

CITY OF DULUTH PARKS AND RECREATION



2015 ANNUAL REPORT



DULUTH PARKS

Fun Places, Great Spaces!

-Mission Statement-

The mission of Duluth Parks and Recreation Division is to promote the health and wellbeing of our community, environment and economy by facilitating recreational opportunities and coordinating the enhancement of our parks, facilities and natural resources now and into the future.

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2015 ANNUAL REPORT



-Vision Statement-

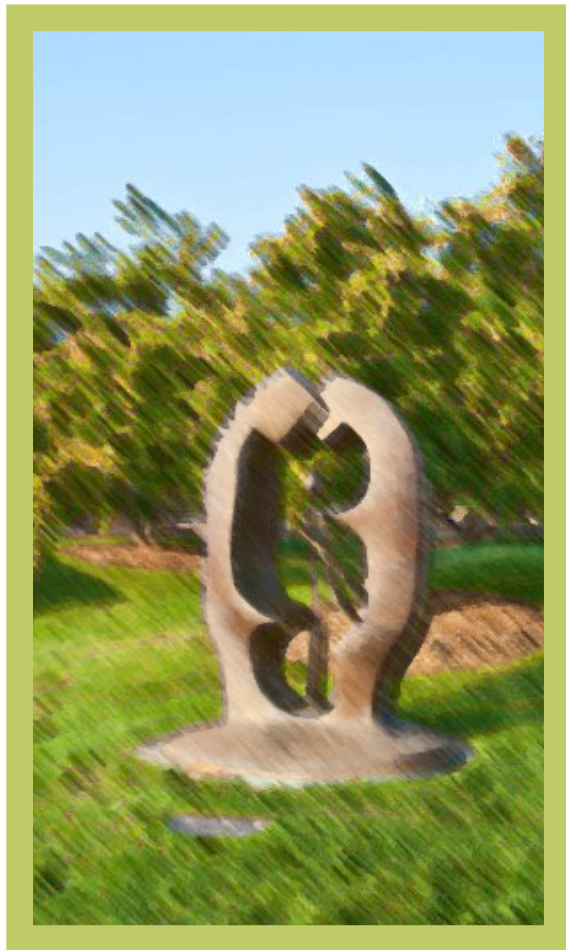
Duluth Parks & Recreation will continue to be the central driving force in strengthening the heritage of a healthy, active community for future generations by continuing on the path of improving and enhancing our parks & facilities; protecting our natural resources; and developing partnerships to deliver recreation programs and services.

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PARKS and RECREATION



INTRODUCTION



Public Administration Department Parks and Recreation Division

City Hall - Ground Floor • 411 West First Street • Duluth, Minnesota • 55802
218-730-4300 • www.duluthmn.gov/parks/index.cfm



March 1, 2016

Dear Friends:

The Parks and Recreation Annual Report provides us with an opportunity to update our partners, community members, visitors, and friends with a review of the Parks and Recreation projects and accomplishments throughout the last year and a brief look into the year ahead. Indeed, 2015 was an exciting year for Parks and Recreation in the City of Duluth.

On March 23, 2015, the City Council unanimously voted to approve moving forward with planning and visioning for the St. Louis River Corridor in front of a standing-room-only City Council chamber. The City Council preliminary approved both the projects and the corresponding $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ Tourism Tax expenditures. Since that date, the Parks and Recreation division, other City staff, and many partner organizations have worked diligently to begin work on the 28 projects that comprise the St. Louis River Corridor initiative. Many project-specific updates follow in this report. The total $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ Tourism Tax is \$18 million and will be spent over the next 4-5 years.

In 2015, we increased our focus on securing grants to fund our Parks projects. We received \$500,000 in federal and state grants for the Western Waterfront Trail, \$400,000 for the Duluth Traverse, and \$1,000,000 for Chambers Grove Park. All of these projects are moving from planning to implementation in 2016.

In our fourth year of administering the Parks Fund, we are again proud to report on the impact of those dollars. The Parks Fund provided resources for us to continue to address deferred maintenance and capital improvement projects across the City. In an effort to provide more interactive features and unique updates, we've updated the look and feel, as well as the layout, of our Annual Report. We added new sections, including 'What's New', 'Community', 'Parks Planning', and 'Glimpse Ahead'. Let us know what you think of the new layout.

Finally, we welcomed a number of new staff members in 2015, including Lisa Luukkala, Project Coordinator; Josh Abraham, Recreation Specialist; and myself, Lindsay Dean, Parks and Recreation Manager. In the Property and Facilities division, we welcomed Hank Martinsen, Property Services Manager; Danielle Erjavec, Property Services Specialist; and Alex Jackson, Energy Coordinator.

We have a talented, skilled and dedicated team that works hard to improve and maintain our park system every day. The Parks and Recreation team will continue to work diligently to support our mission and vision, working alongside the thousands of residents and visitors who enjoy our parks, trails, and recreation facilities year round.

Sincerely,

Lindsay Dean
Parks & Recreation Manager

Erik Birkeland
Property & Facilities Manager

Kelly Fleissner
Maintenance Operations Manager



DULUTH PARKS and RECREATION COMMISSION
411 West 1st, Ground Floor
Duluth, MN 55802



March 15, 2016

CONSERVATION AND STEWARDSHIP OF OUR PUBLIC SPACES

With their overwhelming approval in 2011 of a referendum establishing a dedicated Parks Fund to enhance critical annual funding, the citizens of Duluth clearly recognized that the city's extensive public parks, gardens, recreation areas, and trail systems are vital to their quality of life and a vibrant economy.

With an eye to the future, then Mayor Don Ness called on the entire community to join together in an ambitious and challenging endeavor to enhance the scope and quality of Duluth's public spaces for its citizens and future generations.

Mayor Ness, members of the City Council, Parks and Recreation Commission, Director of Public Administration, Jim Filby Williams, the Parks and Recreation Division under the leadership of Kathy Bergen, Parks Maintenance under Dale Sellner, Property and Facilities under Erik Birkeland, and many others in city government joined a diverse array of user groups, volunteers and citizens citywide to build remarkable momentum since the 2011 referendum.

Our citizens helped design a Duluth Parks and Recreation Master Plan, a Trails and Bikeways Master Plan, a Cross Country Ski Master Plan, numerous mini-master plans for parks and recreation areas from Brighton Beach, Hartley Park, Chester Bowl, Central Hillside, Wade Wheeler Western Sports Corridor, Memorial Park, Irving Park, Morgan Park, and Gary New Duluth to Chambers Grove, expanding Duluth's landmark Lakewalk, renovating Enger Tower and Wade Stadium, building new Duluth Traverse and Cross City trails systems and most recently, continued investment in the many St. Louis River Corridor Initiatives that support public park and trail improvements from Lincoln Park to the Fond du Lac neighborhood.

Many of these initiatives are described in the Annual Reports of the Parks and Recreation Division, which also includes the \$400,000 granted for 90 Neighborhood Parks Fund Grants to citizen led initiatives throughout the city since 2011.

Now in 2016, with the leadership of Mayor Emily Larson, a new City Council, and new Manager of the Parks and Recreation Commission Lindsay Dean, the opportunities to build on this significant momentum of the last five years are exciting and real.

Dynamic new plans for a revived Lake Superior Zoo, an enhanced Fairmont Park in West Duluth, and a restored Lincoln Park, are three important initiatives already approved by the Parks Commission and City Council in 2016.

As President of the Parks Commission, I continually stress the importance of enhancing resources to attack the extensive, and unacceptable, annual and accrued deferred maintenance needs throughout the city's parks system.

On September 9, 2015, the Parks Commission unanimously adopted a Resolution calling on the City of Duluth to *"address annual and accrued deferred Parks Maintenance, together with needed related capital improvements, as high priorities in developing and approving the City's budgets for fiscal year 2016 and beyond."*

I am pleased that last year Mayor Ness proposed, and the City Council approved, an increase in parks maintenance funding from the city's general budget for 2016, the first increase for parks maintenance since approval of the 2011 Parks Referendum.

This is an encouraging first step in addressing a critical issue. I urge the Mayor and the City Council to continue expanding resources to address the annual and accrued deferred parks maintenance needs in 2017, and in years beyond.

We are truly the beneficiaries of the foresight and commitment to open spaces that generations of civic leaders insisted be set aside and dedicated to public enjoyment and recreation.

However, if we fail to maintain what others have created, as well as all the exciting projects the City is now initiating, we will not be good stewards of our public places, and will regrettably pass on huge costs and problems to future generations.

Members of the Parks and Recreation Commission are strongly committed to the active conservation and maintenance of our public spaces.

We encourage attendance and public comments at commission meetings, so that all citizens and organizations are able to play an active role in determining the beneficial uses and assuring the conservation of Duluth's wonderful public parks, recreation areas, and trails.

Your continued support of Duluth's parks and trails does make a difference.

