



# ANNUAL REPORT

2021 Report to the Community

[dmparks.org](http://dmparks.org)

# Contact Information

## PARKS AND RECREATION ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

1551 E. Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway  
Des Moines, IA 50317



515-237-1386



[dmparks.org](http://dmparks.org)



[parks@dmgov.org](mailto:parks@dmgov.org)



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desmoinesparks](https://www.facebook.com/desmoinesparks)



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### Text Message Notifications

Text any of the following keywords to  
84483 to sign up for updates on:  
DSMEvents, DSMPools, DSMSports, DSMTrails, DSMPopUp

### 2021 Photo Contest Submissions

Cover and Contest Winner — Carrie Prall  
Our Community — Ask Studio  
Our Department — Kathleen N. Moore  
Our Impact — Giada Morresi  
Our Financials — Dan Garneau



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# LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

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Dear Friends,

When the calendar flipped to 2021, we had high hopes for what the next 365 days would bring, in contrast to the prior year. The normal we were all looking for seemed to be, as one comedian said, “just a setting on your dryer.” It may not have been the year we wanted, but there is so much to celebrate.

## **OUR COMMUNITY**

Our mission is to “Help Des Moines Live Well, Play Hard and Protect the Earth” and we take that very seriously. Not that we didn’t recognize it before, but the pandemic reminded us just how valuable our parks, trails and programs really are to residents. Nothing that we do would be possible without the unwavering support of Mayor Frank Cownie, City Council, City Manager Scott Sanders and appointed Parks and Recreation Board members. Over the course of the year, we had over 140 items appear on the council agenda – all of which passed! This doesn’t happen without communication and collaboration – not only with our elected and appointed officials, but with other supporting city departments and neighborhood associations.

## **OUR DEPARTMENT**

While each day brought continued levels of uncertainty, through it all our employees forged on with a resilient spirit, knowing what they were doing was important. The dedicated work by our team of 53 full-time and over 200 seasonal employees once again earned us a spot as a finalist in the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Gold Medal Award program. Their efforts also

helped us maintain our position among the top 100 cities in the United States with a ranking of 35 in the Trust for Public Lands ParkScore, coming in above Omaha, Tampa, Atlanta and many other great cities.

## **OUR IMPACT**

Found throughout the pages of our annual report you will see participation numbers, trail counts and numerous data points about our operations. What you won’t see in this publication are the immeasurable impacts – the smiles of kids who just learned to swim, the joy experienced by a mother at her first baby shower, the pride felt by volunteers finishing a project or the high fives between players on a youth soccer team who were able to play because of our scholarship program.

We are going to continue to push forward into 2022. We have big plans for next year and beyond. There are parks, playgrounds, trails and spraygrounds that need to be built and programs to offer, because that is what we do. We are here to offer a safe place for everyone and anyone to experience our city, every day and every season. We are honored to present this look back and are excited, too, about the future that lies ahead.

Sincerely,



Benjamin R. Page  
Director of Parks and Recreation  
City of Des Moines







# **Our Community**

# 2021 MAYOR AND COUNCIL

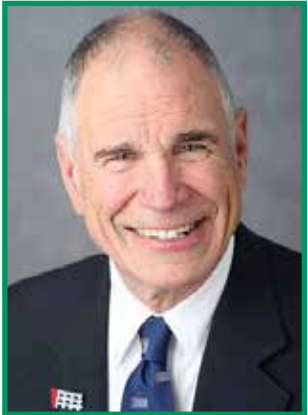
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**T. M. Franklin Cownie**  
Mayor



**Connie Boesen**  
At Large



**Carl Voss**  
At Large



**Bill Gray**  
Ward I



**Linda Westergaard**  
Ward II



**Josh Mandelbaum**  
Ward III



**Joe Gatto**  
Ward IV



# 2021 PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

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Andrea Woodard  
Chair

Brooke Avila  
James Bollard  
Barb Bremner  
Kalyn Cody  
George Davis  
Victoria Facto  
Cynde Fanter

Sarah Lohmeier  
Brent Millis  
Loyd W. Ogle  
Joel Potter  
Sammy F. Pugh  
William Thompson  
R. Stephen Vilmain

# 2021

## SUBCOMMITTEES

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### Rose Garden

Leslie Hunter  
Miles Mills  
Ed Pagliai  
Shane Percival  
Scott Wallace

### Urban Conservation

Victoria Facto (Chair)  
Doug Adamson  
Leslie Berkes  
Jane Clark  
Beth Jaeger  
Loren Lown  
Susan Noland  
Tom Rosburg  
Doug Sheeley  
Tyler Stubbs

