

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

Date: April 22, 2022
To: Marcelia Nicholson, Chairwoman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
From: Guy Smith, Executive Director, Milwaukee County Parks
Subject: Parks 2021 Annual Report
File Type: Informational Report

This informational report provides a report on how the Parks Department set and achieved its 2021 goals.

POLICY

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

Milwaukee County Code of General Ordinances:	Chapter 108: Achieving Racial Equity & Health
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BACKGROUND

[File 22-104](#) amends Chapter 108 to require that “annually, by April 30 of each year or sooner, each Milwaukee County department leader and/or their designee(s) shall provide a written and oral report outlining their year-end results to a Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors committee. The reports shall, at a minimum:

- (a) Indicate the year-end goals the department set in the prior year
- (b) Share the rationale and relevance of the department’s performance metrics (i.e. explaining why they are “SMART” goals (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timely, and extending) and how they align to the county’s racial equity strategy, if applicable)
- (c) Report the department’s year-end results relating to the goals it had set, and
- (d) Provide a thorough analysis clearly articulating why goals were significantly exceeded, met, or not met.
- (e) Explain the department’s progress in creating a departmental-level strategic plan that aligns to the countywide strategic plan and provide an update about future plans to revise and enhance the departmental-level plan in the year ahead.”

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 objectives is articulated in response to the questions below.

BODY

1. What were the top 3 goals of your department/office 2021? Please explain why they are “SMARTIE” goals (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timely, inclusive, and equitable) and how they align to the county’s racial equity strategy.
 - Goal 1: Earned Revenue: The Parks Department will reach its earned revenue goal of \$18,834,089 by the end of 2021. Each year the Parks Department sustains the operations of services that are not fully funded by tax levy support so that they are accessible to the public. Valuable services such as the community centers and pools require the support of revenue earned elsewhere in the department to sustain operations throughout the year. These non-revenue producing services align with the County’s vision as they advance health equity and are an upstream investment in addressing health disparities.
 - Goal 2: Environmental Sustainability: The Parks Department will reduce paved areas by 10,000 square feet by the end of 2021. The Milwaukee County Parks system has 611 acres (26 million square feet) of paved assets including roads, parking lots, trails, and athletic courts. Paved areas (asphalt and concrete) contribute to pollution by exposing water to surface pollutants and runoff. Paved areas also contribute to global warming by creating their own emissions and exacerbating urban heat island effects. The reduction of paved areas directly supports the County’s vision as addressing a root cause of health disparities.
 - Goal 3: Deferred Maintenance: The Parks Department will reduce its deferred maintenance backlog by \$1,000,000 by the end of 2021. The condition of parks buildings and facilities is translated to a dollar value by estimating the cost to restore these assets to a “like new” condition. The ability to maintain our assets ensures that services will continue to be provided to the public including those services that support the County’s vision.

2. To what extent were these goals accomplished in 2021? Please explain.

- Goal 1: Earned Revenue: The Parks Department achieved its earned revenue goal of \$18,834,089 by generating \$21,934,956 in earned revenue by the end of 2021.
- Goal 2: Environmental Sustainability: The Parks Department does not know if it achieved its goal of reducing 10,000 square feet of paved areas by the end of 2021. Projects that may have reduced the total square footage of paved areas include parking reduction in Brown Deer Park, parkway reconstruction in Underwood Creek, Wil-O-Way Grant driveway construction, and the Phase 2 construction of the McKinley Marina parking lot. During the design and construction of these projects the total area of pavement reduction was not tracked.
- Goal 3: Deferred Maintenance: The Parks Department achieved its goal of addressing \$1,000,000 worth of deferred maintenance by addressing at least \$1,008,096 worth of deferred maintenance by the end of 2021. This figure is the Parks' major maintenance budget. Deferred maintenance is addressed in many ways and repairs are not always tracked in terms of dollars saved, often maintenance is provided by a person working who does not code their time as specifically addressing deferred maintenance.