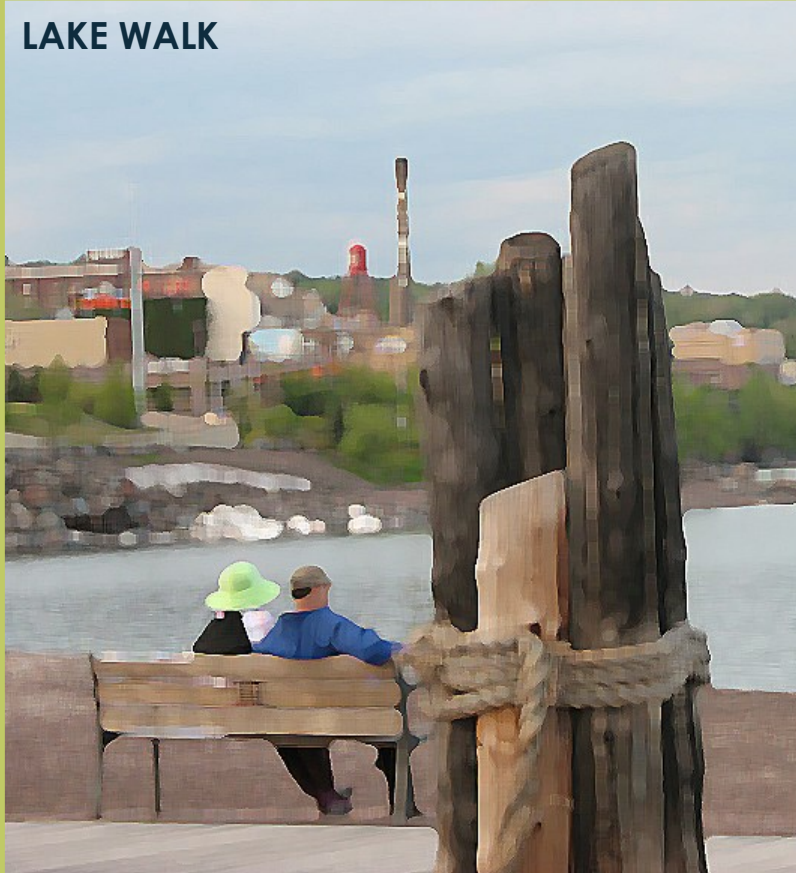
Thank you,



Edwin King Hall, President
Duluth Parks and Recreation Commission

PARKS and RECREATION

LAKE WALK



ABOUT US

CITY STAFF

PARKS & RECREATION

LINDSAY DEAN • MANAGER

-OPERATIONS-

Josh Abraham • Recreation Specialist
Katie Behling • Wedding Event Coordinator
Robin Bergquist • Administrative Specialist
Terri Castonguay • Special Events Coordinator
Kevin Malmquist • Duluth Invaders
(MN GreenCorps Member)
Theresa Mellinger • Senior Coordinator
Shawna MullenEardley • Tree Inspector
Mike Nordin • Duluth Invaders Coordinator
Pamela Page • Recreation Specialist
Cheryl Skafte • Volunteer Coordinator
Gail Walkowiak • Special Events Coordinator

-STEWARDSHIP-

Judy Gibbs • Trails Coordinator
Michael Krick • Project Technician
Lisa Luokkala • Project Coordinator
Jim Shoberg • Project Coordinator

PROPERTY & FACILITIES

ERIK BIRKELAND • MANAGER

-MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS-

Joe Miller • Facilities Operations Supervisor

-PROJECT MANAGEMENT-

Tari Rayala • City Architect

Rob Hurd • Construction Project Coordinator
Alexander Jackson • Energy Coordinator

-PROPERTY SERVICES-

Hank Martinsen • Property Services Supervisor

Danielle Erjavec • Property Services Specialist



MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS

KELLY FLEISSNER • MANAGER

-PARKS MAINTENANCE-

Dale Sellner • Buildings & Grounds Supervisor

Bob Dunsmore • Lead Worker
Doug Rosas • Lead Worker
Jack Schade • Lead Worker

Larry Abrahamson • Nola Honkala
Robert Bugbee • Kevin Jentoft
John D. Capra • Donald Kienholz
Dawn Daniels • Todd Kobus
William Davis • Jennifer Monroe
Darin Franckowiak • Dena Petite
Tammy Gosline • Benjamin Sosniecki
Todd Halbakken • Dale Stanek
Greg Hanson • Cory Wagner
Joanne Highlan • Wendy Wohlwend



COMMISSIONS

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

Voting Members

Edwin Hall	President	At Large
Tjaard Breeuwer		District 1
Thomas Albright		District 5
Andy Holak		Professional
Jon Welles	Vice President	District 2
Patrick Contardo		At Large
John Schmidt		District 3
Tiersa Wodash		District 4
Michael Schraepfer		Land Management
Erik Torch	Secretary	Community Education
Amanda Crosby		Commission on Disabilities

Non-Voting Members

Joel Sipress	City Council Liaison
Frank Jewell	St. Louis Co. Board Liaison
Art Johnston	ISD #709 Board Liaison

Vision Statement

Our vision is to preserve a naturally beautiful city and to provide innovative and quality Parks and Recreation programs and facilities that will sustain a dynamic quality of life for everyone.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to act in an advisory capacity to the Mayor, City Council, the Parks and Recreation Division and other agencies and organizations regarding matters related to Duluth Parks and Recreation programs and facilities.

URBAN FOREST COMMISSION

Liz Johnson	Michael Pennington
James Lemmerman	Jacob Shaw
Janet Nelson	Barbara Stark
Christine Penney	

Mission Statement

The mission of the Commission is to educate and inform the public and act as advocate for the preservation, protection and promotion of Duluth's urban forest and to advise the City on the management of this forest.