### Cemetery Advisory

Kristine Bartley (Chair)  
Larry Smith (Vice Chair)  
Dixie A. Evans (Secretary)  
Pete Eicher  
Cynthia A. O'Brien  
Joel Potter  
Mike Rowley

### Golf Advisory

Parker Murphy (Chair)  
Cynde Fanter (Vice Chair)  
Gary Bianchi  
Clint Brown  
Intaik Lee  
Colleen Monahan  
Bill Nassif  
Gene Nicolai  
Sam Pugh  
Ragan Pullen  
Marty Talarico  
Steve Vilmain

### Trails and Greenways

Jim Bollard (Chair)  
Walter Githens (Vice Chair)  
Aaron Bewyer  
Jeff Cook  
David Fliehler  
Alan Foster  
Katie Jones  
Steve Karsjen  
Matthew Keller  
Sarah Lohmeier  
Loren Lown  
Kyle Robinson  
Aaron Sewell  
Kent Sovern  
Ginger Soelberg  
Scott Sumpter

# FRIENDS OF DES MOINES PARKS

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The work of the Friends of Des Moines Parks is more vital than ever as the community continues to embrace the importance of the City's parks and trails at record numbers. It has been an active year for the Friends who are proud to announce two new grant partners, the Wright Foundation for Sustainability and Innovation for a robust tree planting effort and United Way of Central Iowa for the complete renovation of EK Davis Basketball Courts and surrounding green space. Longstanding grant partner, Variety - the Children's Charity made an increased gift to support swim lesson scholarships for the 2021 swim season. These critical partners allow the Friends to stretch fundraising dollars to meet other high-priority funding needs in the park system.

## By the numbers:

100,000 = dollars secured from new grant partners

803 = swim lesson scholarships supported

374 = number of participants at FORE Our Parks raising over \$60,000 for park projects

13 = number of memorial trees planted across the park system under the new tree program

2 = number of trail clean-ups and new events hosted in 2021



There are several current and upcoming projects that the Friends are proud to share:

- Memorial tree program which planted 13 trees across the park system this year
- Memorial bench program installed 7 benches (including 3 en route)
- Invested \$45K for the new E-911 Trail signage project and planning a volunteer installation effort
- Plans are underway to launch new collectible merchandise featuring the new graphic trail identities
- Invested in the Woodland Cemetery History Quest project and attended the dedication
- Direct Project Support - Friends have allocated \$20,000 each for the Evelyn K. Davis Park improvements and upgraded site amenities at the SW 1st St Bridge Park on Structure

## Other highlights:

- Two volunteer trash clean-ups
- Virtual board retreat in March
- Featured in Greater Des Moines Community Foundation annual report
- Attended National Recreation and Park Association annual conference in Nashville
- Hosted our 8th annual FORE Our Parks golf outing and bike ride, which celebrated a record-breaking attendance and fundraising effort
- Began planning for a new family-friendly winter event coming in January - Embrace Winter DSM
- Welcomed new board members Amal Barre and Adam Ibrahim
- Adopted a board Diversity, Equity and Inclusion statement
- Launched two new events - the Pollinator Parade with Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden and Des Moines Public Schools
- First-ever donor appreciation event, a guided history tour at Woodland Cemetery



# NEIGHBORHOOD LIAISON PROGRAM CELEBRATES 10 YEARS

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Parks and Recreation launched the Neighborhood Liaison program in 2011, modeled after the Neighborhood Based Service Delivery from the Des Moines Police Department, to provide the community with direct access to the staff that serves them and an opportunity to gain firsthand knowledge of area park programs and facilities.

## Goals for the program include:

- Great Parks Services – Made possible through better communication regarding park plans and services and a more in-depth understanding of resident priorities and concerns.
- Parks Support - By working together with those who live around the parks, we hope to gain more park users/advocates who care about their park.

Since then, designated park staff are in regular attendance at the 52 neighborhood association meetings. During these meetings, liaisons collect feedback from the attendees about their parks, trails and green spaces.

This level of one-on-one outreach enables our department to provide a better product for the public and use limited resources in ways that line up with neighborhood priorities. It allows our team to gather data, such as neighborhood demand for native planting or additional tennis activities that we previously couldn't capture. The liaison program has created a stronger relationship with residents than thought possible.



My husband and I have enjoyed living in our home that borders Sayers Park for over 35 years. We had two sons, a granddaughter, family and friends that have all played there.



Over the years when we received a lot of rain, water would run from the park between our house and the neighbors. The drainage was also eroding the ground around the fence post – causing it to lean inward. We noticed the issue was getting worse, so I reached out to Des Moines Parks and Recreation. The team was prompt to return my call, evaluate the situation and determine how to correct the issue.

