, Sibley Eagles; Will Hutt, Pearl White 15U; and Amelia Watson, Lynnhurst Polar Bears.

Adult Athletes. Almost 25,000 adults played on an MPRB sports team. Softball was the most popular sport by a large margin, with just under 12,000 players who competed on 593 teams. Broomball, soccer and volleyball all registered more than 2,500 participants, followed in popularity by kickball, basketball, dodgeball, flag football, pond hockey and tennis.



Beaches and Pools. More than 160,000 people used MPRB beaches and full-size pools and nearly 1,000 season passes were sold at Jim Lupient Water Park. Webber Park Natural Swimming Pool recorded more than 9,000 visits after opening on July 24.

Healthy Food, Healthy People. Ten locations across Minneapolis parks brought in healthier vending machines as part the MPRB's Healthy Food Policy enacted in 2013. The number of healthy vending machines in MPRB facilities is expected to double in 2016.

Goal: People connect through parks and recreation

Festivals across the Seasons. MPRB hosted dozens of festivals sprinkled throughout all four seasons. Winter festivals included the Lake Harriet Kite Festival and always-interesting Art Sled Rally at Powderhorn Park. Powderhorn also hosted an Egg Hunt in the spring attended by more than 200 people who searched for approximately 2,000 eggs. Summer is the busiest time of year for Minneapolis parks, so it's no surprise tens of thousands of people came out for the Red, White and Boom 4th of July celebration on the Central Mississippi Riverfront. In the fall, 19 different parks held Halloween parties that showcased creative costumes worn by park users young and old.





Cultural Celebrations. Both the Owamni Falling Water Festival and Hmong Flag Football Tournament enjoyed a successful second year. The Owamni Festival brought 2,000 people to Father Hennepin Bluff Park to celebrate indigenous Minnesota culture, and more than 300 people watched eight teams vie for the top spot in the Hmong Flag Football tournament at Farview Park.

King’s Legacy. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day events were held at Central Gym, Powderhorn and Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. parks. The gatherings were full of food, entertainment, speeches and educational activities that reflected on the importance of this special holiday. At Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Park, Charles E. Mays accepted the 2015 Living the Dream award for his dedication and commitment to our community, and the Feeding the Dream Food Drive took in approximately 1,100 pounds of food for the Sabathani Community Center.

Loring Park Hosts Holidazzle. The MPRB partnered with the Minneapolis Downtown Council to bring the annual Holidazzle celebration to Loring Park.



Thousands of visitors from throughout Minnesota attended the free event and enjoyed food, drink and crafts from local vendors, fireworks, outdoor screenings of classic holiday movies and a special refrigerated outdoor ice skating rink.

Call to End Child Poverty. About 500 kids filled Folwell Park for the National Children’s Defense Fund Day of Service on July 15. The event’s theme focused on ending child poverty. Children who participated in the program, called Freedom School scholars, presented written letters about the importance of ending poverty to elected officials during a special ceremony that included a Harambee (Swahili word for “pull together”) of songs and dance movements.

Music and Movies in the Park. More than 200 free public concerts rocked some of Minneapolis’ most iconic parks, including Lake Harriet, Nicollet Island, Father Hennepin Bluff, Minnehaha Falls, Bryant Square and Theodore Wirth. Nearly 75 free movie screenings featuring family favorites, new releases, action heroes and more played on a giant portable screen that rotated through more than 30 parks.



Goal: Volunteers make a vital difference to people, parks and community

Passion for Parks. More than 8,300 volunteers contributed more than 178,000 hours of their time – an estimated \$4.4 million worth of labor! – to add positivity, guidance and fellowship to our communities.

Volunteers of the Year. Volunteer of the Year awards were presented to Leigh Breitenbach, Patrick Arneson, Ted Tucker, Phoebe Waugh and Bob Sorg. The Group Volunteer Award was presented to Metro Blooms. Rising Star awards were presented to teens Jake Sullivan, Sean Ulrich and the Northern Star Council Boy Scout Troop 100, the first all-Hmong troop in the Twin Cities.