PARKS and RECREATION

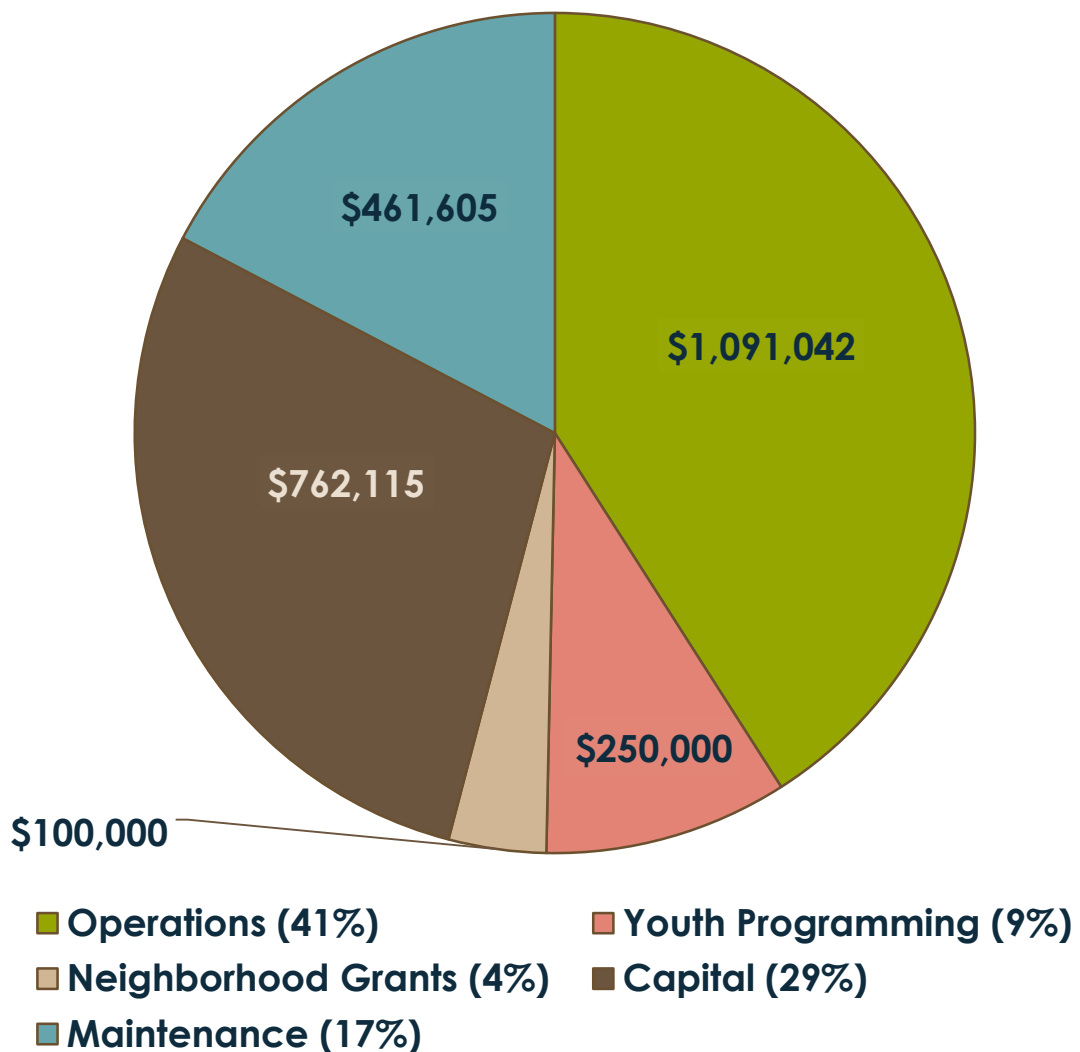


BUDGET

PARKS FUND BUDGET

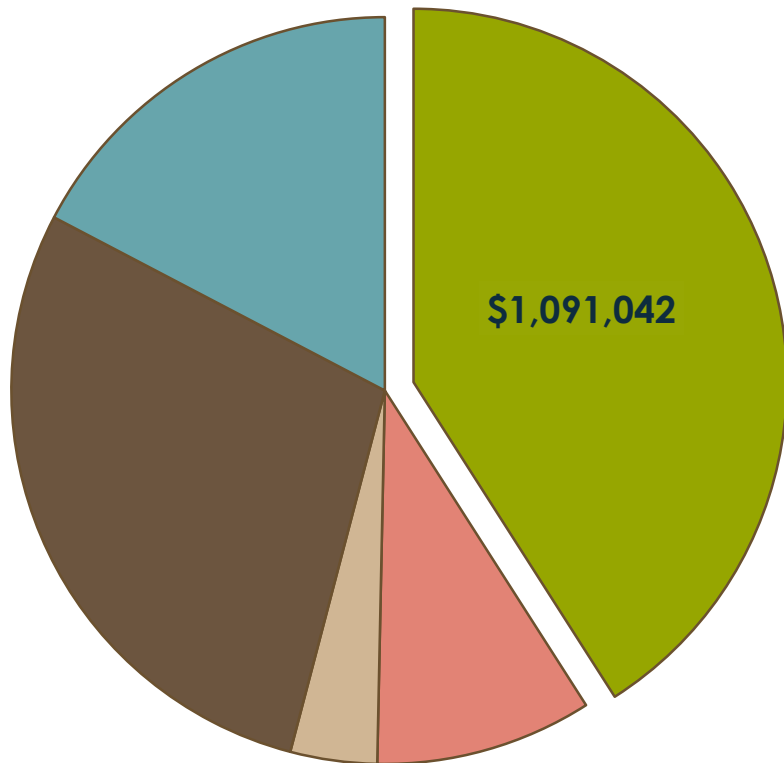
2015 EXPENDITURES

\$2,664,761



PARKS FUND BUDGET

Operations

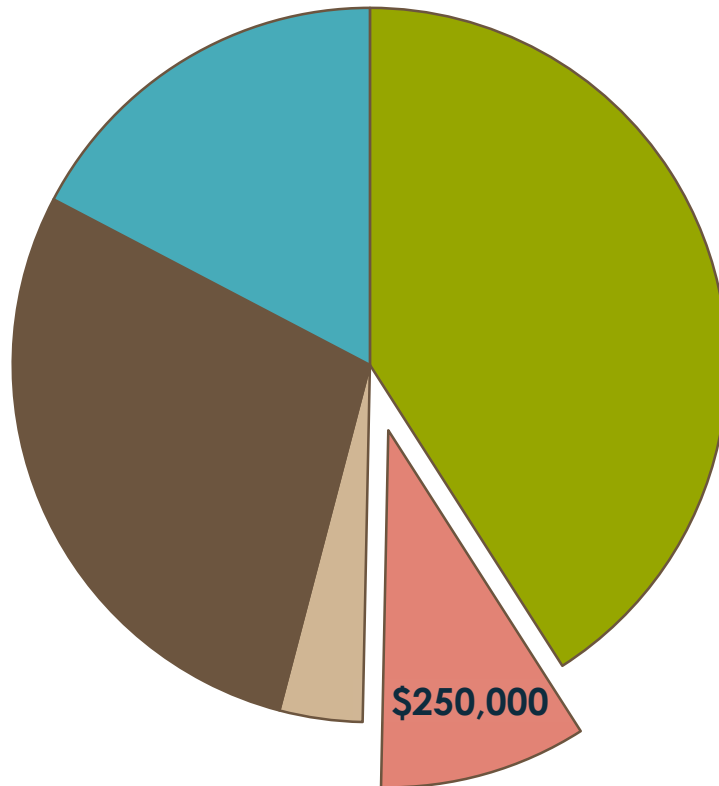


- **Wages and Benefits**
- **Equipment and Supplies**
- **Marketing and Printing**
- **Phones and Internet**
- **Vehicles and Mileage**
- **Memberships and Dues**

- **Special Events and Concerts**
- **Skating and Turf Time**
- **Youth Programming**
- **Senior Programming**
- **Training and Education**
- **Parks Commission**

PARKS FUND BUDGET

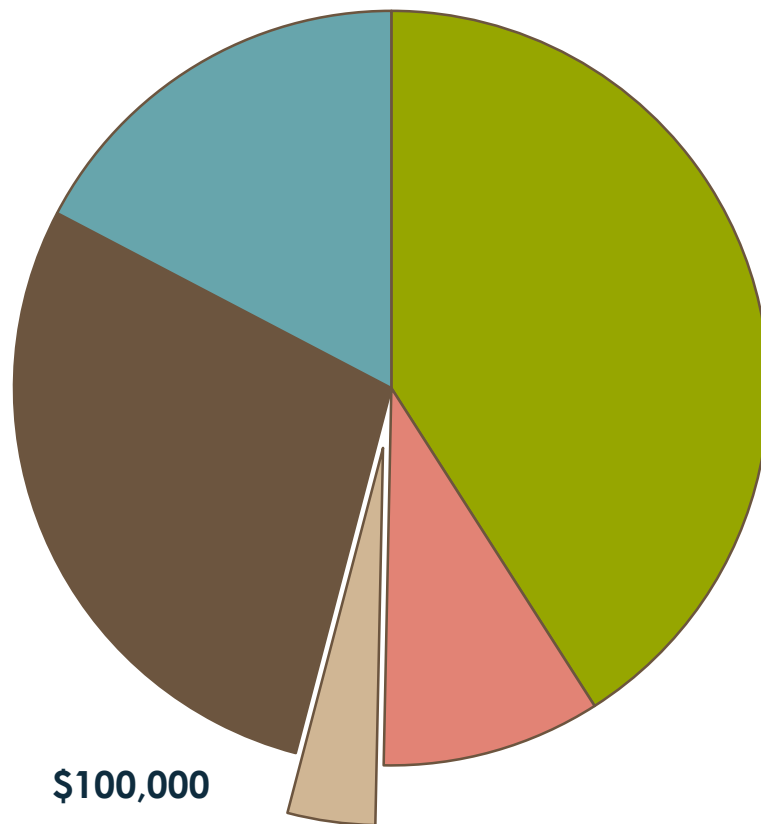
Youth Programming



- \$150,000 to support the YMCA in placing and training 25 AmeriCorps members in full time positions throughout the City
- Five \$20,000 grants to underserved neighborhoods to support and expand youth programming:
 - Gary New Duluth (Valley Youth)
 - West Duluth (Valley Youth)
 - Lincoln Park (Boys & Girls Club)
 - Central Hillside (Neighborhood Youth Services)
 - East Hillside (Myers-Wilkins Collaborative)

PARKS FUND BUDGET

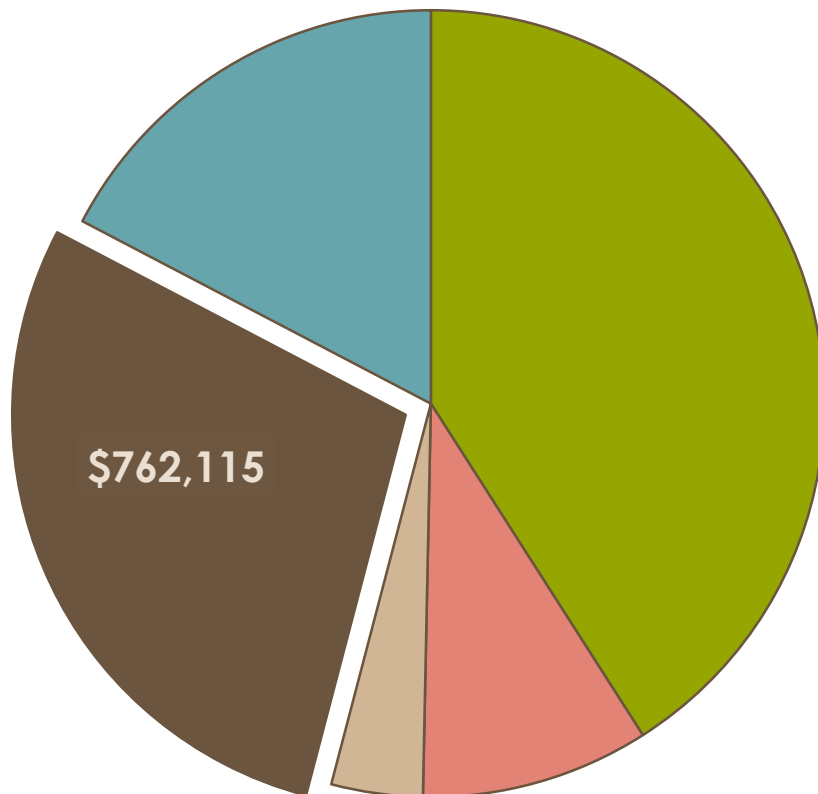
Community Parks & Recreation Grants



- Partner with the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation to offer grants to neighborhood and community groups in the spring and fall
- Maximum amount per grant is \$5,000
- Awarded \$100,000 in 2015

PARKS FUND BUDGET

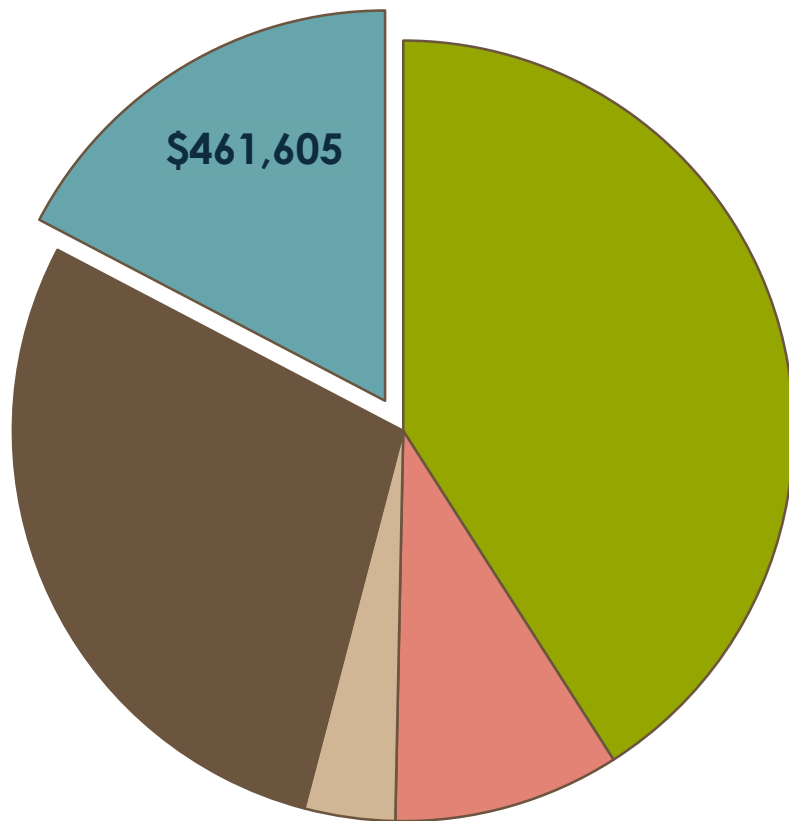
Capital



- Community Center Upgrades
- Cross City Trail Mini Master Plan
- Trail Repair and Improvement
- Lakewalk Extension & Commercial Use Permitting Studies
- Hartley & Chester Mini-Master Plan Implementation
- Playground at Cobb School
- Cross Country Ski Trail Master Plan

PARKS FUND BUDGET

Enhanced Maintenance



- Seasonal maintenance staff
- Invasive species removal team
- Cleaning, repairs, and maintenance at parks, fields, and community centers
- Training, certifications, and licenses

PARKS and RECREATION



WHAT'S NEW

Wade-Wheeler



Wade Stadium	
Practices	54
Games	156
Camps	2
Other Events	1
Wheeler Sports Complex (Fields 1-7)	
Practices	38
Games	142
Tournaments	10

WADE STADIUM

A \$4.6m renovation of the existing Wade Stadium, baselines and outfield walls (phase one) was funded with \$2.3m in bonding from the State of Minnesota and an equal match from the City of Duluth. The project provided a new drainage system, new lights, new scoreboard, new synthetic turf, and new fencing (including padding). Additional improvements include a concrete patio baseline viewing area; brick replacement, stabilization, and tuck-pointing of the stadium walls; a new concession area; and upgraded accessibility for patrons. The increased durability and drainage capabilities of the new artificial turf allowed the season to be extended two months and use of the field quadrupled. Additional phases of the renovation will continue as funding becomes available.