3. What factors *enabled* progress toward accomplishing these goals?

Earned revenue goal: 2021 was a particularly successful year for revenue generating areas within the department. One key factor in the performance of entirely outdoor revenue generating activities is weather which is impossible to predict when establishing the annual revenue target in the budget. Contributing to the successful attainment of this goal were areas that significantly exceeded their revenue goals including Food and Beverage sales (\$241,234 over budget), Golf merchandise sale (\$269,338 over budget), Golf course revenue (\$2,476,196 over budget), and McKinley Marina revenue (\$134,107 over budget).

Environmental sustainability goal: Parks did not track progress towards the goal of reducing pavement though it is known that at least four projects had a positive impact towards achieving this goal. Parks was able to leverage existing capital projects for the Brown Deer Park road construction, Underwood Creek Parkway construction, Wil-O-Way Grant driveway construction, and Phase 2 of the McKinley Marina parking lot construction to include green infrastructure features and other sustainability improvements. Increasing the number of capital projects focused on parkways and other paved assets will enable pavement reduction in the future.

Deferred maintenance goal: Parks spent or encumbered all of its major maintenance budget which was \$1,008,096 in 2021. Other deferred maintenance was also

addressed through ongoing and completed capital projects. In the future, completed capital projects will be used to calculate the amount of deferred maintenance that was addressed through their completion. In addition, Parks uses the asset management software Cityworks which allows for reporting on work orders that have been addressed and closed out. Not all work orders are associated with deferred maintenance repairs, for example trimming tree limbs or removing graffiti are two tasks that are tracked in Cityworks and their work orders are tracked similar to a task that does address deferred maintenance such as replacing a faulty light fixture. In the future, Parks will attempt to track progress made towards addressing deferred maintenance through Cityworks reporting.

4. What factors *hindered* progress toward accomplishing these goals?

Earned revenue goal: While the Department overall did achieve its earned revenue goal in 2021 that was due to the areas mentioned above over-performing their budgeted revenue targets while some areas did not achieve their budgeted revenue targets. Athletic field and facility rentals were about \$80,000 below revenue target, special event permits were about \$100,000 below revenue target, admissions revenue at the Domes, Boerner, and Wehr Nature Center were about \$250,000 below revenue target, and admissions revenue at pools was about \$500,000 below revenue target. Most of the service level reductions in 2021 that are the cause of these lower revenue levels are due to the pandemic and its associated closures of facilities. Revenue from aquatics was impacted not only by the pandemic but also a historically low number of seasonal lifeguards hired which resulted in only 4 outdoor facilities opening in the summer of 2021.

Environmental sustainability goal: Parks did not track progress against the goal of removing paved assets and was limited in the amount of pavement that could have been reduced by a lack of project funding.

Deferred maintenance goal: Parks has established a manageable goal for addressing deferred maintenance within the parameters of its annual budget, but this amount is approximately 1/500th (0.2%) of the total amount of deferred maintenance that exists in Parks' facilities. Real progress in addressing deferred maintenance requires more resources allocated to the building and construction trades in order to properly maintain assets, more capital projects to replace aged assets, demolition and removal of certain assets that are no longer in service, and progress needs to be made on large scale initiatives for signature facilities that contribute to deferred maintenance such as the Mitchell Park Domes and Kosciuszko Community Center.

5. What is the status of your department/office in developing its strategic plan?

Parks does not have a strategic plan but does have a series of planning documents that help form its strategic direction. In 2021 Parks finalized a long-range Park and Open Space plan with the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. This plan

documents current level of service data for the parks system and region and makes recommendations for future recreational uses based on demographic trends. Parks also implements work plans for individual functional areas so that each area has an annual set of goals and actions to achieve those goals. There are also site-specific planning processes that have been developed for Park assets requiring a defined future direction. These processes are in varying stages of completion including a completed plan for the future of the Kosciuszko Community Center, and a plan that is undergoing a due diligence review for the Mitchell Park Domes.

FISCAL EFFECT

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

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES

None

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APPROVED BY:

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ATTACHMENTS:

None

cc:

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