Goal: Parks provide a center for community living

RecQuest Launch. RecQuest launched in January. The sweeping initiative will better align the facilities and services offered at recreation centers with the needs of specific communities they serve. Phase 1 compiled and analyzed data on rec center use, programs and needs city-wide, and was completed in the fall. Future phases will use the data to provide a vision for the next generation of rec center programs and facilities, and articulate a long-term investment strategy to implement that vision. The final report will be presented in 2016.

Inaugural Girl Interrupted Conference. Girls aged 14-18 learned tools to help navigate the sometimes-challenging transition from high school to adulthood at the first-ever Girl Interrupted Conference in October. The day-long conference hosted at the Minneapolis Institute of Art featured in-depth breakout sessions that empowered young women to overcome adversity. Pastor Carmen Means served as the event’s inspiring keynote speaker.





Goal: Parks shape an evolving city

First of its Kind. The Webber Park Natural Swimming Pool became the first public natural swimming pool in North America when it opened July 24. The 21,000-square-foot pool uses a cutting-edge system of biological treatments to clean its water instead of traditional chemicals. It features zero-depth entry, a lap swim area, diving platform, separate shallow wading pool and no entrance charge. Hours were limited to weekends but will expand in 2016.

New Life for Phillips Community Center Pool. Public and private groups in partnership with the MPRB raised enough money to move forward with a plan to renovate the pool, which has been closed since 2008. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2016, with a grand opening planned for 2017.



Water Works Moves Forward. The new Water Works park planned along the Central Riverfront had its concept design approved by the MPRB in September. Initial engineering tasks, like assessing the best way to demolish the Fuji-Ya building, began in the fall. Project partner Minneapolis Parks Foundation committed \$14.9 million toward the design and construction of Water Works and other planned RiverFirst Initiative improvements along the Upper Mississippi.

Someday, an Island Reborn. Significant progress was made in the environmental investigation and permitting process required for the MPRB to re-create Hall's Island as envisioned by the RiverFirst Initiative.

New Recreation Hub at Wirth. The concept design of a new 14,000-square-foot recreation hub within Theodore Wirth Regional Park was approved in August. The Wirth Adventure and Welcome Center will provide



an all-season, modern facility that supports outdoor activities at Minneapolis' largest park. The MPRB is partnered with The Loppet Foundation in this

exciting new endeavor, which also includes a new tubing hill, mountain biking trails and tweaks to the snowboarding area.

Service Area Master Plans. Months of sustained community outreach culminated in the creation of initial drafts of both the Downtown Service Area and South Service Area Master Plans. Once finalized, these collective, cohesive visions will guide the development of every neighborhood park property in Downtown and South Minneapolis for decades.

Goal: Park facility renewal and development respects history and focuses on sustainability, accessibility, flexibility and beauty

Regional and Neighborhood Park Master Plans. Master plans for four parks were completed: Bossen Field, Central Mississippi Riverfront, Nokomis-Hiawatha and Theodore Wirth, while significant progress was made on the Calhoun-Harriet Master Plan. The Urban Agriculture Activity Plan, adopted in 2014, shaped the development of these plans and will continue to influence future park planning efforts.

Sculpture Garden Reconstruction Begins. The Minneapolis Sculpture Garden and Cowles Conservatory closed in anticipation of major reconstruction work beginning next spring that will improve its failing infrastructure, better manage storm water and increase accessibility. The iconic Spoonbridge and Cherry remained in place along with three other sculptures, but all other art was carefully relocated in the fall. The Standing Fish sculpture inside Cowles Conservatory was sent to Weisman Art Museum, The Foraging Circle moved to JD Rivers' Children's Garden and Gold Medal Park received several sculptures. The transformation of one of Minneapolis' most beloved cultural assets will be completed in 2017.



Minnehaha Refectory. The historic Minnehaha Refectory completed a series of upgrades that debuted to rave reviews. Inside the building, the ceiling was opened to expose original wooden beams and restaurant staff enjoyed numerous kitchen upgrades. Outside, pedestrian and bike trails were realigned for better traffic flow.

