



MPF Overview

The information contained in this report serves as an update and summary of next steps with regards to Milwaukee Parks Foundation (MPF). Milwaukee Parks Foundation Executive Director, Rebecca Stoner, welcomes input and collaboration from the Parks Committee, and her contact information can be found at the end of this report. Milwaukee Parks Foundation (MPF) is dedicated to a safe and vibrant parks system that benefits all. Founded by 13 members of the community in December 2019, the MPF Board of Directors came together to create an outlet for everyone in Milwaukee County and beyond to support the Milwaukee County Parks system, with the belief that these are our parks, this is our community, and this is our future.

MISSION: Engage our community in supporting Milwaukee County Parks to collectively steward a thriving park system.

VISION: Foster dynamic connections through our land and community, expanding what is possible in our neighborhoods, and engaging residents in supporting a safe and vibrant parks system that benefits all.

Historic Timeline

- 🍃 **FEBRUARY 2019:** Proposal to initiate creation of MPF given to County Executive. Consultant hired to begin assembling a Foundation Board and structure
- 🍃 **MARCH – SEPTEMBER 2019:** Board members recruited, documents submitted, initial strategies developed
- 🍃 **SEPTEMBER 2019:** First official meeting of the MPF Board of Directors
- 🍃 **NOVEMBER 2019:** MPF Launch Event
- 🍃 **DECEMBER 2019 –** Milwaukee Parks Foundation receives official 501(c)3 nonprofit status
- 🍃 **APRIL 2020 –** Milwaukee County Parks and Milwaukee Parks Foundation Letter of Inten finalized
- 🍃 **JULY 2020 –** Milwaukee Parks Foundation publishes racial justice and equity statement, first grant made to the We Care Crew to assist during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 🍃 **OCTOBER 2020 –** Strategic Planning Process begins
- 🍃 **NOVEMBER 2020 – APRIL 2021 –** Over 400 residents and stakeholders interviewed and provide input on Strategic Plan, Plan finalized
- 🍃 **APRIL 2021 –** Staffing committee formed, Executive Director search begins
- 🍃 **AUGUST 2021 –** Executive Director hired
- 🍃 **AUGUST – DECEMBER 2021 –** Executive Director first few months; over 130+ community stakeholder and donor meetings, more than \$77,000 raised

Recent Wins

- 1) MPF hiring a **Director of Communications & Strategic Partnerships** to focus on marketing and awareness, as well as relationship management with residents
- 2) **3 New Board Members** with significant community connections and passion for parks onboarded in November, 2021
- 3) More than four news mentions, two speaking engagements, and **25% growth in digital audience**
- 4) First End of Year Fundraising Appeal launched, **raising \$5,000 in its first week** with a goal to raise at least \$15,000 more before year end
- 5) **90 New donors** to Milwaukee Parks Foundation so far in 2021

milwaukee parks FOUNDATION



Strategic Plan Overview

After a seven-month strategic planning process, involving conversations with 423 residents with the help of well-known consultant P3 Development Group, the following strategic priority areas were established for the Milwaukee Parks Foundation.

Awareness, Access and Belonging – Milwaukee’s history of segregation and racial disparities limit the sense of belonging many feel in our parks. In addition, there are no fully accessible parks in our county. Through building belonging, increasing access, and raising awareness, we will build towards a Milwaukee Parks system for all.

Equitable Amenities and Programs – Due to declining tax levy support, Milwaukee County Parks has millions of dollars in wanted and needed deferred maintenance projects. This strategic priority is the heart of Milwaukee Parks Foundation’s work: to ensure residents across Milwaukee County’s footprint have the same access to high quality amenities and programming in the parks.

Volunteering and Partnerships – There are countless people throughout Milwaukee County who love their parks and are already engaged. There are countless more who would like to get engaged. The Milwaukee Parks Foundation aims to both increase and streamline volunteering and partnerships that can support our work. Importantly, volunteering, fundraising and advocacy go hand-in-hand.

Advocacy – There is no dedicated tax revenue for our County Parks. As Milwaukee County’s budget continues to be constrained year over year, the Milwaukee County Parks budget continues to decrease. Advocating for dedicated, sustainable funding for our parks with local leaders and beyond will mean a sustainable County Parks system for years to come.