Our experience with the Des Moines Parks and Recreation team has been such a positive one. Not only do they do a wonderful job maintaining our parks so we can enjoy them, but they are also considerate of the surrounding property owners. Thanks for being such a great neighbor!

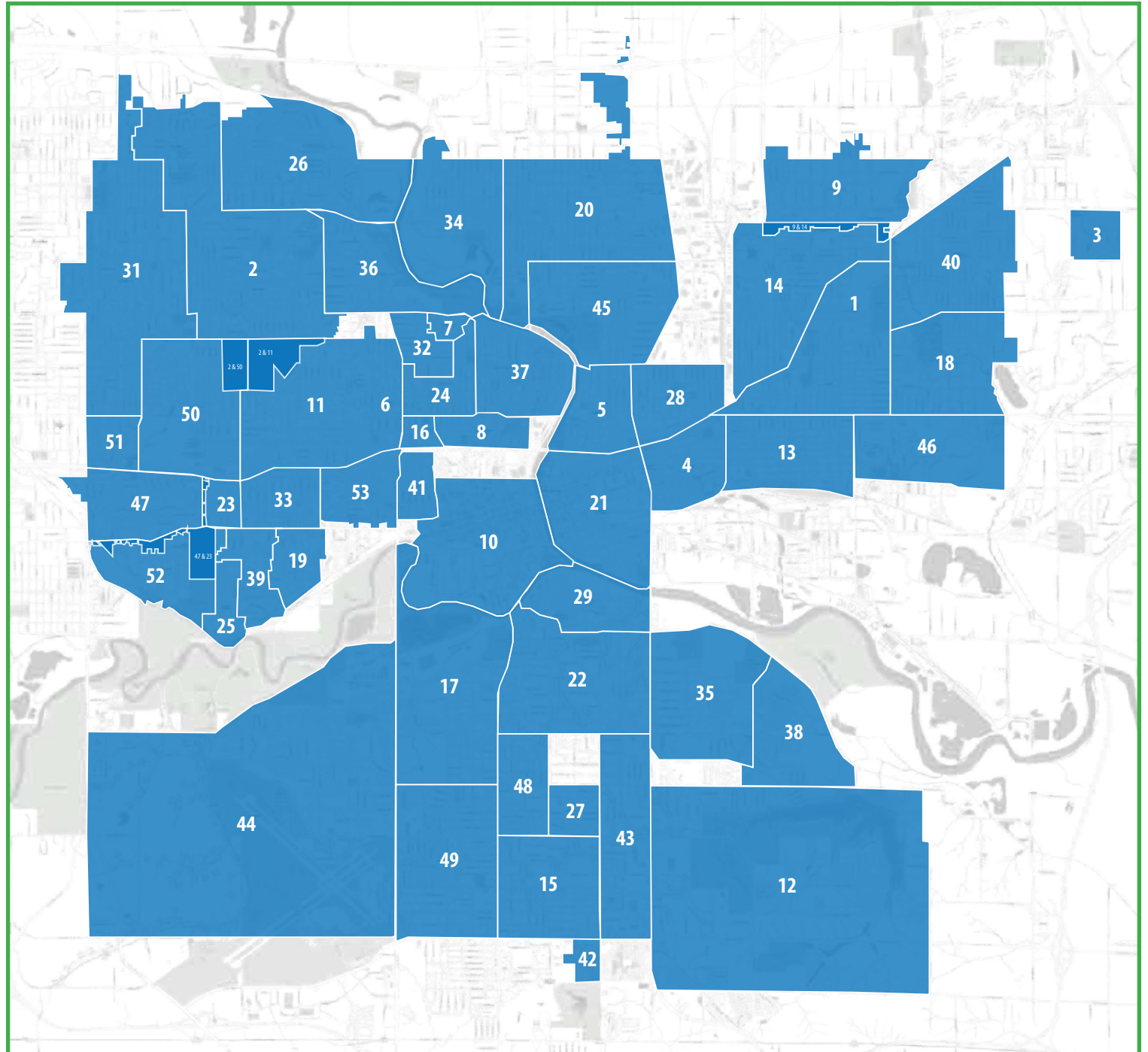
*Nancy Quinn*



# DES MOINES NEIGHBORHOODS

## DES MOINES NEIGHBORHOODS

- 1 ACCENT
- 2 Beaverdale
- 3 Brook Run
- 4 Capitol East
- 5 Capitol Park
- 6 Carpenter (and Drake)
- 7 Chautauqua Park
- 8 Cheatom Park
- 9 Douglas Acres
- 10 Downtown Des Moines
- 11 Drake
- 12 Easter Lake Area
- 13 Fairground
- 14 Fairmont Park
- 15 Fort Des Moines
- 16 Good Park
- 17 Grays Lake
- 18 Grays Woods
- 19 Greenwood Historic
- 20 Highland Park
- 21 Historic East Village
- 22 Indianola Hills
- 23 Ingersoll Park
- 24 King Irving