LESTER AMITY SKI TRAIL LIGHTING

In the fall of 2015 the City of Duluth Properties and Facilities Maintenance, on behalf of the Parks and Recreation Division, invested in a lighting upgrade for the Lester Amity Ski Trail. This upgrade replaced 95 - 250 watt high pressure sodium luminaires with 95 - 50 watt luminaires. This system upgrade offered several valuable benefits, including a dramatic reduction in electrical consumption, cost and pollution. The old system used approximately 34,580 kilowatts (kWh) annually. The new LED system uses only 6,920 kWh in a typical year, which is an 80% reduction in electrical use annually. Decreasing kilowatt usage by 27,664 kWh reduces CO₂ pollution by approximately 57,264 pounds annually. Additionally, the LED lights have a significantly longer life span which will reflect cost saving in annual maintenance expenses as well as on utility billings.

CHESTER CREEK CONCERT SERIES

We initiated a more objective process of choosing bands for Chester Creek Summer Concerts. A committee was formed, an application created and a deadline set. Over 30 musical acts applied to fill 10 available vacancies. The Committee, plus representatives from Chester Bowl Improvement Club, were given the applications, including web-links to sample applicants music. On selection day, the Committee met, discussed the objectives and voted. Preference was given to local talent. The results of the new selection process were heard throughout the summer, and feedback from the public was exceptionally positive.

ADOPTERS FOR EDIBLE DULUTH APPLE ORCHARDS

Edible Duluth, an initiative of Park Maintenance and the Volunteer Program, recruited seven local organizations to “adopt” a public fruit tree orchard in one of our parks. Each orchard featured approximately a dozen cherry and/or apple trees that bear fruit for public picking. Adopters helped water and monitor the trees for disease. Partners included The Izaak Walton League, Morgan Park Community Garden Club, Faith Lutheran Church, Northwood Children's Services, Duluth-Superior Eco-Rotary, the Kimball Family, Barr Engineering and Harbor City International School. Visit www.duluthmn.gov/volunteer/edible-duluth for more information and orchard locations.

MINNESOTA GREENCORPS

Parks and Recreation was the recipient of a GreenCorps member for the 2015-16 service year. Minnesota GreenCorps is an environmentally focused AmeriCorps program coordinated by the MPCA, which places AmeriCorps members with organizations around the state to spend a year of service addressing critical environmental issues, while gaining experience and learning valuable job skills. Kevin Malmquist was selected as the Duluth Parks and Recreation member and has spent the first few months of his service year working on the Duluth Invaders service initiative and on Emerald Ash Borer education and management.





PORTLAND MALT SHOP STAIRS

In the spring of 2014 the stairs and bridge were taken out of service due to holes in the concrete on the landings. A structural analysis was completed and the recommendation was to replace the failing concrete treads and make repairs to the landings before returning the stairs to service. The project was completed in two phases. The first phase took place in 2014; temporarily repairing the holes in the landings, redesigning and replacing the concrete treads, allowing the stairs to be re-opened for the summer tourist season. The second phase was completed in the spring of 2015. In this phase the concrete treads and the concrete landings were removed. Structural steel was added, which enabled conversion of the landings to ipe wood (Brazilian walnut). The steel structure was painted, treads replaced, and ipe wood installed on the landings. Project challenges included working around the tourist season and over an active railway line. The end result brought the stairs up to current code and reset the life cycle on this access to the Lakewalk, one of Duluth's most popular attractions.

OBSERVATION DOG PARK

Observation Dog Park was an effort by volunteers who conceived, planned and performed much of the physical work that established Duluth's Second City Dog Park. The City of Duluth Park Maintenance team provided some material, equipment and a small amount of guidance to help complete the effort that was also supported by Community Parks and Recreation Program grants.

ADA RESTROOM FACILITIES AT CITY CENTER WEST

City Center West is home to the West Branch Library and Evergreen Senior Center, both popular places that see a lot of use. The bathrooms that are shared by both of these user groups did not meet accessibility standards as they were designed and built prior to those requirements. Today the public bathrooms meet accessibility guidelines by the Americans with Disabilities Act. In addition to meeting these standards, the newly remodeled bathrooms received a much-needed interior finishes upgrade. As part of this project, a drinking fountain was relocated to an unused, obsolete phone alcove.





COBB SCHOOL PLAYGROUND

Late in the Fall of 2015 a new playground was installed to replace the existing playground that no longer passed safety inspection. Funded through Parks Fund Enhanced Maintenance, this beautiful new and exciting playground was designed for 5 to 12 year old children in the neighborhood. Parents and Children can now walk to this site without having to cross Woodland Avenue to access a playground.



Duluth Traverse Trail

The Duluth Traverse is a multi-use trail system linking neighborhoods and people to green spaces and the outdoors. It is a single-track, multi-use trail, purpose built for mountain bikes, stretching the entire ridge line of Duluth from Lester Park in the east to Chambers Grove Park in the west. It will be the first 100-mile trail system of its kind, wholly within an urban environment. At the end of 2015, 65 miles of the Traverse had been built.

In 2015, the City of Duluth built 7.1 miles of the Traverse in Mission Creek, connecting Chambers Grove Park to Becks Road. An additional 3.75 miles of the Traverse was completed between Lester Park and Hartley Park by City partner, Cyclists of Gitchee Gummi Shores (COGGS).

In 2016, the City will be bidding two contracts for construction of 17.4 miles of the Traverse connecting Spirit Mountain to Brewer Park, including the full build-out of the Mission Creek Trail Center. COGGS will be constructing an additional 4.75 miles in Hartley Park and Chester Park.

All proposed distances are subject to change pending results of the bidding phase.



CHESTER BOWL FUN SLOPE

The Chester Bowl Improvement Club, working with City of Duluth staff and private contractors, many of whom donated their time and materials, opened the new "Fun Slope" during the 2015 winter. This newly skiable area was cleared and then peppered with berms and waves of man-made snow, creating a unique ski and snowboard experience that skiers and boarders of all ages loved! The City installed additional lighting to make this area safer at night. The Fun Slope has increased skiing capacity at Chester Bowl, which had a record number of users this winter. Find learn more, visit:

[www.chesterbowl.org/
events/fun-slope-open/](http://www.chesterbowl.org/events/fun-slope-open/).

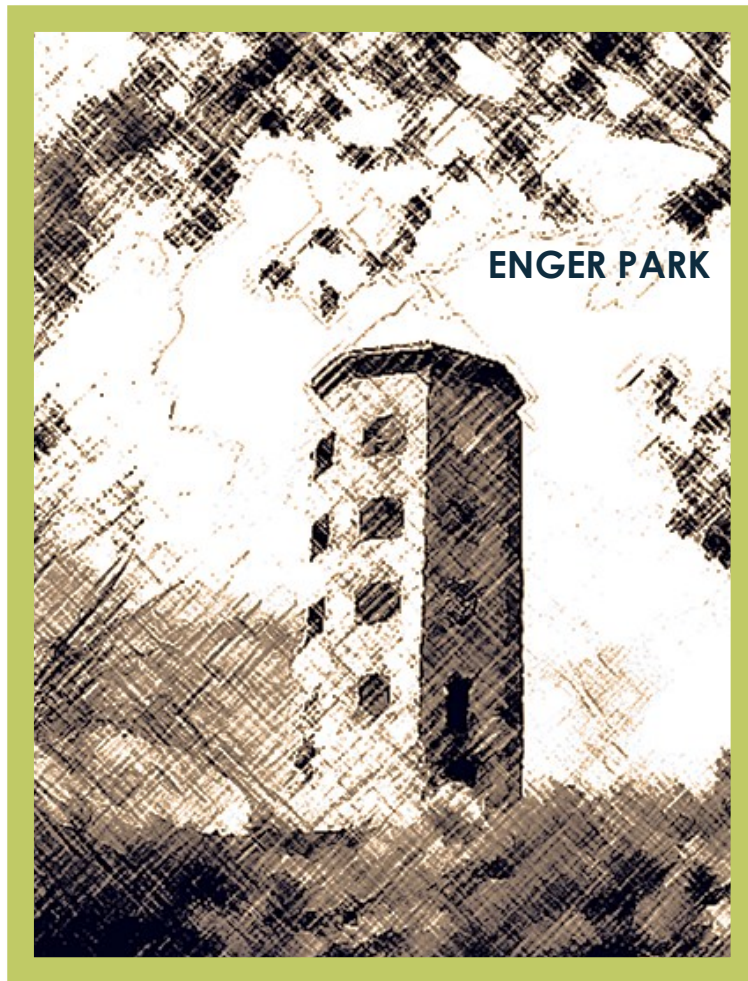


QUARRY PARK ACQUISITION

In 2015, as part of the larger St. Louis River Corridor Initiative, the City of Duluth pursued the acquisition of an abandoned rock quarry site to create a unique 30 acre neighborhood park with a world-class ice climbing facility. City of Duluth's Parks and Recreation Division worked interdepartmentally with Property Facilities Management to secure the property. A portion of the land was St. Louis County tax-forfeited land and the other portion was purchased from Oneota Cemetery Association. The acquisition process was completed in early 2016. The acquisition allowed the City of Duluth to protect informal greenspace adjacent to existing Parks which, in the future, will provide a neighborhood connection to regionally significant trails (Duluth Traverse Trail and Superior Hiking Trail). In addition, the re-use of a post-industrial site offers the adjacent neighborhood a formal green space to be used by the public long into the future.