Walk through the Wetlands. Friends of Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden raised money for a new boardwalk through the garden's wetlands. The boardwalk's decking was constructed using ash trees harvested as part of the Ash Canopy Replacement Program. A small bridge on the boardwalk was dedicated to longtime EBWG Gardener Cary George.



Northeast Athletic Field Recreation Center. The concept design for a new recreation center at Northeast Athletic Field Park was approved. The new building is expected to open in 2017.



Columbia Park Picnic Shelter. The Columbia Park Picnic Shelter completed a rehabilitation project that kept its classic modernist design and improved restrooms, added accessibility improvements and repaved the parking lot.

Northtown Yard Bridge. The St. Anthony Parkway Bridge over Northtown Rail Yard closed to all traffic in the fall in anticipation of its replacement in 2016. A portion of the historic bridge will be repurposed into a trail overlook along St. Anthony Parkway.

All Hail the Riverfront Trail. The West River/James I. Rice Parkway Trail beside the Mississippi River celebrated 3.3 miles of freshly repaved and realigned trail from Franklin Avenue to Plymouth Avenue. The adjacent stretch of parkway was repaved too.



Trails, Trails, Trails. A section of trail near Bassett Creek in Theodore Wirth Regional Park was repaired after a 2011 tornado left it in poor condition, work on a new trail and overlook along Ridgway Parkway was substantially completed and a two-phase plan to widen and rebuild Minnehaha Parkway Trail near Lyndale Avenue was approved. When the plans to improve Minnehaha Parkway Trail are completed, bikers and pedestrians will be able to travel beside Minnehaha Creek underneath the Lyndale Avenue Bridge.

Splish Spash. Harrison Park and Waite Park celebrated new wading pools, and grand openings for new wading pools nearly completed at Bethune, Hi-View and Van Cleve parks are scheduled in 2016.



Fresh Places for Play. A new playground that highlights the civil rights movement and African American inventors hosted a grand opening event at Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Park. Fuller Park, Steven's Square and Windom Northeast Park also celebrated new playgrounds, and grand openings for new playgrounds at Hi-View Park, Bethune Park and 54th Street Play Area near Lake Hiawatha are scheduled in 2016.



Fantastic Fields. Elliot Park opened a new multipurpose synthetic turf field large enough for nearby North Central College to host NCAA soccer games. At Neiman Sports Complex, two baseball fields were redone and the reconstruction of the field at McRae Park began.

Sport Courts. Basketball courts at Beltrami, Jackson Square, Painter, Pearl and Webber parks were resurfaced. Beltrami also received two new hoops, and Jackson Square and Pearl had a youth-sized hoop installed. The volleyball and tennis courts were also resurfaced at Pearl Park.



Goal: Focused land management supports current and future generations

No to Crown Hydro. An official complaint was filed by the MPRB with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission regarding Crown Hydro's longstanding application to build a hydroelectric facility near Mill Ruins Park and the Stone Arch Bridge. Crown Hydro's proposal fundamentally changed as it evolved over the last two decades, which should require it to seek a new license. Furthermore, Crown Hydro has not addressed any of the numerous written concerns raised repeatedly by the MPRB and fellow riverfront advocates.

Upper Riverfront Progress. More than eight acres of riverfront property was purchased by the MPRB on both sides of the Upper Riverfront. Strategic land acquisitions are critical in the effort



to create a network of continuous trails and park land beside the Upper Riverfront, as envisioned in the Above the Falls Master Plan and RiverFirst Initiative.

Tough Negotiation. The MPRB engaged in an extended negotiation with local manufacturer Graco over an easement needed to build a new .75-mile trail along the Northeast Minneapolis riverfront. The easement was eventually awarded through condemnation proceedings, and a critical link in the RiverFirst Initiative vision for the Upper Riverfront will begin construction in 2016.

Bassett's Creek Park Land Swap. The MPRB traded an 11,420-square-foot parcel of land adjacent to the abandoned Fruen Mill property to a developer for an identically-sized parcel of land nearby. The land swap aided development of a long-vacant nuisance property and added more desirable park land to Bassett's Creek Park.