- 25 Linden Heights
- 26 Lower Beaver
- 27 Magnolia Park
- 28 Martin Luther King Jr. Park
- 29 McKinley School/Columbus Park
- 31 Merle Hay
- 32 Mondamin Presidential
- 33 North of Grand
- 34 Oak Park
- 35 Pioneer Park
- 36 Prospect Park
- 37 River Bend
- 38 River Woods
- 39 Salisbury Oaks
- 40 Sheridan Gardens
- 41 Sherman Hill
- 42 Somerset
- 43 South Park
- 44 Southwestern Hills
- 45 Union Park
- 46 Valley High Manor
- 47 Waterbury
- 48 Watrous Heights
- 49 Watrous South
- 50 Waveland Park
- 51 Waveland Woods
- 52 Westwood
- 53 Woodland Heights

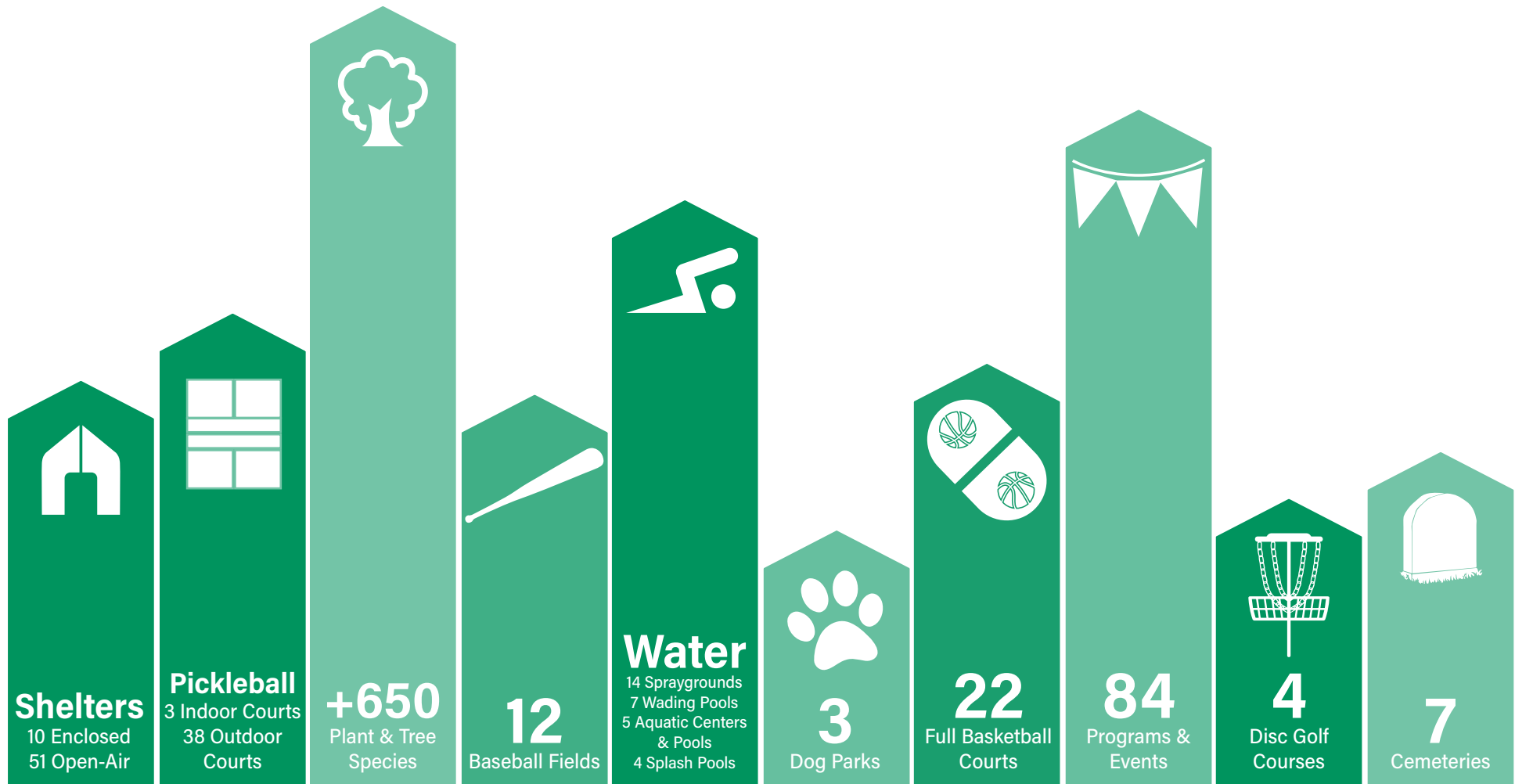


# WHAT YOU GET FOR \$127 A YEAR

A home in Des Moines with \$140,500 assessed value pays \$127 in property taxes toward Parks and Recreation. For \$127 a year, residents have access to these Parks and Recreation amenities and much more:









**RIVERVIEW**

# **Our Department**



## ADMINISTRATION

The Administration Division is responsible for the overall operation and management of the Parks and Recreation Department. This includes the frontline customer service over the phones, online and in person at the Richard A. Clark Municipal Service Center, volunteer opportunities and the marketing and promotion of department facilities and programs. We are also responsible for the safety of the department's permanent and seasonal team members while ensuring a fun and safe environment for the parks, trails and open space system users. The Administration Division also oversees managing the department's operating budget, creating partnerships with other organizations and being a direct liaison to the Friends of Des Moines Parks and the Parks and Recreation Board.

## PARKS

The Parks Division is responsible for the beautification and maintenance operations of all the facilities and grounds within the Des Moines Parks and Recreation Department. This includes park buildings, playgrounds, sport courts, pools, aquatic centers, wading pools, splash pads, spraygrounds, mowed turf, prairie areas, woodlands, litter and snow removal. Also included are trails, both paved and nature, municipal cemeteries, landscaped areas, flowerbeds, trees and the greenhouse. The Parks Division staff that perform all of these responsibilities do so knowing that well maintained and operating parks are fundamental to all parts of our department in order to carry out our overall mission.

## PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Planning and Development Division designs, plans and implements parks, recreation, natural resources, trails and open space projects that facilitate safe, inviting and memorable use of these facilities. The primary function of the division is to manage the Park Improvement section of the City's Capital Improvement Program by supervising and executing planning and construction projects. We strive to deliver projects that attract people to all of our facilities, from landmark destinations to nationally recognized trails to neighborhood parks that serve as the heart of our communities, all with a focus on the natural resources of the system. To accomplish this, our staff and consultants possess broad expertise and understanding of fields such as landscape architecture, planning, architecture and engineering.

## RECREATION

The Recreation Division strives to create a wide range of programs accessible by all residents. The Recreation Division offers activities that enhance people's experiences in Des Moines and is always seeking to highlight the facilities and natural environment of the City in ways they have never seen before. We aspire to serve not only our regular participants but are actively looking to create excitement for first-time users as well. It is our goal to match people's diverse interests, using our top-rated facilities conveniently located throughout the city, for all who participate. The Recreation Division is focused on excellence in leisure as part of a larger commitment to health, wellness, and the overall betterment of people's lives.



I joined the Des Moines Parks & Recreation Board in June of 2012. I volunteered to do this to help our wonderful parks and trail system be better and help others to find these treasures we have throughout the city. By using this very system (which I have since the ripe old age of 4) and gathering feedback from other users we are able to make improvements and help visitors familiarize themselves with these great amenities.

My service to the Parks was inspired by my mother Marian Huck who served on the board from January 1974 to February of 1987, including 4 years as President. It has been a pleasure to see the very projects she worked on thrive and revive with new life. Two of the projects she worked on were the Botanical Center and SAVING the Des Moines Zoo. While these are separate but dotted line entities of the Parks these are examples of the vision and hard work of the staff of Des Moines Parks & Rec to make this community a one of kind place to live.

Des Moines Park and Recreation is the most collaborative and connected department in the city. They work with all departments to create a more efficient and effective process across projects.

This past 18-24 months has more than ever shown the need for these valuable outdoor spaces for exercise, reflection, and social interaction. The parks have been a lifeline and the serenity we have needed from these most unusual of times.

