

# PARKS 2020 SUMMER LEVEL OF SERVICE



## BACKGROUND

As a result of the budgetary impacts of COVID-19, Parks staffing levels are at an all-time low.

We know that Milwaukee County residents love their parks - but many residents are not aware that parks are a non-mandated service. That means that we are at the bottom of the list when it comes to receiving funding support from the county because mandated services take priority.

Parks is being hit hard by county spending freezes implemented as a result of COVID-19, and by the loss of revenues from the closure and delayed opening of the majority of our revenue-generating activities.

Parks is projecting a \$10 million deficit in 2020.

## STAFFING LEVELS

Parks full-time staffing levels have been reduced by hundreds of people over the past 25 years - while our services have expanded and our system footprint has grown. This means we have had fewer and fewer full-time staff taking on more responsibilities.



**1995**  
903 FTs



**2020**  
240 FTs

Parks staff have done a heroic job over the years to make it feel like our parks system was alive and well.

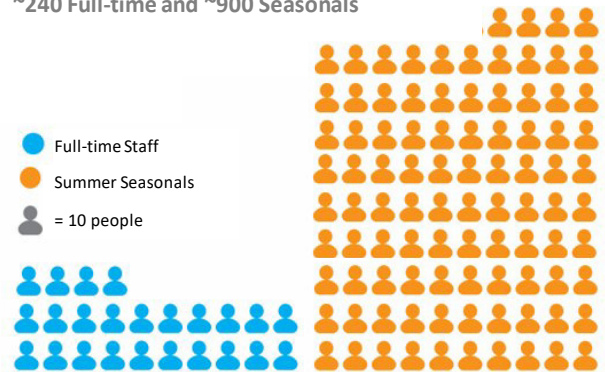
Unfortunately, this season will be different. Despite all best efforts of our dedicated Parks team, the community will notice changes to our level of service including less frequent mowing, more trash, and limited access to certain amenities.

## SEASONAL BUDGET

But wait, don't you have a seasonal budget? We normally do, but those previously approved seasonal dollars were frozen in spring because of the financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the county. This

### 2019 Staffing Levels

~240 Full-time and ~900 Seasonals



### 2020 Staffing Levels

~240 Full-time (~220 active) and ~183 Seasonals



is how 2020 staffing levels compare to last year... Additionally, right now 218 of our 240 full-time staff are participating in the state's Work-Share furlough program and working 36-hour weeks. And we have redeployed 92 Parks administrative staff to work one to two, 8-hour shifts in the field to support our operations staff with the basics like mowing and trash collection.

Despite all best efforts, this summer Parks simply does not have enough staff or resources to properly maintain our Parks. As a result, the community will notice changes in the level of service they are used to experiencing in parks.

# IMPACTS OF PARKS REDUCED LEVEL OF SERVICE

Some of the level of service changes you may see this summer...

- Higher grass and weeds due to less staff for mowing
  - More trash/accumulation of trash
  - Build of up woody debris in parks and along waterways
  - Graffiti that is not removed as quickly
  - Most restrooms kept closed
  - Deep-well indoor and outdoor pools closed, including aquatic parks
  - Fewer waders and splash pads open
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## KEY MESSAGES & CONSTITUENT RESPONSE

Because Parks is so understaffed and focused on addressing the operational and maintenance demands of the summer, it would help tremendously if you were able to share some key messages with those you engage with. While we are doing our best to keep up with inquiries and concerns, our response times are longer right now. Any support you can provide in working with us to help to educate the public will go a long way! Key messages you can share...

- Parks staffing levels are at an all-time low.**
- Parks is projecting a \$10 million budget deficit in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic.**
- Because of county spending freezes currently in place, the department has less than 200 active seasonals right now. Normally they have over 900 to support summer activities.**
- Unfortunately you will see more trash and higher grass throughout the system this summer. The Parks department is drastically understaffed this season and are quite simply unable to keep up with the needs of the system.**
- In addition to the the lack of seasonal support, the majority of Park's full-time staff have been furloughed and working 36-hour weeks. Additionally, more than 90 of Parks non-operations staff have been redeployed to the field 1-2 shifts per week to support basic trash collection and mowing.**
- Thanks for making us aware of (insert concern). I will share it with the Parks team. They will respond as soon as they are able, and we appreciate your patience and understanding given Parks' current staffing levels.**
- If you have a request, please visit: <https://countyparksmke.com/issues> to log your request. Forms will be monitored and responded to by staff. Please remember, staff responses may take a little longer right now.**
- We all want better for our Parks and are working toward that. In the meantime, we appreciate your understanding, patience, and support.**