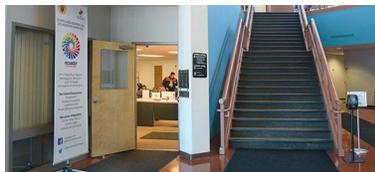
Northeast Cleanup. Contaminated soil at Northeast Athletic Field Park was removed and replaced with clean dirt, clearing the way for future field and path improvements.

Data Collection at Hiawatha. Data collected on the effects of ground and storm water pumping at Hiawatha Golf Course will help determine a new plan for the course as it recovers from a devastating 2014 flood.

Goal: *Financially independent and sustainable parks prosper*

Bright Future at Meadowbrook. A long-term, sustainable strategy for Meadowbrook Golf Course was determined after the 2014 flood forced it to close. Planned improvements aim to reduce impacts of future floods by reshaping Minnehaha Creek through the property and raising high-value course components like tee boxes and greens. A new driving range is expected to bring in more revenue.

New Tenants. Surdyk's Catering and the Ecuadorian Consulate of Minnesota were welcomed into MPRB Headquarters as our new tenants.



Sheridan Memorial Park Receives \$500,000. The MPRB received a \$500,000 grant from the federal government to build a host of park improvements at Sheridan Memorial Park, which opened in 2013.

County Grants. Hennepin County Youth Sports Grants provided \$200,000 toward the new playground and interpretive history at Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Park and a variety of smaller grants for improvements at Bohanon, Logan, Longfellow, North Commons and Sibley parks.

Goal: *Through outreach and research, park and recreation services are relevant today and tomorrow*

Listen and Learn. An unprecedented number of public meetings were held across Minneapolis as the MPRB embarked on several initiatives – Closing the Gap, RecQuest and multiple Service Area Master Plans – that make up our most ambitious park planning effort in decades.



Racial Equity. Voices for Racial Justice provided a racial equity analysis and assisted with community engagement for RecQuest and the Calhoun-Harriet Master Plan.

Leaders in Urban Trail Research. The MPRB partnered with university and non-profit researchers to conduct the first national trail user survey. Data



collected will be used to calculate health benefits of trail infrastructure, plan future investments and optimize operation of the MPRB's trail network. This work solidified the MPRB's standing as a national leader in trail research and will help estimate average daily trail traffic, total trail miles traveled annually and the effect of weather patterns on trail use.

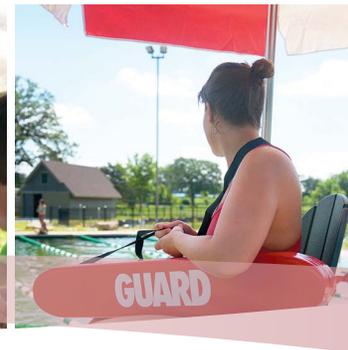
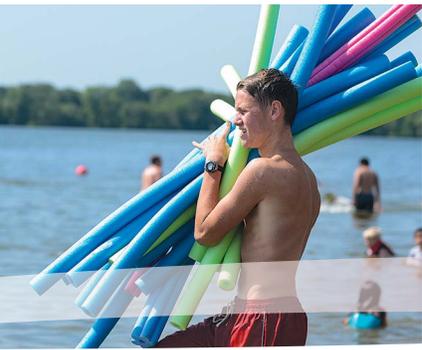
Goal: *Easily accessible information supports enjoyment and use of the park and recreation system*

Better, Brighter, Easier. The redesigned MPRB website launched in February. The colorful new site showcases brilliant photos, an intuitive menu and is designed for easy access from a smartphone or tablet.

Bde Maka Ska. Signs around Lake Calhoun were updated to include the Dakota name "Bde Maka Ska" (pronounced b-day ma-kha skah, according to the Dakota Language Society). The new signs honor the Dakota people and educate the public about the lake's Dakota name.



Good Call. A new phone system upgraded communications with more than 375 new phones installed at MPRB headquarters and across more than 65 locations throughout the park system.