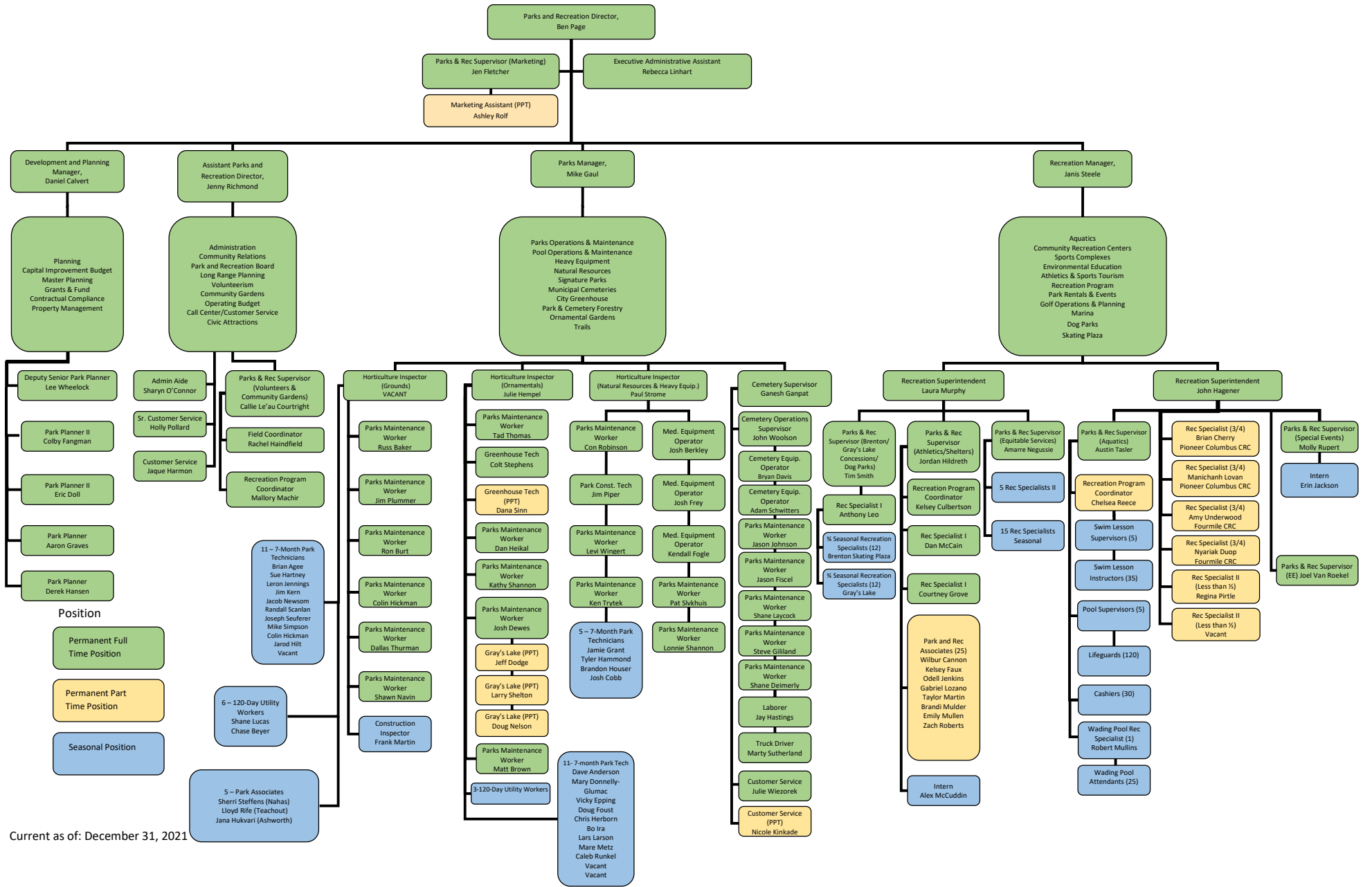
I am looking forward to staying involved by chairing the Urban Conservation Committee and anxiously await the Birdland Park Master Plan come to fruition, MacRae Park's final transformation and Beaverdale Park live up to its potential with its own plan.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve and learn so much about this great city and to Help Des Moines Live Well, Play Hard, and Protect the Earth.