PARKS and RECREATION



COMMUNITY

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The following interns provided **1193 hours** of service to Duluth Parks.

Alexa Shapiro
Anna White
Cory Johnson
Edda Anderson
Hyoweon Park
Kerwin McKay
Kevin Malmquist
Nicole Nelson
Reef Mohsenian
Shannon Paulson

RECREATION

In 2015, volunteers contributed **121 hours** to recreation programs and offerings. Volunteers help Duluth Parks and Recreation offer opportunities like skating at the Heritage Sports Center and other special events.

TRAILS

In 2015, volunteers contributed **409 hours** to trail projects. These hours include projects that were completed with Park partners, like COGGS, SHTA and DXC. Additionally, volunteers contributed hours to support the completion of the Devonshire Trail project. Individual volunteers, Dan Proctor and John Ipsen, both provided substantial service to our trails, as well.

Volunteer Programs

CLEAN AND GREEN

Litter - it's a never-ending battle. Through the City of Duluth's Clean and Green service initiative, hundreds of volunteers gave thousands of hours during 2015. Groups and individuals helped remove unwanted trash from our parks and trails, as well as contributed to beautification projects like weeding in the Rose Garden and mulching trees in various neighborhood parks.

2015 Clean and Green Accomplishments

3,185 Hours of Service

5,953 Pounds of Bagged Garbage Collected



DULUTH INVADERS

Invasive, non-native plants can be devastating to native plants, trees and wildlife habitat. The Duluth Invaders service initiative is committed to addressing the influx and growth of invasive plant populations in our community. Through community education, mapping and tracking efforts, as well as eradication events and treatment efforts, we are taking on invasives.



2015 Duluth Invaders Accomplishments

869 Hours of Service

20+ R²ED Team Members Recruited & Trained

EDIBLE DULUTH

Promoting, growing and developing public edible landscapes are the focus of the Edible Duluth service initiative. Partnering with programs that advocate for food access and equity, Duluth Parks and Recreation is excited to be exploring the role that we can have in this issue.



2015 Edible Duluth Accomplishments

186 Hours of Service

6 Adopt-A-Spot Partners



reLEAF DULUTH

A healthy urban forest is an important community resource. The reLEAF service initiative works to promote volunteer engagement in protecting our urban forest, educating the public on the importance of our urban forest, and hosting service activities that include tree inventory, pruning and planting.

2015 reLEAF Accomplishments

190 Hours of Service

ADOPT-A-SPOT

Duluth Park's Adopt-A-Spot program invites individuals and groups to care for and maintain public lands for the benefit of the community. The partners listed below have formally adopted the listed spot.

Adopt-A-Spot Partners

Dan Proctor	ADOPTED	Chester Creek Trails
Carla Melandar & Lutheran Social Services	ADOPTED	Ordean Courtyard Gardens
Jill Kimball and Family	ADOPTED	Fond du Lac -Edible Duluth Orchard and Garden
Christina Tarasczuk	ADOPTED	Lakewalk
Brad Leick	ADOPTED	Lester Park Connector Trail
EcoRotary	ADOPTED	Lakewalk Edible Duluth Orchard
Northwood Children's Services	ADOPTED	Pennel Park and Merritt Park -Edible Duluth Orchards
Izaak Walton League -W.J. McCabe Chapter	ADOPTED	Brighton Beach Edible Duluth Orchard
Faith Community Garden	ADOPTED	Washington Square Edible Duluth Orchard
Barr Engineering	ADOPTED	Sailboat Park Edible Duluth Orchard
WLSSD	ADOPTED	Cross City Trail - 21st Ave W to Point of Rocks
Dick Gould	ADOPTED	Park Point Mutt Mitt Containers

Senior Programs

Due to the generous donations of two Duluth residents, Senior Programs was able to create a more modern, casino style bingo system at the Morgan Park and Portman Senior Centers. The remaining senior center, Evergreen, will transition to the new system in 2016.

Using bingo daubers instead of chips or cards has improved the weekly bingo sessions; doubling attendance to nearly 25 participants per session. There has been positive feedback as many seniors enjoy the simplicity of the new system.



Sports & Recreation

FLAG FOOTBALL

Sports and Leagues had a successful flag football season, with approximately 177 participants making up fifteen teams. While the main goal of the flag football program is for participants to have fun, children from second through fifth grades are also offered the opportunity to learn the value of teamwork and sportsmanship while developing the fundamental skills necessary for future development within the sport of football. Children had the chance to gain new skills and build lasting friendships during the season.

Youth Recreation

Bayfront Skating	1,900
Heritage Skating	5,200
Bayfront Family Center (summer)	2,150
Special Turf Activities (spring)	130
Learn-to-Skate (DAHA)	150
Champions Building Champions (Men as Peacemakers)	300
Art Kits	850
Ultimate Frisbee	150
Flag Football	177
Play Gym	1,045

Adult Softball League

Teams	62
-------	----

Washington Recreation Center

Gym (number of times used)	401
Conference Room	71

RECREATION PROGRAMS

The Parks and Recreation division provides free access to recreation equipment during the summer months at the Bayfront Family Center. The program increased in popularity as more youth programs were becoming interested in taking field trips to Bayfront Festival Park. Meanwhile the Community Art Kit program, which provides free art supplies, also increased in popularity among youth programs in Duluth.

Organizations struggled to transport participants and supplies to the needed locations, presenting a problem in taking full advantage of the programs. Through a partnership with True North AmeriCorps, two volunteers were assigned to distribute equipment and kits to youth-serving agencies. Thus, many Duluth children were able to participate in the offered recreation programming. The volunteers maintained inventory of all supplies and worked with staff to help choose equipment based on age and interest of participants. Through the collective efforts of all involved, recreation programs saw an increase in participation in 2015.

Permits & Special Events

PERMITS

2015 Park Rentals

	Attendance (estimate)	# permits
Brighton Beach	1200	23
Chambers Grove	1275	14
Chester Bowl Park	765	11
Enger Park	800	19
Leif Erikson	945	7
Lester Park	3330	56
Lincoln Park	830	11
Memorial Park	190	4
Miscellaneous Parks	248	5
TOTAL	9583	150
Alcohol Permits	3910	30

Wedding Ceremonies & Rehearsals

Brighton Beach	14
Chester	1
Enger	43
Hartley	5
Leif Erikson	17
Lester	8
Lincoln	7
Memorial	1
Rose Garden	35
Sister Cities	1
Old Main	2

MISCELLANEOUS PERMITS

Busker Permits	25
Special Event Permits	122



2015 Building Rentals

	Attendance (estimate)	# permits
Duluth Heights	9,373	62
Evergreen	5,345	77
Morgan Park	5,941	49
Portman	2,307	35
Piedmont	100	3
TOTAL	23,066	226
Alcohol Permits	5,500	46

SPECIAL EVENTS

CITY WIDE -Special Events-

Chester Creek Concerts	5400
Movies in the Park	12,550



YOUTH PROGRAMS -Special Events-

Valentine's Skate (Skate for Your Heart)	150
DECC Family Skating Parties	450
Boo Bash	225
Gobbler Glide	155
Whipper Snapper Races	3000
Sandmodeling	150
Santa Skate	250



SENIOR PROGRAMS -Special Events-

Billiard Tournament (+ spectators)	227
Senior Appreciation Day	100
100 Year Birthday Party (+ spectators)	212
Holiday Banquet	253

SOCIAL INTERACTION

Learning how to have positive social interactions is a theme that runs through all of the youth programs. Program staff members realize that part of setting the youth up to succeed in the future has a lot to do with communication and social interaction with peers and adults. These skills are developed through contact with positive role models from college volunteers, agency staff members, and AmeriCorps representatives. Many youth were positively affected by this Parks and Recreation funding. Continuing this funding will ensure that Duluth's youth have continued access to opportunities and become empowered future leaders of our City.



Youth Programming

The youth organizations in Duluth continued programs that were originally expanded in 2012 with funding from the City of Duluth Parks and Recreation Division. The programs included providing educational and academic support, develop habits for healthy lifestyles, and learn how to have positive social interactions. The programs that received this funding included:

- Boys & Girls Club (Lincoln Park)
- Duluth Area YMCA True North AmeriCorps
- Myers Wilkins Community School Collaborative (East Hillside)
- Neighborhood Youth Services (Central Hillside)
- Valley Youth Center (West Duluth and Gary New Duluth)

EXPANDED OPPORTUNITIES

The Parks and Recreation Funding continues to help the programs to reach a greater number of youth in our community. As a whole, these youth programs worked to reach 3,874 youth in 2015. This is over 1,000 more youth than were served by this funding in 2014.

The 25 True North AmeriCorps members served at several sites around the City including Mentor Duluth, YWCA Girl Power, Girls Scouts, Key Zone, Men as Peacemakers, Myers-Wilkins Community School Collaborative, Harbor Highlands Community Center, Downtown YMCA Youth Employment Program, City of Duluth Parks and Recreation, Valley Youth Center, and Neighborhood Youth Services. AmeriCorps members provided 26,660 tutoring hours to 1,398 students. This is a great example of collaboration as well as expansion of services to be sure that even more youth have access to a variety of enrichment programming. This was vital in sustaining the level of programming and support to kids in need in Duluth and adequately staffing the programs.