Goal: Positive recreation experiences and welcoming parks prevent crime

Park on the Go. A Pop-Up Park tent brought music, dance, art and activities for teens to various gatherings throughout the summer, including a National Night Out celebration in North Minneapolis attended by Gov. Mark Dayton.



Pop-Up Bike Shop. A bicycle trailer rigged with bike repair supplies made the rounds throughout Minneapolis parks and events. Team Teenworks youth workers hauled the trailer to different parks and taught basic repair skills, repaired abandoned bikes and helped children and adults learn to ride bikes.

Junior Staff Make a Difference. Kids in the Waite Park Rec Plus program aged 9-12 became Junior Staff members at Waite Park. Junior Staff agreed to set a good example for other park users, helped keep the recreation center clean and organized, planned a talent show for younger Rec Plus participants and completed an art project.

Ride On! More than 275 kids took part in bike rodeos put on by Park Agents and Park Police Officers at McRae, Nokomis and Wirth parks.



Participants learned about bike maintenance, how to watch for hazards while riding and the importance of proper helmet fitting. Then they tested their abilities in a closed skills course.

StreetReach. The MPRB Youth Development Department partnered with Park Police in a deliberate, coordinated youth violence prevention effort at neighborhood parks, called StreetReach. StreetReach staff collaboratively assessed the atmosphere at parks and surrounding neighborhoods to anticipate violence or negative behavior, and provided intervention services to ensure park safety.

Safe Space to Demonstrate. MPRB workers, including StreetReach staff, worked with protest organizers to ensure safety during large student demonstrations at Dr. Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. Park and Lynnhurst Park.

Battle of the Badges. Park Police competed with the Minneapolis Police and Fire departments in the Battle of the Badges BBQ rib cook-off at North Commons Park. Attendees enjoyed games, ate delicious barbecue and built positive relationships with emergency services personnel.

Goal: Communities, public and private partners, and staff cooperate to promote safety

Learn to Swim. Youth received more than 700 swimming lessons from MPRB aquatics staff. People for Parks partnered with the MPRB to provide deeply discounted swimming lessons for the community at the new Webber Park Natural Swimming Pool.

Goal: Intervention and communication reduces safety concerns

MPRB Officer of the Year. The MPRB Police Department selected Officer James Cannon as the 2015 Park Police Officer of the Year. Cannon was lauded for building positive relationships at the north Minneapolis parks and recreation centers he patrolled during the night shift. Cannon also volunteered as a part-time range instructor and field training officer and helped train at least four new Park Police officers in 2015.



Toward Zero Deaths. Park Police participated in the Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths Program, the state's cornerstone traffic safety initiative. Park Police provided extra DWI patrols around holidays and ramped up speeding and seatbelt enforcement.

Safer at Cedar. Increased patrols and improved collaboration with the community reduced crime and safety issues at East Cedar Beach.

Goal: Residents, park visitors and staff make safe choices in parks

Safety Camp Success. More than 190 kids learned new skills and enjoyed outdoor activities at Safety Camp in Theodore Wirth Regional Park. Each attendee received a free bike helmet at the end of camp.



Goal: Parks are safe and welcoming by design

Uniform Trail Signs. MPRB adopted consistent standards for all signs and pavement markings on bike and pedestrian trails. The MPRB's Uniform Trail Marking and Signage Standards will reduce confusion and increase safety for millions of park users each year.



Sustainability. *Meet current park and recreation needs without sacrificing the ability of future generations to meet their own needs by balancing environment, economic and equity concerns*

Parade Upgrade. Parade Ice Garden completed a multiyear, \$9 million renovation that greatly increased its energy efficiency. Each rink was removed and new refrigeration systems and ice surfaces were installed, along with



new heating and cooling systems for the entire building, retrofitted LED lighting and a new roof. A new exterior 153 kW rooftop solar array will produce 10 to 15 percent of the facility's total annual electrical

usage, saving about \$18,000 on top of the \$80,000 worth of estimated annual savings provided by the energy efficiency upgrades.

Storm Water Treatment. Monitoring of storm water filters installed along the 37th Street N Greenway was initiated to reduce the amount of dissolved phosphorus, suspended solids and other pollution reaching nearby Crystal Lake.

