

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

Date: April 19, 2024
To: Marcelia Nicholson, Chairwoman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
From: Guy Smith, Executive Parks Director for Milwaukee County Parks
Subject: Milwaukee Parks Foundation Project Updates
File Type: Informational Report

REQUEST

This report is for informational purposes, there is no request at this time. Milwaukee Parks Foundation is sharing project updates on two key initiatives - Healthy Parks Healthy Neighbors Initiative and Cheers to our Parks.

POLICY

Wisconsin State Statutes:	
Milwaukee County Code of General Ordinances:	
Specific Adopted Budget:	
Specific Adopted Budget Amendment:	
Specific Adopted Capital Project:	

BACKGROUND

Related File No's:	
Associated File No's (Including Transfer Packets):	
Previous Action Date(s):	

Milwaukee Parks Foundation Overview and Impact

Milwaukee Parks Foundation's mission is to collectively steward a thriving parks system. Through fundraising, raising awareness, building community capacity and partnerships, and advocacy, Milwaukee Parks Foundation (MPF) is dedicated to building a more vibrant and equitable parks system that benefits all.

Since hiring staff in late 2021, Milwaukee Parks Foundation has pledged or invested more than \$1.8million* into Milwaukee County Parks through their Seeds & Sprouts initiative. Seeds support enhances park infrastructure and amenities; sprouts support invests in grassroots leaders activating their parks. This equates to more than 40

projects, programs and events across 30+ parks. Milwaukee Parks Foundation focuses all investment on parks with the greatest needs.

*Please note, impact report provided does not include \$250k gift from Molson Coors nor Pat Connaughton Foundation gift. These were made in early 2024.

Johnson Controls, Inc. – Healthy Parks Healthy Neighbors Initiative Update

Milwaukee Parks Foundation (MPF), Milwaukee County Parks (MCP), the McGovern Senior Center and other significant partners are launching the Healthy Parks, Healthy Neighbors (HPHN) Initiative in summer 2024 in McGovern Park thanks to a \$300,000 contribution from Johnson Controls, Inc.

The overall goal of HPHN is to catalyze an intergenerational cadre of neighbors to participate in healthy, fun, varied programming throughout parks surrounding Johnson Controls' campus, focusing on McGovern Park but also featuring parks such as: Wyrick, Lincoln, and the Lincoln Creek Parkway. It is evident that a park connected to its community is safer, healthier, more vibrant. A community connected to its park is safer, healthier, more vibrant. There are three components to the HPHN:

Intergenerational Park Activation and Fun: Relying on collaborative partners such as the McGovern Senior Center, Friends of Lincoln Park, and Health Connections, Inc. support for the HPHN would lead to a robust slate of year-round programming across the two year initiative in McGovern and Lincoln Parks. Ideas include: apple orchard clean ups and harvesting, exercise and dance classes, sports leagues, picnics, pool parties, Shakespeare in the park, youth enrichment activities, and so much more. MPF is currently convening partners to build out the calendar for summer 2024.

Let's Get Moving! through Trail Activation: HPHN will activate trails with a variety of opportunities to get neighbors moving! Ideas include: guided hikes, bird watching, walking clubs, to name a few. In fall 2024, partners will come together to host a Hike & Bike event for all community members, engaging JCI employees. Dollars will be invested not only in programming and events, but in trail improvements such as improved signage, trail clearing and maintenance.

Pilot Project – Conservation Crews: The HPHN will also provide seasonal part time employment opportunities and green infrastructure job training to 2-3 young neighbors through a pilot project – the youth conservation corps. Giving young people an opportunity to learn green jobs and leadership skills, earn money, and get outdoors will have a multitude of benefits. MCP is currently working to get positions posted and recruitment underway. MCP's Trails Coordinator will work with the conservation crew throughout all parks, focusing on parks in surrounding JCI neighborhoods, to ensure trails are clean, accessible, and vibrant for use.

Budget 2024:

\$39,000 – Youth conservation crew via MCP

\$20,000 – McGovern Senior Center improvements and programming

\$20,000 – Programming expenses and services, implemented via partners such as Health Connections, Inc., Friends of Lincoln Park, Taylor Made Foundation, and more.

\$49,000 – Significant trail improvements via MCP

\$22,500 – Expenses for volunteering, events, project management and coordination via MPF.

Molson Coors – Cheers to our Parks Initiative Update

In collaboration with Milwaukee County Parks and the Milwaukee Parks Foundation, Cheers to Our Parks includes a match campaign bolstered by a \$250,000 donation from Molson Coors. The program seeks to raise an additional \$250,000 from park lovers and community leaders, building toward a total contribution of \$500,000 by the end of 2025.

Cheers to Our Parks aims to increase engagement across the more than 150 county parks through the creation of a Park Champions coalition. These individual volunteers will invest their time and talent into stewarding a thriving parks system. By signing the park pledge on the Milwaukee Parks Foundation’s website, Park Champions commit to completing three of the five actions below in 2024:

1. Donate to Milwaukee Parks Foundation to contribute to the \$250,000 match fundraiser
2. Visit a Milwaukee County Park or beer garden
3. Engage with Cheers to our Parks events and volunteer opportunities
4. Share the Park Champion Badge and your parks “why” on social media
5. Support Cheers to our Parks with wearable gear

Of the dollars raised, \$250,000 will be invested in priority park projects now and \$250,000 will be invested by Milwaukee Parks Foundation to ensure support for park priorities in the future. Priorities will be determined by Milwaukee County Parks leadership with significant input from resident leaders and the Milwaukee Parks Foundation.

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Describe how the item aligns to the objectives in the [strategic plan](#):

2A: Determine what, where, and how we deliver services to advance health equity

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

FISCAL EFFECT

None

TERMS

None

ATTACHMENTS:

MPF Impact Map

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES

Rebecca Stoner, Milwaukee Parks Foundation,

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PREPARED BY:

Jim Tarantino, Deputy Director, Milwaukee County Parks

APPROVED BY:

Guy Smith, Executive Director, Milwaukee County Parks

CC:

David Crowley, County Executive

Mary Jo Meyers, Chief of Staff, County Executive's Office

Comm on Parks & Culture Chair

Comm on Parks & Culture Members

Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

Janelle M. Jensen, Legislative Services Division Mgr, Office of the County Clerk

Aaron Hertzberg, Director, Department of Administrative Services

Joseph Lamers, Fiscal & Budget Director, DAS

Vince Masterson, Fiscal & Strategic Asset Coordinator, DAS

Pamela Bryant, Capital Finance Manager, Comptroller's Office

Justin Rodriguez, Capital Finance Analyst, Comptroller's Office

Allyson R. Smith, Committee Coordinator, Office of the County Clerk

Ciara Miller, Research & Policy Analyst, Office of the Comptroller

Anthony Rux, Budget & Management Analyst, DAS-PSB