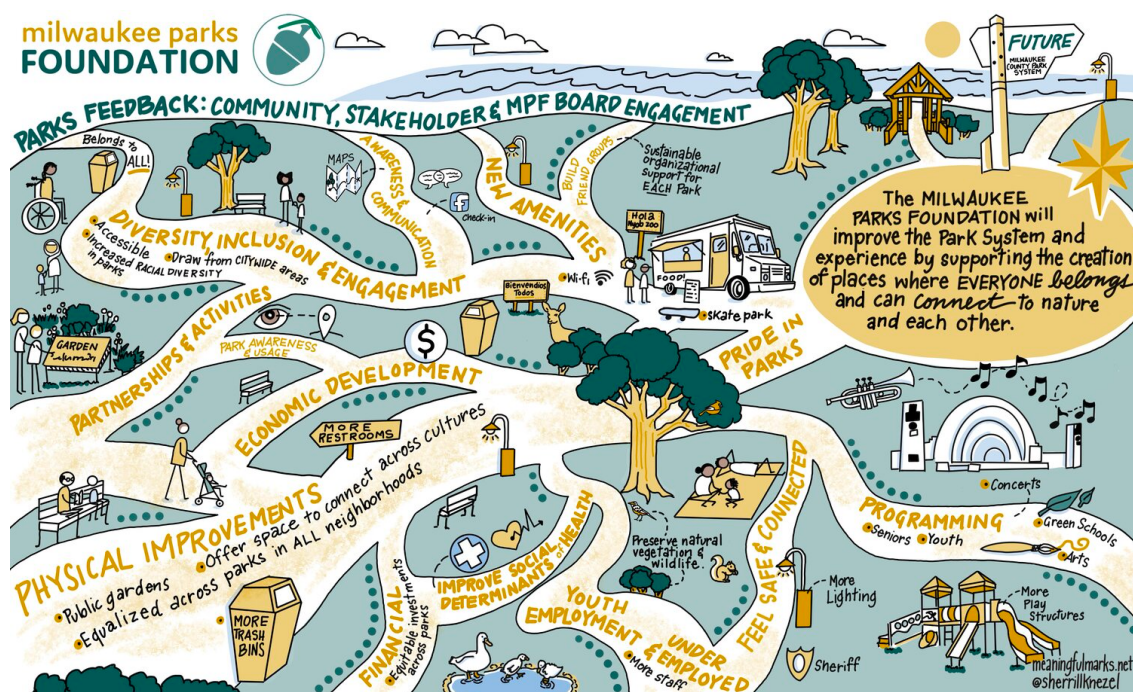


Image: Visual summary of feedback gathered from 400+ residents as part of Strategic Plan



2022 – 2023 Fund Development & Grantmaking Plan: Seeds and Sprouts

The Seeds & Sprouts initiative is the first initiative of the Milwaukee Parks Foundation. The initiative tackles challenges throughout our County Parks System on the micro and macro level. See more information on subsequent pages. In its first two years



SEEDS

- 80% of dollars raised invested directly in Milwaukee County Parks across 2022-2023.
- Initial focus developed with input from Milwaukee County Parks leadership and resident surveys.
- Initial Focus: Building Improvements and Safety.
- Dollars will be invested with buy-in from Milwaukee County Parks, residents, and the Milwaukee Parks Foundation.



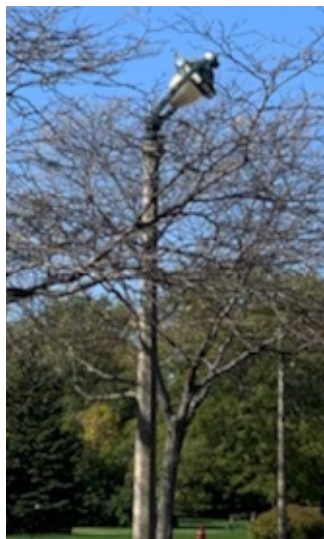
SPROUTS

- 20% of dollars raised invested directly in resident-led projects in various parks across 2022-2023
- Initial focus will be on Building Improvements and Safety, specifically small parks projects and events.
- Dollars will be invested with buy-in from Milwaukee County Parks, residents, and the Milwaukee Parks Foundation.

Two priority areas identified by Milwaukee County Parks leadership and resident input, were: **Building Improvements and Safety**. Milwaukee Parks Foundation has chosen these priorities as the first focus of our grantmaking and fundraising. Examples of projects within the focus areas of Safety and Building Improvements include: improved park lighting, park ranger equipment and uniforms, park pathway repair, pavilion repairs, sustainability and climate resiliency for park facilities (i.e. Solar, LED, stormwater management), facility planning, specific community centers, etc.



Milwaukee County Parks are home to a number of dilapidated pavilions that cannot be used



Significant lighting repairs needed throughout Milwaukee County Parks



Pathway improvements such as bridge repair are critical for resident safety



Next Steps

Over the next year, MPF is focusing on four significant efforts that tie back to our strategic priorities: First, raising awareness and increasing brand visibility. By raising awareness not only about the challenges facing Milwaukee County Parks, but also Milwaukee Parks Foundation's mission, we will be able to expand our footprint and have a greater impact on our parks overall. We will do this through digital marketing campaigns, engagement events, and media.

Second, raising funds for amenities and programs, to be invested primarily in parks that have seen historic disinvestment due to systems of oppression. Utilizing our Board of Directors, a Development Committee, and robust fund development plan, Milwaukee Parks Foundation will increase our revenue in order to maximize grant making through our Seeds and Sprouts Initiative.

Third, creating infrastructure, processes and policies. MPF is currently working with Milwaukee County Parks leadership to create a grantmaking process to ensure funds are granted to our County parks in a way that is in line with our collective missions and does not cause an undue burden on our County leadership. Additionally, we want to ensure resident voice is included in significant investments.

Fourth, and possibly most important, building a culture of equity and inclusivity in our work. We will do this through hiring and onboarding our Board and team, throughout our new policies and procedures, our purchase power, and by including community leaders in our decision-making processes.