Visionary Leadership. *Respect the vision and leadership that built the park and recreation system and recognize the need for ongoing leadership in achieving excellence*

National Accreditation. After a thorough, multiyear process, the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) renewed MPRB's national accreditation. CAPRA accreditation is based on an agency's compliance with 144 different standards that represent elements of effective and efficient park and recreation operations. MPRB was one of only five Minnesota park agencies that received this distinguished honor.



2017 Urban Parks Conference. City Parks Alliance picked Minneapolis-St. Paul to host the 2017 Urban Parks Conference. The 2017 conference will focus on transformative park projects happening along the Mississippi River.

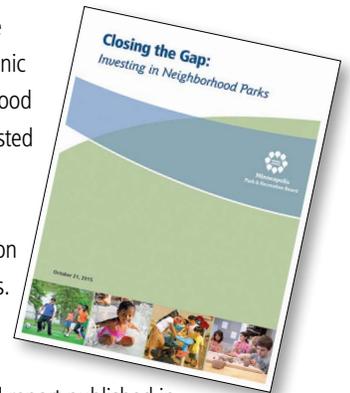
Workplace Improvement. The MPRB executive team completed a culture and climate assessment that examined how MPRB employees felt about workplace conditions. Implementation of specific strategies to improve the MPRB workplace began after the assessment was completed.

New Executive Leadership. Michael Schroeder stepped into the Assistant Superintendent for Planning position in February, and Jennifer Ringold was promoted to Deputy Superintendent in January. Ringold also earned a Minneapolis Downtown Council 2025 Plan Leadership Award for her efforts to plan a greener future for downtown.

Paid Parental Leave. The Board of Commissioners adopted a paid parental leave policy for MPRB staff in September and backdated it to Jan. 1, 2015. Eligible employees may receive up to three weeks of paid leave following the birth or adoption of a child.

Responsiveness and Innovation. *Anticipate and thoughtfully respond to the diverse needs of the city's communities, continually seeking ways to better deliver park and recreation services*

Close the Gap. The MPRB launched the Closing the Gap initiative to address chronic underfunding of Minneapolis' neighborhood parks. MPRB commissioners and staff hosted more than 30 public meetings in every part of the city to help the community understand the seriousness of the situation and gauge support for potential solutions. Feedback received at those meetings was combined with data that depicted the state of neighborhood parks in a final report published in October. In 2016, a course of action will be decided.



Insider Insights. Representatives from Indianapolis, New York City, Portland and Seattle shared how their cities addressed neighborhood park funding shortfalls at a well-attended public forum at the Walker Art Center in September.



Survey Says... A professional survey conducted in the spring uncovered many encouraging insights into how Minneapolitans view Minneapolis parks. Most notably, 95 percent of Minneapolis residents rated the parks system as "good" or "excellent."



Funding Fresh Ideas. MPRB staff used Park Leadership Funds to work directly with the community to enhance programs, pilot new ideas and respond to suggestions. The program funded new Zumba fitness and archery classes, work readiness training through Team Teenworks and programs for Somali youth at Cedar Field Park.

Native Lacrosse at Corcoran Park. The MPRB was proud to host the newly-formed Twin Cities Native Lacrosse Organization at Corcoran Park. More than 85 youth participants played both traditional (wooden-stick) and modern stick lacrosse on Corcoran’s multipurpose field over the course of the season.



Hiawatha Ski Trails. The gentle, 2.5-mile cross-country ski trail at Hiawatha was groomed more frequently in response to increased public demand.

Independence and Focus. *Independence allows the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board to focus on providing and obtaining the resources necessary to accomplish its mission and form effective, responsible partnerships*

#1 Park System (Again). The Trust for Public Land (TPL) declared Minneapolis’ park system best in the nation for the third consecutive year. The TPL expanded its calculations to include smaller cities in 2015, and as a result St. Paul was included for the first time. St. Paul joined Minneapolis at the top of the list, which cemented the Twin Cities’ reputation as a world-class parks destination.