*Vicki Facto*





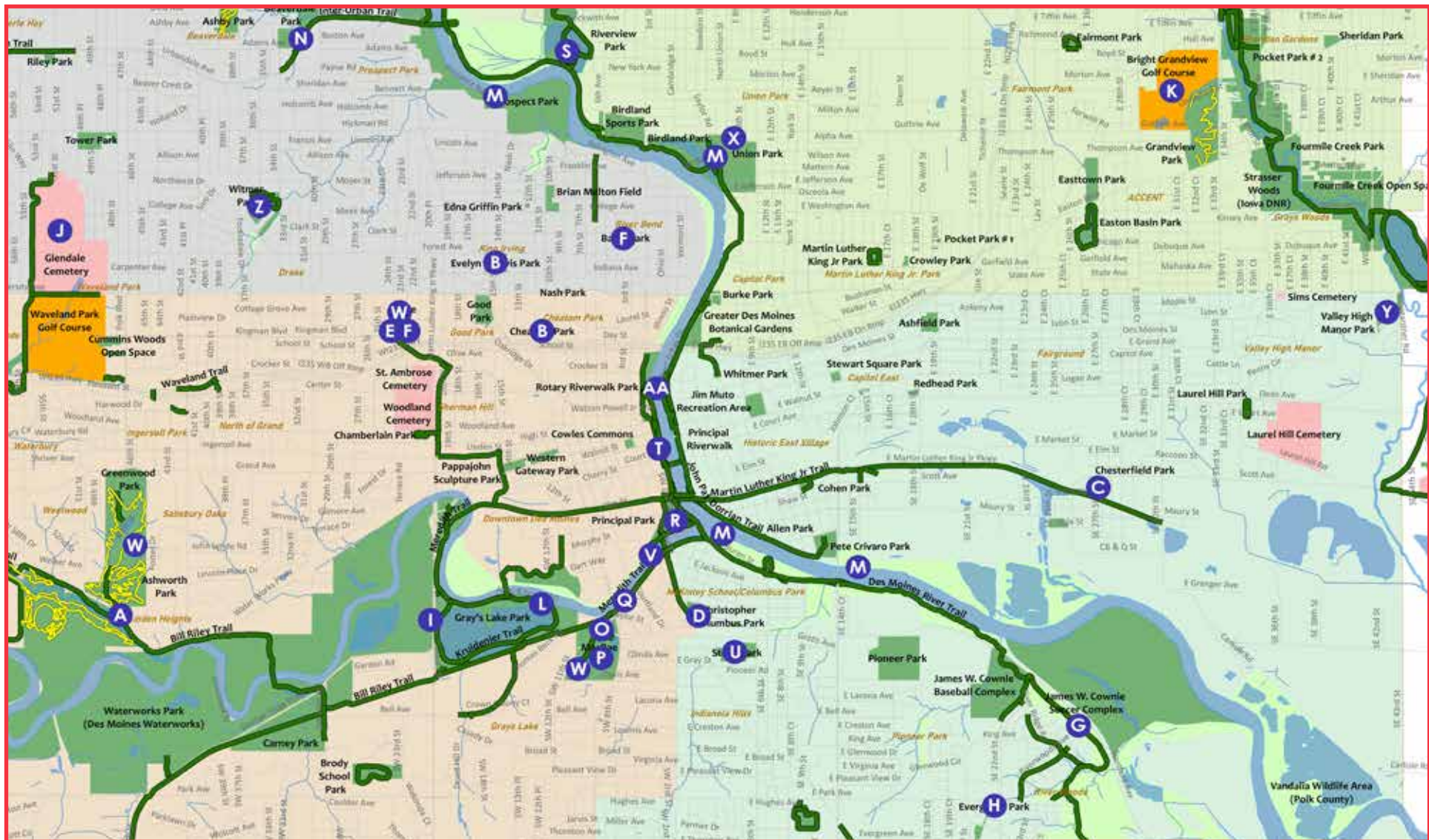
Current as of: December 31, 2021

# DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING DIVISION

## COMPLETED PROJECTS

- A. Bill Riley Trail Underpass**  
The Bill Riley Trail Railroad Underpass was fully reconstructed and armored at a higher elevation to address frequent flooding issues. The alignment was improved for increased visibility and user experience. A new and improved safety railing was also installed.
- B. Cheatom Park and Evelyn K. Davis Park Futsal Courts**  
Both Courts were completed and painted.
- C. Chesterfield Park - Design**  
Chesterfield Design completed and the project is ready for construction bidding. The site design includes renovation of the existing restroom, a new futsal court, new basketball court, playgrounds, sprayground, walking loop, landscaping, parking, pavilion, open space and multi-purpose field.
- D. Columbus Park Shelter Parking Lot**  
The addition of a 10 stall parking lot dedicated to the Columbus Park enclosed shelter for rentals. The new parking lot will allow for accessible access, adjacency to the rental shelter and reduce vehicular impacts to the park.
- E. Drake Park Enclosed Shelter Renovation**  
Renovation of the existing 1930's WPA era Drake Park shelter an enclosed all-season rental shelter and new restrooms to accommodate the park and shelter.
- F. Drake and Bates Park and Sprayground Improvements**  
A generous donation enabled two new spraygrounds to be constructed at Drake Park and Bates Parks. The spraygrounds were also complemented with additional park improvements such as open-air pavilions, shade structures, site amenities and seating areas.
- G. E911 Signage and Trail Graphic Identity Design Completion**  
With the support of the Friends of Des Moines Parks. New E911 signage and trail graphic identity design has been completed for nine trails. The new signage has been installed at the Carl Voss Phase II trail, and all 9 identities will be installed system-wide by the end of spring in 2022. The signage includes geo-locating information for first responders, maintenance contact information and recognition of the Friends of Des Moines Parks.
- H. Evergreen Park - Conceptual Design**  
Update of the 2011 master plan to align with new funding opportunities that will accommodate an open-air shelter and playground improvements as well as other potential future improvements at Evergreen Park.
- I. Fleur Drive Medians 1-3 Plantings**  
Fleur Drive Medians 1-3 is the first phase of a complete renovation of the landscape medians along Fleur Drive from Gray's Lake to the Airport. All phases will be completed as outside funding becomes available.
- J. Glendale Cemetery Roads Phase III**  
Completion of the last two road sections in Glendale Cemetery. This final phase represents a total investment in Glendale Cemetery roads of \$1,609,830.
- K. Grandview Golf Cart Paths**  
Construction of new golf course cart paths at Grandview Golf Course includes the removal of existing golf cart paths, installation of new path subbase and new asphalt paths.
- L. Gray's Lake Shoreline Improvements**  
The Gray's Lake Shoreline Improvements Project repaired 1,150 linear feet of severely eroded Gray's Lake shoreline using a combination of sheet pile, natural boulder armoring, soil riprap bio-engineering, and native plantings. The project provides long-term underlining shoreline stability with native landscape cover to enhance and beautify Gray's Lake.
- M. ICON Sites; Scott, Birdland, Prospect, Harriett - Design**  
The Iowa Confluence Water Trail projects will construct new river recreation access points and additional on-site amenities across four sites within the city. The design of the first phase of ICON water trails development in the City of Des Moines was completed.
