

**COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE**  
Inter-Office Communication

Date: 4/22/2026

To: Marcelia Nicholson-Bovell, Chairwoman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

From: Guy Smith, Executive Director, Milwaukee County Parks

Subject: Milwaukee County Parks 2025 Annual Report

File Type: Informational Report

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This informational report provides a report on how Milwaukee County Parks set and achieved its 2025 goals.

**POLICY**

This report aligns to Chapter 108: Achieving Racial Equity & Health.

Milwaukee County Code of General Ordinances:	<a href="#">Chapter 108: Achieving Racial Equity &amp; Health</a>
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**ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN**

- 1A: Reflect the full diversity of the County at every level of County government
- 1B: Create and nurture an inclusive culture across County government
- 1C: Increase the number of County contracts awarded to minority and women-owned businesses
- 2A: Determine what, where, and how we deliver services to advance health equity
- 2B: Break down silos across County government to maximize access to and quality of services offered
- 2C: Apply a racial equity lens to all decisions
- 3A: Invest “upstream” to address root causes of health disparities
- 3B: Enhance the County’s fiscal health and sustainability
- 3C: Dismantle barriers to diverse and inclusive communities

Alignment to the above strategic goals is articulated in responses to the questions below.

## **BODY**

1. Please submit your Scorecard Report along with this report, to show progress on your Department/Office's top goals in 2025. If you would like to add any additional information about the extent to which you accomplished your goals, please do so here.

Scorecard and Parks' Strategic Plan is attached to this report. In addition to the 5 Key Performance Indicators that are included in the Scorecard, Milwaukee County Parks made significant progress on the following goals in 2025 –

- Provide multi-lingual signage in targeted areas and multi-lingual options for external communications and processes – Parks has produced a multi-lingual signage plan that will guide the languages used in future sign installations
- Increase the rate of conversion of seasonal to full-time staff – Parks began tracking this during 2025 and has shown improvement in the rate of full-time positions being filled by existing seasonal employees (36% in 2023, 46% in 2024, 50% in 2025)
- Complete an equity review of processes
- Transition to more natural areas - reinvest in forestry, tree canopy, and non-maintained areas; use environmentally sustainable techniques
- Create discrete measurable career path with competencies by area or position - a career pathway tool was created that shows requirements and competencies needed to advance throughout the entire department

2. What key factors *enabled* progress toward accomplishing these goals?

For the goal of “implementing three recommendations from the Aquatics facility plan”, 2025 was the year that the Aquatics facility plan was completed and approved by the County Board of Supervisors. Completing in September 2025, Parks quickly began implementation through the 2026 capital project request process. In 2026, Parks was granted capital funding to begin to plan and design for a future aquatic feature in Washington Park to replace the 1960s era pool. In addition, Parks has funding available through the MMSD-Jackson Park flood management project to begin to process of replacing the pool in that park. If both planning and design processes are beginning in 2026 it is likely that implementation would begin the following year if construction funding is available. In addition, other recommendations from the Aquatics facility plan are moving towards implementation. In Sherman Park, the outdated wading pool was replaced with a modern splash pad in late 2025 and will be open to the public in 2026. The installation of modern splash pads, along with the consolidation of aging wading pools, was one of the key recommendations of the plan. In Walker Square Park, a similar investment will take place to replace the wading pool with a more exciting and modern aquatic feature that was informed by a planning process in 2025. Both the Sherman Park (ARPA) and Walker Square (City TID) investments are being made with non-County sources of funding.

3. What key factors *hindered* progress toward accomplishing these goals?

Parks continues to make steady progress in the implementation of its strategic plan but the factor that limits further progress is lack of available capital funding. Parks has been fortunate to receive capital funding in support of the Washington Park aquatics project, the Domes reimagined project, and trail development all of which supports our strategic plan objectives. In other areas, the capital resource limitation of Milwaukee County prevent full implementation.

4. If any goals are changing, please list your Department/Office goals for 2026. (Please put "N/A" if your goals will remain the same.)

N/A

**FISCAL EFFECT**

The report is informational only and there is no fiscal impact.

**VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES**

**PREPARED BY:**

Jim Tarantino, Deputy Director

**APPROVED BY:**

Guy Smith, Executive Director *guy smith*

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Parks' Strategic Plan  
2025 Parks Scorecard

CC: David Crowley, County Executive  
Mary Jo Meyers, Chief of Staff, County Executive's Office  
Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors  
Janelle M. Jensen, Legislative Services Division Mgr, Office of the County Clerk  
Nicholas Sinram, Executive Director, Department of Administrative Services  
Vince Masterson, Fiscal & Strategic Asset Coordinator, DAS  
Pamela Bryant, Capital Finance Manager, Comptroller's Office  
Justin Rodriguez, Capital Finance Analyst, Comptroller's Office  
Kelsey Nyen, Committee Coordinator, Office of the County Clerk  
Anthony Rux, Budget & Management Analyst, DAS-PSB  
Sandy Saltzstein, Research and Policy Analyst  
Sheldon Wasserman, Committee on Parks & Culture Chairperson