Popular Regional Parks. Minneapolis was home to four of the five most-visited regional parks in the metro area. Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park held down the top spot with an estimated 5.5 million visits, followed by



St. Paul’s Como Regional Park, Zoo and Conservatory. Mississippi Gorge (2.7 million), Central Mississippi Riverfront (2.3 million) and Minnehaha (1.7 million) regional parks rounded out the top five measured by the Metropolitan Council.

Light Rail. In February, the MPRB approved an agreement with the Metropolitan Council regarding a plan to run Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) passenger trains over the Kenilworth Channel. MPRB staff worked with the Met Council to ensure SWLRT bridges cause the least disruption possible to park activity. Looking ahead, MPRB passed a resolution in October that stated specific positions on the upcoming Bottineau Light Rail project, including encumbrance of park land in North Minneapolis.



Welcome Woonerf. The only development granted an exemption from Minneapolis’s new park land development fee was a senior housing complex dubbed “Mill City Quarter” planned near the downtown riverfront. Instead of paying a fee dedicated toward nearby park acquisition and development, developer Eagle Iron Partners agreed to build a heavily-landscaped, pedestrian-friendly street, called a “woonerf” for the public to enjoy. In the future, it will connect to Water Works.

Fruitful Partnership. Several formal agreements better defined the MPRB’s vital partnership with the Minneapolis Parks Foundation, which committed to raising \$14.9 million in private contributions for Water Works and other RiverFirst Initiative improvements planned along Upper Riverfront.

Safety. *Work safely to support a thriving work environment and an outstanding park experience for visitors*

Flexible and Accessible. Over the summer Park Police deployed bikes and Rugged Terrain Vehicles more often to make park agents and officers more approachable and more frequently patrol park areas that are difficult to reach in squad cars.



Safe in Tight Spaces. Several confined space entry training sessions educated MPRB employees who work in tight spaces, such as manholes, storm sewers, display fountains, utility vaults, trenches and tanks.

Cool Behind the Wheel. More than 150 employees attended an eight-hour defensive driving course to help reduce accidents involving MPRB vehicles.

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW



Superintendent's Office

Leadership, vision, direction The Superintendent's Office is responsible for the executive management of the highly diverse services

Communications:

70,032 email subscribers, 2.4 million annual website visits, 6,342 Facebook Likes

Community policing:

10,866 calls for service, 5,175 visits to recreation centers, 344 special events

and operations of the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. The Superintendent provides leadership and vision, implements Board policy, and

crafts strategic and financial planning objectives. The Superintendent serves as an ambassador to the community and to other governmental agencies. The Superintendent's Office oversees communications and marketing; community outreach; and park safety and security.

Deputy Superintendent's Office

Supporting organization service delivery The Deputy Superintendent's Office provides support to the Superintendent and

MPRB event participants:

620,000 attended events, 87,650 listened to concerts, 23,343 watched movies

Permits processed:

7,182 parking, 5,415 dog park, 1,052 picnic, 160 photo, 172 wedding, 220 event permits

Better connectivity:

65 park locations accessible via wireless internet and a more efficient phone system installed

Board of Commissioners. The Deputy Superintendent provides strategic focus and leads performance management efforts. The Deputy Superintendent's Office oversees customer service; finance; human resources; information technologies; and risk management.

Planning Services

Developing the system Planning Services provides expertise to lead, advise and guide the development and redevelopment of the Minneapolis Park system. The division oversees park system research and analysis,

Renovations completed or underway:

Five playgrounds, two athletic fields, four wading pools, one recreation center, 2.75 miles of trail repaved, .75 miles of parkway resurfaced

Park Plans completed or underway:

Five master plans, three activity plans, two service area plans

community engagement for park planning and design, park master planning, real estate services, design and engineering, physical development and redevelopment, and construction permitting.