More youth are attending the programs more frequently than in the past. With the opening of the Steve O'Neill apartments, Neighborhood Youth Services had an increase in youth participants this year. The programs saw an increase in daily attendance as well as a significant increase in the number of meals served.

EDUCATIONAL AND ACADEMIC SUPPORT

A core focus of all of the youth programs is to see the youth they work with do well in school. Homework assistance and tutoring is a key part of each program. Students receive support, including 1-on-1 tutoring, peer support, and group tutoring sessions.

The summer programs are often a way to bridge the summer learning loss that occurs with a big break in traditional education. Opportunities offered by the different programs include environmental education, education based computer programs, reading programs, math and science. Other enrichment programs offered included life skills like; banking and saving, nature and science based learning, and safe computer usage. College and workplace readiness programs help to establish stepping stones for the futures of the youth.

All of the programs strive to provide positive adult role models for their participants. The Duluth Police Athletic League worked with programs to combine healthy activities with role modeling. Program staff empower youth to explore their interests and build self-confidence.

Myers Wilkins Community School Collaborative collects specific anecdotal responses from youth which show a good range of what their program is offering and what the youth are gaining from being involved:

"I discovered I want to go to college."

"I can do things I never knew I could do."

"I can be confident in myself no matter what."

Many of these programs have great success rates, meaning the youth are indeed developing new skills. Not only are youth receiving education support but they are receiving the support of positive role models that strengthen them as an individual, and help them to gain positive life perspective.

HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

Each program integrates living healthy lifestyles into their programs. The programs work to integrate healthy nutritional snacks and meals into their program. But they go above and beyond simply offering food, several of the programs conduct cooking/gardening activities so the youth begin to learn how to make healthy eating choices while at home. Programs like Chef's Club and the JET Program help with the nutritional education and job skills. But there are countless other activities done by all the programs that promote healthy lifestyles. This includes learning to fish, outdoor survival programs, swimming lessons, and a variety of sporting and athletic opportunities get the youth active and in the habit of regularly getting outdoors and getting exercise.

The youth programs encourage tolerance and diversity by exploring different cultures. Some experiences youth participated in include Ojibwe drumming and beading classes, Indigenous Peoples Day, the UMD Kwanzaa Celebration, Hmong Culture Night, Latina Culture Night, and a visit from Ms. Malaak Shabazz as part of Black History Month.

COMMUNITY PARKS & RECREATION PROGRAM 2015 GRANT AWARDS

ORGANIZATION	PROJECT	SPRING 2015
Lake Superior Zoological Society	John Deere Riding Lawn Mower Purchase	\$5,000
Woodland Amateur Hockey Association (WAHA)	Lower Rink Maintenance Free Project	\$5,000
University of Minnesota Foundation	Park Point Beach Safety Kit Boxes	\$3,000
Hartley Nature Center	Environmental Education Intern Support	\$5,000
GND Development Alliance	GND Center Revitalization and Sod	\$5,000
Glen Avon Hockey Association	Ice Rink Repairs	\$5,000
Friends of Keene Creek Park	Seating for Keene Creek Park	\$5,000
Duluth Cross-Country Ski Club (DXC)	Lester/Amity Chalet Water Drainage Abatement	\$5,000
Chester Bowl Improvement Club (CBIC)	Chester Bowl Safety Improvements	\$5,000
COGGS (Cyclists of Gitchee Gumme Shores, Inc.)	Summer Maintenance Program	\$5,000
		\$48,000

ORGANIZATION	PROJECT	FALL 2015
Hartley Nature Center	Outdoor Pavilion	\$4,000
The Welch Center Inc.	Outdoor Winter Activities at Memorial Park	\$5,000
COGGS (Cyclists of Gitchee Gumme Shores, Inc.)	Duluth Traverse Trail Maintenance	\$5,000
Duluth Community Garden Program	Fond du Lac Fencing Project - Edible Duluth	\$2,823
Duluth Cross-Country Ski Club (DXC)	Lester-Amity Chalet Accessibility and Repair	\$5,000
GND Development Alliance	Rain Garden Plantings	\$4,000
Lake Superior Zoological Society	Restore Barn Solar Hot Water System	\$3,800
Lincoln Park Children and Families Collaborative	Music in Lincoln Park Summer Concert Series	\$5,000
Neighbors of Lower Chester Park	Facility Maintenance Supplies	\$577
Chester Bowl Improvement Club (CBIC)	Ski Jumping Commemoration	\$4,000
Woodland Amateur Hockey Association (WAHA)	Public Rink Resurface Project	\$4,000
Wheels on Trails Organization (ARC)	Grassy Point Trail - Phase III	\$4,800
Friends of Dog Parks (Friends of Keene Creek Dog Park)	Eastern Dog Park	\$4,000
		\$52,000

\$100,000



GOLF

Season Passes	# Sold
Unlimited	184
Senior	325
Young Adult	122
Junior	122
Family	42
Skyline Pass	1,620
Total	2,415

Daily Fees	# Sold
18 Hole	11,960
9 Hole	23,620
18 Hole Sr/Jr	2,125
Outings	2,982
Twilight	975
18 Hole Special	2,939
9 Hole Special	845
Total	45,446

Cart Rentals	# Sold
18 Hole	17,305
9 Hole	15,374
Total	32,679

Miscellaneous	# Sold
Driving Range	77,226
Merchandise	135,369
Food & Beverage	339,496
Other Rentals	18,469
Total	570,561



GOLF

At the beginning of 2015, Billy Casper Golf took over management and operations of Enger and Lester public golf courses. During the year the management of Billy Casper Golf was focused on making improvements related to the courses and the overall experience of the golfers. Investments were made on upgrading the bunkers as well as the restoration of Coffee Creek at the Enger Golf Course greatly improved playability of the course. Billy Casper Golf also focused on improving customer service and the clubhouse experience, which created higher customer satisfaction and overall experience for Duluth's golfers at both courses.



PARKS and RECREATION



CHESTER CREEK

PARKS PLANNING

PARKS STEWARDSHIP

In 2015 Parks and Recreation created a new focus within their division which is referred to as the Parks Stewardship Team. The focus of the team's work is around community engagement of the future use and development of public green space in Duluth, walking through every step of the process from public input meetings, planning, permitting design and construction. Uniquely, the Stewardship Team approach relies heavily on community partners to invest in parks infrastructure for the sustainability of existing and new amenities on public land.



CAMPUS CONNECTOR

The concept of a trail connecting the existing Lakewalk to eight elementary, middle, high school and college campuses was officially named through a naming contest during 2015. Campus Connector will serve as the first vertical trail connection in Duluth. It will connect the Lakewalk, via Congdon Park to the University of Minnesota Duluth's campus, on College Street to the College of St. Scholastica and to Rice Lake Road. In addition, Rice Lake Road will be improved in 2016 with a new, wide trail for bicycles and pedestrians from Mesaba Avenue to Arrowhead Road. Additionally, construction of an off street protected bicycle path on College Street from Junction Avenue to Kenwood Avenue will begin in 2016.

HARTLEY PARK LEGACY GRANT -PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION-

During 2015, Hartley Park underwent an Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) process that examined all aspects of the proposed projects in Phase One implementation of the 2014 Mini-Master Plan. This included pine plantation thinning, parking lot expansion, hiking and biking trail improvements, Old Hartley Road improvements, accessible trail restorations, and removal of buckthorn and other invasive species. The Planning Commission was satisfied with the outcome, and permission was given to move forward. In 2016 the City will implement all of the projects related to the \$600,00 Legacy Grant.

COMMUNITY INPUT OPPORTUNITIES



MASTER PLANNING OUR PARKS

Since 2008 the Parks and Recreation Division began the process of creating master plan documents for many of the parks, trails and recreation facilities within the City of Duluth. The process of creating master plans takes time but the Parks Division is committed to developing these important guiding documents.

Master Plans:

- Provide an inclusive public process to determine the future uses of a park
- Engage stakeholders to understand park usage patterns and needs
- Complete an inventory of existing park amenities and infrastructure
- Create a clear "road map" of how to move forward with changes to the park

In 2015 the following Mini Master Plans were complete:

- **IRVING PARK**
- **WEST DULUTH SPORTS CORRIDOR**
- **GRAND AVENUE NORDIC CENTER**

In 2015 the process was initiated for the following Mini Master Plans. The intention is to complete the planning process in 2016:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| -CROSS CITY TRAIL | -MERRITT PARK |
| -LINCOLN PARK | -KEENE CREEK PARK |
| -MEMORIAL PARK | -GRASSY POINT PARK |
| -ST. LOUIS RIVER NATIONAL WATER TRAIL | -NORTON PARK |
| -QUARRY PARK | -RIVERSIDE PARK |
| -FAIRMOUNT PARK/ LAKE SUPERIOR ZOO | -BLACKMER PARK |
| -PIEDMONT PARK | -SMITHVILLE PARK |
| -HARRISON PARK | -HISTORICAL PARK |
| | -FOND DU LAC PARK |

