



CHRIS ABELE, MILWAUKEE COUNTY EXECUTIVE
JOHN DARGLE, JR., DIRECTOR OF PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURE

Date: November 13, 2017
To: Jason Haas, Chair, Parks, Energy and Environment Committee
From: John Dargle, Jr., CPRP, Director, Milwaukee County Parks
Subject: **Milwaukee County Parks Recycling Program (INFORMATIONAL)**

ISSUE

An informational report describing how the Milwaukee County Parks (Parks) can develop a more comprehensive recycling program for Milwaukee County Parks in accordance with File 17-506.

BACKGROUND

At the September 2017 Intergovernmental Relations Committee, the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors asked Parks to collaborate with the Director, Department of Administrative Services-Sustainability to inventory its current recycling practices and infrastructure, identify parks that demonstrate the greatest need for recycling services, and propose how Parks can develop a parks system-wide recycling program.

Current Recycling Program

Environmental stewardship is one of Parks' core values, and the department has undertaken significant efforts to reduce landfill waste and increase recycling in its operations, including:

- Collaborating with Keep Greater Milwaukee Beautiful, Milwaukee Riverkeeper, MillerCoors, and other community partners on waste reduction, recycling, and beautification initiatives in County parks.
- Managing 23 recycle dumpsters at Parks' Major Service Yards to collect co-mingled recyclables (paper, bottles and cans) from public-use areas of County parks (see Table 1 for dumpster locations, sizes, and pickup frequencies). These recycle dumpsters are strategically placed geographically throughout the Parks System (see Exhibit A1).
- Securing a Dr. Pepper-Snapple grant in 2014 to provide 60 new beverage recycling bins for use in County parks. The bins are placed at softball/baseball fields, beer gardens, Mitchell Park Domes, Boerner Botanical Gardens, and other



popular park locations where beverages are sold or frequently carried in by visitors.

- Making recycling bins available at special events, including at indoor facilities, and strongly encouraging event permit holders to recycle through the Special Event Permit process.
- Recycling Parks' scrap metal, as well as spent batteries, light bulbs, oil, and electronics, to generate revenue for the department.
- Recycling yard waste collected from park properties, such as tree limbs and grass clippings, for firewood, trail management, and compost (e.g., at Boerner Botanical Gardens). Removed trees are sold to certified vendors, or made into wood chips for use in landscape beds, around trees as mulch rings, or offered for free to the general public.
- Requiring contractors to recycle or reuse at least 50 percent of the waste generated Parks' new construction and major renovation projects.
- Encouraging Beer Garden patrons to reuse pint glasses and steins. At Traveling Beer Gardens, patrons who reuse their glassware get discounted refills.
- Buying recycled materials for Parks operations; from July 2016-June 2017, 41 percent of the paper products the department purchased had recycled content.
- Recycling cardboard, paper, glass, and plastic at the Parks Administration building and at Parks' maintenance facilities.

Table 1. County Parks Recycle Dumpsters as of October 2017.

Major Service Yard	Dumpster size	Monthly Service
Currie Golf	6-yd container per month	6
Mitchell Park Domes	8-yd tote pickup-every other week	12
Dretzka Golf	6-yd container per month	6
Estabrook Park	6-yd container every other week	6
Grant Park	8-yd tote pickup once per month	6
Greenfield Park	8-yd tote pickup once per month	8
Humboldt Park	6-yd container per month	6
Jackson Park	6-yd container every other week	6
Kozy Rec	8-yd tote pickup once per month	4
	8-yd tote pickup-every other week	2
Lake Park	8-yd tote pickup once per month	6
Lincoln Golf	6-yd container per month	6

McKinley	3, 8-yd tote pickup once per month	6
Oakwood Golf	8-yd tote pickup-every other week	6
O'Donnell Park	8-yd tote pickup once per week	12
Parks Admin	6-yd container every other week	12
Parks Maint	6-yd container every other week	12
South Shore	2-yd recycling	6
Sports Complex	8-yd tote pickup-every other week	12
Washington Park	8-yd tote pickup once per month	12
Whitnall Park	8-yd tote pickup once per month	12
Zablocki Park	6-yd container per month	6
Total		170

Parks provides a variety of recycling bins in the public-use areas of Milwaukee County Parks (Figure 1). In deciding where and how to setup the bins, Parks staff consider the activities, visitation rates, and other logistics of each park (e.g., space constraints, proximity to Major Service Yard, typical waste materials generated by visitors and concessions, etc.). The below list illustrates how recycling bin placement varies by location and season. Note that this list does not include the recycling bins that Parks offers for special events held at these locations.