Recreation Services

Providing visitor activities Recreation Services provides expertise to lead, provide and create affordable recreational, cultural, educational, and leisure opportunities to benefit and enhance the lives of all Minneapolis

Sport team participants:

7,982 youth, 24,735 adults

Non-sport recreation center class participants:

121,819

Golf and cross-country skiing:

160,036 rounds of golf played, 1,255 ski passes sold (2014-15 season)

Youth development:

247 Teen Teamworks employees, 6,406 Pop-Up Park participants, 4,131 Youth Mentorship participants, 825 Rec Plus participants

residents. The division oversees recreation facility operations, including recreation centers, golf courses, aquatic facilities and beaches, ice arenas, cross-country skiing venues, and Wirth Winter Recreation Complex; recreation, education, and interpretive programming; and athletic fields and complexes.

Environmental Stewardship

Caring for the system Environmental Stewardship provides expertise for the care and maintenance of the park system. The division oversees the

Miles of city streets arborists plant and maintain trees:

1,100

Repairs completed:

2,766 work order requests, including 3 new roofs, 74 benches, 15 parking lots restriped

Participants:

15,000 Neighborhood Naturalist participants, 77,500 Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden visitors

maintenance of the Minneapolis Park system's physical infrastructure; equipment and fleet; natural areas and water resources; forestry; volunteer coordination; and environmental education.



MPRB employees: 495 full-time, 1,180 temporary

2015 BUDGET Condensed Financial Report



Revenues

Property Taxes	\$	50,994,300
Enterprise	\$	9,304,955
Capital Projects	\$	8,951,000
Local Government Aid	\$	9,133,360
Other Revenue	\$	9,558,847
Total Revenues	\$	87,942,462

Expenditures

Superintendent's Office

Superintendent's Office	\$	992,499
Board of Commissioners	\$	645,077
Communications and Marketing	\$	674,388
Park Police	\$	5,371,294

Deputy Superintendent's Office

Community Outreach	\$	1,347,706
Customer Service	\$	1,605,800
Finance	\$	917,613
Human Resources	\$	885,670

Environmental Stewardship

Asset Management	\$	18,557,903
Environmental Management	\$	6,940,091
Forestry	\$	10,502,270

Planning Services

Design and Project Management	\$	1,418,915
Strategic Planning	\$	794,270

Recreation Services

Athletic Programs and Aquatics	\$	2,639,835
Recreation Centers and Programs	\$	9,579,510
Youth Development	\$	3,323,350
Golf, Ice and Winter Programs	\$	6,531,465

Other

Capital Projects	\$	11,462,000
City Management Fee, Contributions and Other	\$	2,288,329
Debt Service	\$	1,213,537

Total Expenditures	\$	87,691,522
---------------------------	-----------	-------------------

2015 Distinctions

Minneapolis Parks: #1 Park System (tied with St. Paul) in the U.S. – *The Trust for Public Land Parkscore® Index*, May

Minneapolis: #1, Top 10 Healthiest Cities – *Livability*, April

Minneapolis-St. Paul: #5, The 8 Best Cities for Frugal Lovers of the Outdoors – *Wisebread*, April

Central Mississippi Riverfront Regional Park Master Plan: Professional Design Award in Analysis and Planning
– *American Society of Landscape Architects*, April

Minneapolis: #1, Most Bikeable Cities of 2015 – *Redfin Walk Score®*, May

Minneapolis: #2, America's Fittest Cities – *American College of Sports Medicine American Fitness Index®*, May

Minneapolis-St. Paul: #2, America's Greenest Cities – *Travel + Leisure*, May

Minneapolis: #1, 2015's Best Cities for 4th of July Celebrations – *Wallet Hub*, June

Minneapolis – St. Paul: #3, Friendliest Cities in America – *Time*, July

Minneapolis Parks: Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies Reaccreditation
– *National Recreation and Parks Association*, September

Pathways to Places: 2025 Plan Leadership Award – *Minneapolis Downtown Council*, October

Minneapolis Grand Rounds: 2015 Great Places Award – *Sensible Land Use Coalition*, December

Minneapolis Parks: Tree City USA Award – *The Arbor Day Foundation*, May



Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board

2117 West River Road Minneapolis, MN 55411 612-230-6400 phone 612-230-6500 fax

www.minneapolisparcs.org



2015 Annual Report – Published January 2016

printed on certified paper containing post-consumer content and manufactured with windpower