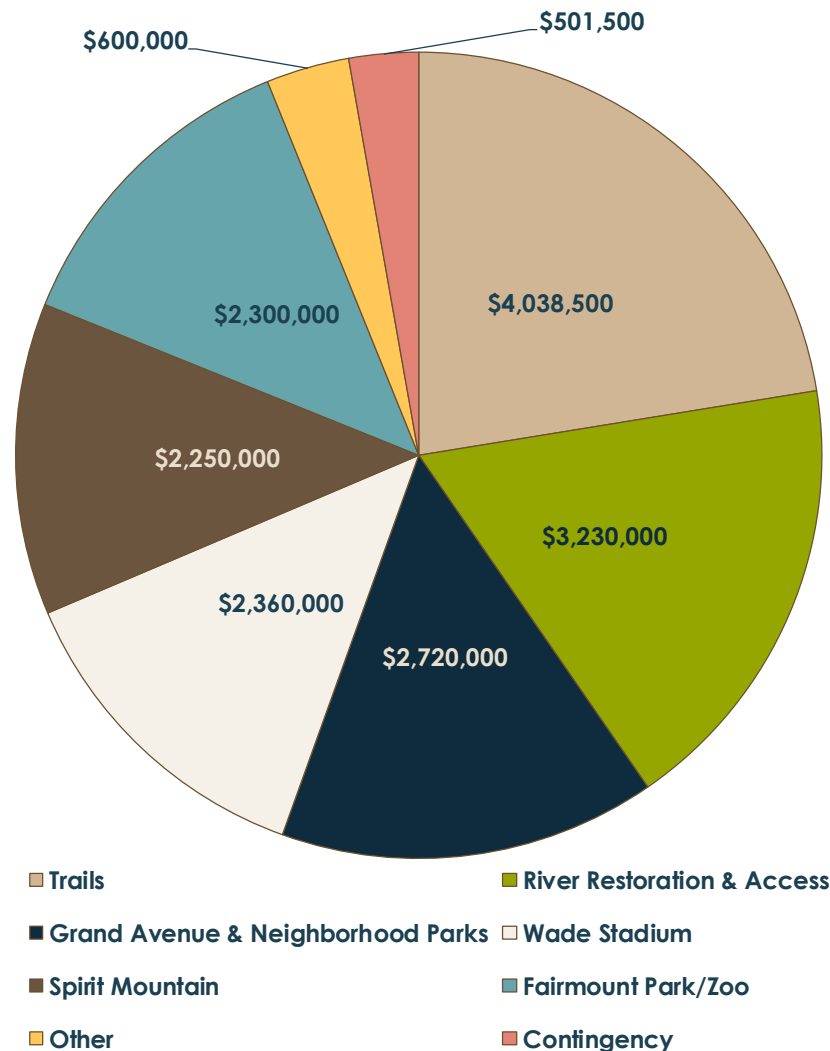
FEMA 2012 FLOOD PROJECTS

Work commenced in 2015 in several areas: Old Thompson Hill Road above the Zoo was restored, as well as portions of western snowmobile trails and the old DWP rail bed. The hiking trail in Mission Creek leading up from the trailhead at 131st Avenue West was restored and once again connects to the Superior Hiking Trail. Planning documents were completed for repairs in Chester, Hartley and Congdon Parks, and work will commence there in 2016. Work will also be done along Chester Creek, which was heavily damaged.



ST. LOUIS RIVER CORRIDOR INITIATIVE

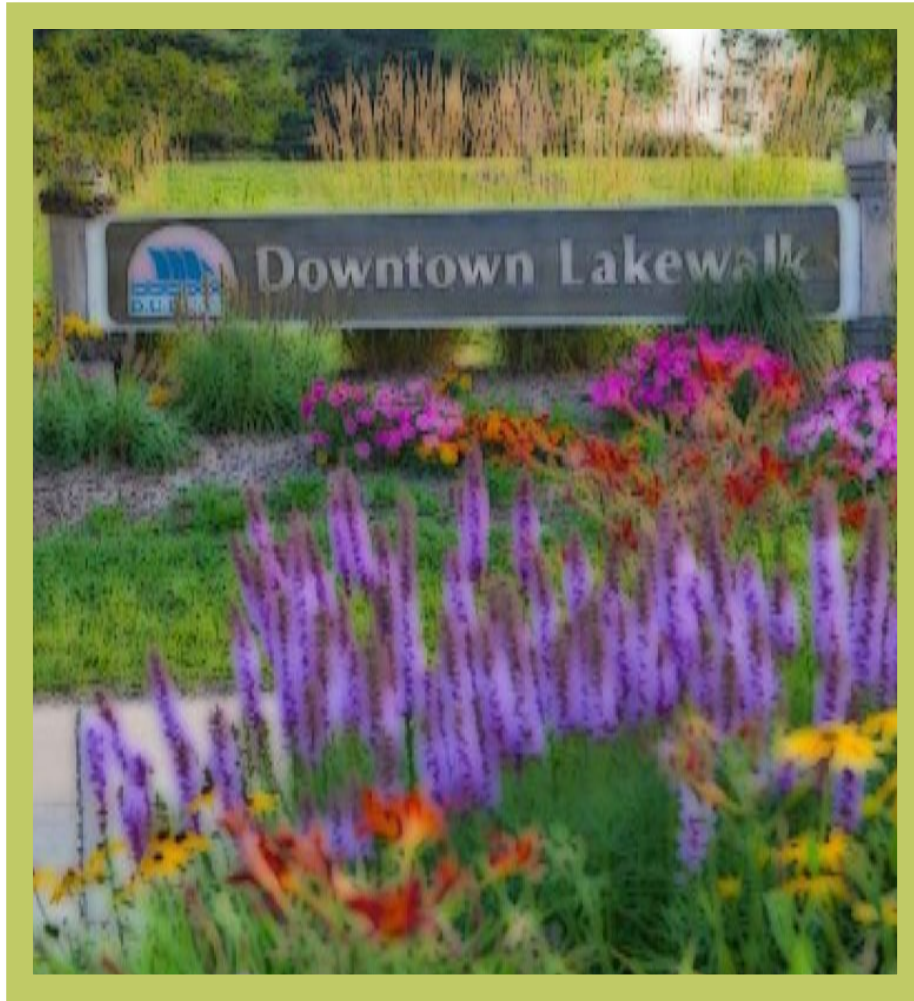
-Connecting People to the River-



The St. Louis River Corridor Initiative invests in public park and trail improvements from Lincoln Park to the Fond du Lac neighborhood. The overall goals of the Initiative are to support the natural environment, enrich neighborhood quality of life, attract new home buyers, establish new visitor destinations and stimulate appropriate development. Initiative projects are funded in part by \$18 million in bonds, collected through the ½ and ½ tourism tax approved by the Minnesota Legislature in 2014. These funds will leverage additional dollars through community partnerships and grants.

28 projects make up the St. Louis River Corridor Initiative. Over a year into the Initiative, we are seeing projects move from concepts to formal planning processes, along with a select few moving into construction. Success can be seen in the implementation of Phase One plans for Gary New Duluth Recreation Area, Spirit Mountain Water System, Wade Stadium and Chambers Grove Shoreline Restoration, to name a few. In addition, the twenty mini master plans completed or initiated in 2015 are all related to the River Corridor projects. Anticipate seeing more visible progress on 28 projects in the upcoming year!

PARKS and RECREATION



GLIMPSE AHEAD

GLIMPSE AHEAD

NEW SKI TRAIL GROOMER

In the fall of 2015 Park Maintenance purchased a new John Deere UTV tracked vehicle to add to our ski trail grooming fleet (PistenBulley 100 snow groomer and Arctic Cat Bearcat Snowmobile). The addition of the new UTV allows us to support the skiing community's request of increased grooming frequency. Our funds were limited to the purchase of the UTV only. DXC (Duluth Cross Country Ski Club) purchased and generously donated a new pull-behind groomer for the UTV, providing yet another example of collaboration and dedicated partnership to improve our parks and trails.

WESTERN WATERFRONT INVASIVE REMOVAL/RESTORATION/RENEWAL

After 30 years of deferred maintenance, the Western Waterfront Trail is set to receive a facelift, restoring it to its original condition. Invasive plant removal and habitat restoration is currently underway and will continue throughout the 2016 season from Blackmer Park in the west to 63rd Ave in the east. In the fall of 2016, the City will be restoring 3.3 miles of the trail, returning it to its original 8-foot wide surface and providing improvements to increase accessibility. Duluth Parks will also be completing a Mini-Master Plan for the Western Waterfront Trail in 2016 which will be inclusive of future extensions and future alignments.

RECREATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

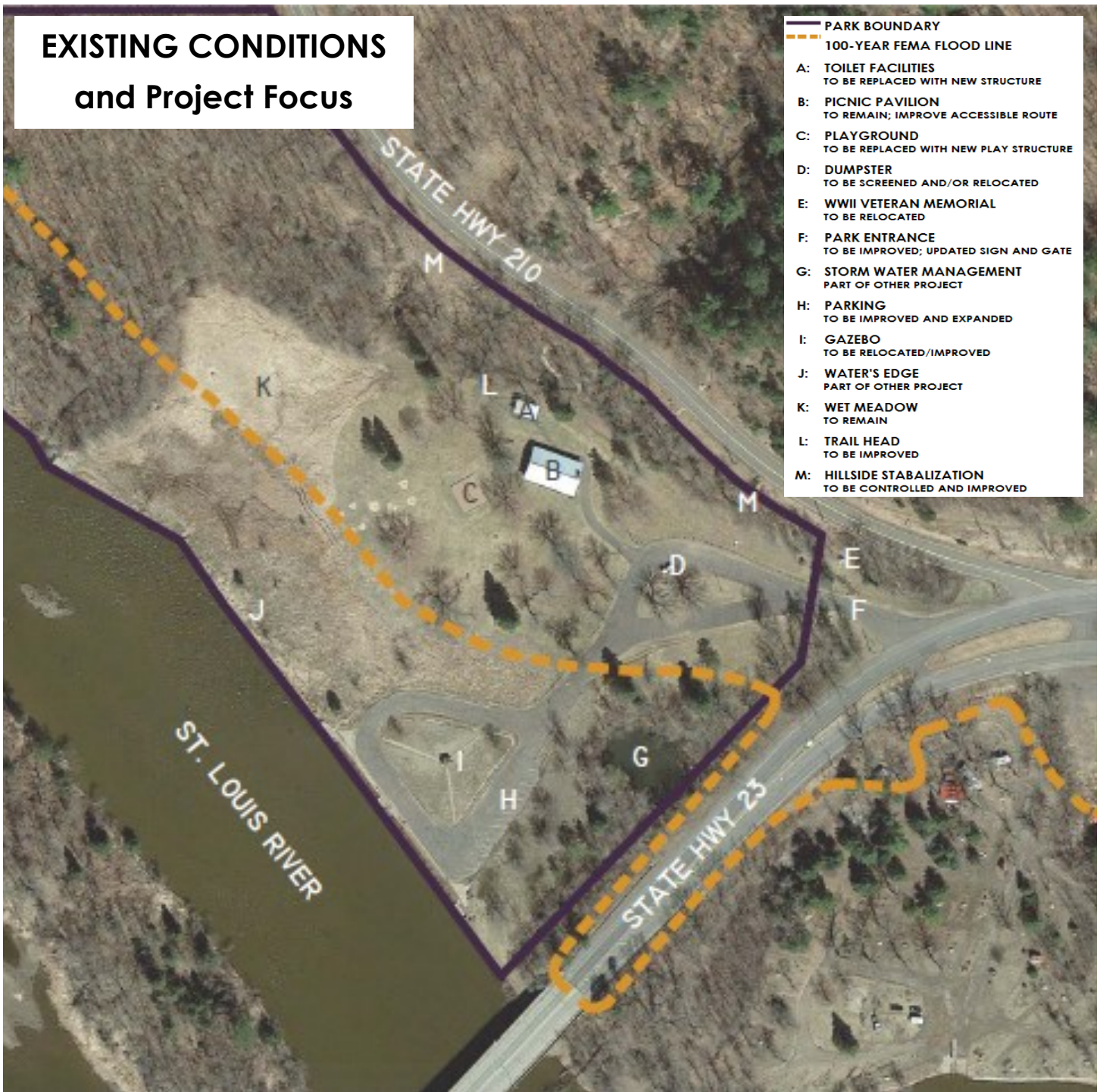
In 2016, Parks and Recreation will be implementing a new recreation management software. The software will allow the public to register for programs and reserve park facilities online. The public will also be able to view schedules of park facilities and select desired reservation times, which will be reviewed and approved by parks and recreation staff. The launch of the recreation management software gives Parks and Recreation the capability of mass communication through emails, texts, and social media. Additionally, the software enables fee payments via credit cards online.

ASSET MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

For the past two years Property and Facilities Management (PFM) has been entering all of the City owned facilities' building systems, data, architectural drawings, and utility information into the City asset management system. The asset management system is used to benchmark a facility by tracking building system lifecycles, and in so doing it directly supports capital planning and facility investment decision-making by providing capital improvement cost analysis and facility condition data for each building in the system. In 2016, PFM will be putting all of the Parks buildings into the City asset management system, and once that data is entered into the system, PFM will lead the development of a strategic facility plan for Parks facilities in 2017.

CHAMBERS GROVE PARK IMPROVEMENTS

EXISTING CONDITIONS and Project Focus



Chambers Grove Park, damaged by the flood of 2012, will receive some much-needed attention in 2016. Currently under design, the improvements to the park will include replacing and relocating the bathroom facilities, new and expanded parking, a playground, St. Louis River access, and improved drainage and stormwater management. In recent years this beloved park has experienced significantly more use, in large part due to the new multi-use Mission Creek Trail system built by COGGS and the City of Duluth. This project is funded by a \$1 million DNR Legacy Grant for flood recovery.

LAKE SUPERIOR ZOO/FAIRMOUNT PARK

LAKE SUPERIOR ZOO/
FAIRMOUNT PARK

CONCEPT PLAN

03/04/2016



The City of Duluth and the Lake Superior Zoological Society worked collaboratively to create a concept plan for the Lake Superior Zoo and Fairmount Park. The planning team included City staff, Zoo staff, Zoological Society board members, and Parks & Recreation Commissioners. The planning process included input from citizens through four public presentations, as well as online and paper comments. The concept plan was unanimously approved by the Parks & Recreation Commission on March 9, 2016 and by the City Council on March 14, 2016. The Concept Plan features a revitalized, more compact 10-acre zoo for \$15.7 million and a signature park for the St. Louis River Corridor.



2015 LAKE SUPERIOR ZOO ADMISSIONS REPORT

Paid Admissions	Price	Number Sold
Adults (13 yrs and older)	\$10.00	28,274
Adult & children 13 and up (group)	\$9.00	1,968
Adult, half off reciprocating member	\$5.00	1,351
Adult, Military (*new admissions category July 2014)	\$9.00	420
Seniors (62+)	\$9.00	2,423
Seniors, Military*	\$8.00	39
Senior, half off reciprocating member	\$4.50	65
Children (3-12 yrs)	\$5.00	12,196
Children 3-12 (group)	\$4.00	6,067
Children, Military*	\$4.00	153
Children, half off reciprocating member	\$2.50	796
Boo at the Zoo (gate ticket purchase)	\$10.00	5,695
Boo at the Zoo (advance ticket purchase)	\$9.00	3,510
Bulk ticket & pre-paid admissions	Varies	1,114
TOTALS	N/A	64,071
Gratis Admissions	Number	% of Total Admissions
Lake Superior Zoo Members	16,876	18.5%
Other Members (excluding 1/2 off reciprocating)	1,717	1.9%
Free (children 2 and under/coupons/comp. tickets)	7,432	8.2%
Volunteers	1,000	1.1%
TOTALS	27,025	29.7%
TOTAL Paid Admissions	64,071	70.3%
TOTAL Gratis Admissions	27,025	29.7%
GRAND TOTAL ADMISSIONS	91,096	100%

of people reached in off-site educational outreach (i.e. zoo mobiles) = 15,835

PARKS PARTNERS

1854 Treaty Authority
 AEOA Senior Dining
 Age Well Duluth
 ARDC (Arrowhead Regional Development Commission)
 Arrowhead Youth Soccer Association (AYSA)
 Bentleyville Tour of Lights
 Boys and Girls Club of the Northland
 Central Hillside Community Club
 Chester Bowl Improvement Club (CBIC)
 Cities of Service
 COGGS (Cyclists of Gitchee Gumee Shores)
 Community Action Duluth (Seeds of Success & Stream Corps)
 Corporation for National and Community Service
 Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute - Northland
 CSS (College of St. Scholastica)
 DAHA (Duluth Amateur Hockey Association)
 DAYBA (Duluth Amateur Youth Basketball Association)
 DAYSA (Duluth Area Youth Softball Association)
 DECC (Duluth Entertainment Convention Center)
 DEDA (Duluth Economic Development Authority)
 Destination Duluth
 Drift Toppers Snowmobile Club
 DSACF (Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation)
 DSPA (Duluth Softball Players Association)
 Duluth Area Chamber of Commerce
 Duluth Area Horse Trail Alliance (DAHTA)
 Duluth Children's Museum
 Duluth Climbers Coalition
 Duluth Community Garden Program
 Duluth Disc Golf
 Duluth Dog Parks
 Duluth Flower and Garden Society
 Duluth Heritage Sports Center
 Duluth Huskies
 Duluth Invaders - R²ED Team
 Duluth Outdoor Alliance
 Duluth Preservation Alliance
 DXC (Duluth Cross-Country Ski Club)
 East Hillside Community Club
 Ecolibrium3
 Environmental Protection Agency
 Fond du Lac Community Club
 Friends of Tennis
 Friends of the Lakewalk
 Gary New Duluth Community Club
 Gary New Duluth Development Alliance
 Goodwill Industries
 Grandma's Marathon
 Great Lakes Alliance
 Greater Downtown Council
 Harbor City International School
 Harrison Community Club
 Hartley Nature Center
 Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory
 Healthy Duluth Area Coalition
 Indian Point Campground
 Irving Community Club
 ISD # 709
 Junior League of Duluth
 Lake Superior Rose Society

Lake Superior Zoological Society
 Lakeside-Lester Park Community Club
 Lincoln Park Community/Senior Center
 Lincoln Park On the Move
 LISC (Local Initiatives Support Corporation)
 Local Geocachers
 Longview Tennis
 LSC (Lake Superior College)
 Men as Peacemakers
 Merritt Community Club
 Merritt Creek Academy
 Metropolitan Interstate Council
 Minnesota GreenCorps
 Minnesota Point Preservation Society
 Minnesota Power
 MN Department of Agriculture (MDA)
 MN Department of Health (MDH)
 MN Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
 MN Land Trust
 MN SeaGrant
 Monarch Buddies
 Morgan Park/Smithville Community Club
 MPCA (MN Pollution Control Agency)
 Myers-Wilkins Community School Collaborative
 NAACP
 Neighbors of Lower Chester Park
 North Shore ATV Club
 Northern Minnesota Track Club
 Northland Paddlers Alliance
 Northwood Children's Home
 Norton Park Community Club
 NYS (Neighborhood Youth Services)
 Over the Hill Night Riders Snowmobile Club
 Park Point Community Club
 Piedmont Heights Community Club
 Portman Recreation Association
 Rainbow Community/Senior Center
 River Corridor Coalition
 Riverside Community Club
 RSVP - SeniorCorps
 Safe and Walkable Hillside Coalition
 Safe Routes to School
 Senior Center Clubs (Portman, Evergreen, Morgan Park)
 South St Louis County Soil & Water Conservation District
 Spirit Mountain Authority
 St. Louis County
 St. Louis River Alliance
 Superior Hiking Trail Association (SHTA)
 United Way (Volunteer Center)
 University of Minnesota - Duluth
 University of Minnesota - Extension
 Valley Youth Center
 Visit Duluth
 Wheels on Trails
 WLSSD (Western Lake Superior Sanitary District)
 Woodland Hills
 YMCA
 Youth Sports Groups
 YWCA



DULUTH PARKS

Fun Places. Great Spaces!

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Duluth, MN 55802

www.duluthmn.gov/parks/