Public-Use Recycling Bin Locations (partial list)

1. Big Bay Park
2. Bradford beach
3. Brown Deer Golf Course
4. Cannon-Rental Hall
5. Currie Golf Course Clubhouse
6. Downtown Unit
 - a. Provide containers for public and private events
 - b. Other Agencies (Coast, Betty Brinn Museum, etc.) within the unit
 - c. City of Milwaukee places containers throughout downtown parks in summer
 - d. Starbucks has one inside year round
7. Doyne Golf Course
8. Dretzka Golf Course
9. Estabrook Beer Garden
10. Grant Golf Course
11. Greenfield Golf Course
12. Greenfield Park
13. Hansen Golf Course
14. Hoyt-NE corner of parking lot near beer garden
15. Humboldt Park - Special events
16. Jacobus Rental Hall
17. Kosciuszko Community Center
18. Lake Park Golf Course

19. Lake Park - All 6 picnic areas and playground
20. Lincoln Golf Course
21. Madison Golf Course
22. McKinley Marina
 - a. A 6-yard recycle dumpster in all 3 sections of the marina
 - b. 1 recycle bin by the roundhouse
 - c. 3 bins by the north pavilion
 - d. 7 bins along the promenade in center
 - e. 5 bins along the promenade in south
23. Mitchell Park Conservatory - The Domes
24. Noyes Park Golf Course
25. Oakwood Golf Course
26. Parks Administration
27. Rose Park- Basketball Courts
28. Sports Complex
29. South Shore
30. Warnimont Golf Course
31. Washington Park
 - a. Basketball Courts
 - b. Bandshell
 - c. Playground
 - d. Urban Ecology Center Building
 - e. Special Events
32. Wehr Nature Center
33. Whitnall Golf Course
34. Wilson Recreation (Ice Rink)
35. Zablocki Golf Course

Areas of Need

Due to space constraints, limited staffing, and other factors, Parks does not offer recycling at all park locations. Rather, the department focuses on providing recycling at the County's most popular park locations where logistics and resources allow.

On their routes, waste haulers generally collect recycling from multiple sites, including Parks facilities and park locations. As a result, Parks does not have comprehensive data on materials recycled, however the department tracks the frequency of recycling pick-ups.

Figure 2. Example Public-Use Recycling Bins in Milwaukee County Parks.



A. Friends of Hales Corners Park and Pool



B. Humboldt Park - Special Events



C. Mitchell Park Domes Entrance



D. Sports Complex & Rental Pavilions



D. Whitnall Park Compost Site



**E. Log Marshalling Site
(Trees removed due to disease or hazardous conditions)**

Next Steps

Parks recognizes the importance of increasing recycling and reducing landfill waste. Accordingly, the department will pursue the following initiatives to improve and expand its recycling program:

- Work with waste haulers to develop system for tracking materials recycled by Parks operations and park visitors.
- Develop partnerships with waste haulers to increase recycling bins in park locations.
- Launch a pilot 'Leave No Trace' or 'Pack It In, Pack It Out' program at select park locations to encourage park visitors to minimize their waste.
- Identify and pursue opportunities to increase revenues from/reduce costs of Parks recycling. For example, the department may be able to save money and earn revenues through in-house recycling of fluorescent light bulbs.
- Adopt a 'Buy Recycled' purchasing procedure for Parks operations.

This recycling program aligns with the Parks' 2015-2020 Strategic Plan in support of goal #2 - broaden and strengthen park stewardship and goal #4 - strengthen partnerships to become more responsive to community needs. Also, meets CAPRA accreditation standard 7.9.1 – Recycling and/or Zero Waste Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

No action requested. Informational item unless further action required.

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Approved by:



John Dargle, Jr., CPRP, Director

Attachments:

Attachment 1 – Milwaukee County Parks Recycling Program Map

Copy:

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