- N. Inter-Urban Trail Drainage and Storm Sewer Repairs**  
The Inter-Urban Trail Drainage and Storm Sewer Repairs addressed historic trolley car era storm sewer that had collapsed resulting in severe erosion that was directly threatening the stability of the trail corridor. New storm sewer capacity was installed, conveyance channels were riprap armored, and a stretch of degraded trail was repaired and repaved.
- O. MacRae Park Hillside Slope Stabilization**  
The construction of two cast in place concrete retaining walls and drainage system that will protect the EMC Overlook and Thomas Beck Road. The project also improved stormwater infrastructure and drainage on Thomas Beck Road directly adjacent to the EMC Overlook.
- P. MacRae Park Phase III Improvements Completion**  
Phase III improvements include approximately a half-mile of new trail construction, a pedestrian bridge, a boardwalk over the pond, fishing improvements, an open-air shelter, a custom nature playscape, and a half-mile of park road reconstruction with storm sewer and parking improvements.
- Q. Meredith Trail Stabilization**  
The Meredith Trail Stabilization project repaired a major landslide along the Raccoon River which impacted a portion of the trail. The riverbank was reconstructed from the Raccoon River to the top of slope. The reconstructed riverbank was armored with riprap and disturbed sections of the trail were rebuilt and repaved.
- R. Principal Park Master Plan**  
The Master Plan provides guidance for MiLB facility compliance, identifies areas in need of infrastructure upgrades, and lays out an overall vision to provide a unique fan experience that will sustainably extend the life of Principal Park for the next 30 to 50 years.
- S. Riverview Park, Playground and Stage Completion**  
Completion of the renovation of the park which included the addition of an outdoor event venue with a stage and open lawn seating and an all inclusive playground that honors the history of the former amusement park.
- T. Riverwalk Balustrade and Paver replacement**  
The replacement of several sections of balustrade along the Des Moines River and the replacement of decorative pavers along Principal Riverwalk Park.
- U. Stone Park - Conceptual Design**  
The Stone Park Site Plan Update will take a comprehensive look at the layout of current and future park amenities including community gardens, a futsal court, pickleball courts, a new playground, and a sprayground.
- V. SW 5th Street Bridge Improvements**  
Memorial interpretive signage, a donor recognition panel and donated benches were installed to complement and celebrate the history of this remarkable landmark.
- W. Tennis Court Resurfacing and Pickleball Court Lines**  
The Greenwood Park tennis court was resurfaced and pickleball court lines were added to the court. Pickleball lines were added to the existing Drake Park and MacRae Parks tennis courts. All of our tennis courts now have pickleball lines to accommodate both tennis and pickleball play.
- X. Union Park Rebuilding Together Playground**  
Replaced two outdated post and deck playgrounds at Union Park with the support of the Community, our Partners at Rebuilding Together, and the Des Moines Police Department. The new playgrounds complement the Rocket Slide aesthetic and provide new and dynamic playground elements to Union Park. The Park also received updated site amenities and several areas of broken sidewalks and concrete were replaced.
- Y. Valley High Manor Park - Conceptual Design**  
Valley High Manor Park conceptual design was completed with the neighborhood to provide accessible future amenities for the park including a proposed playground, walkways, trails, seating areas, a disc golf putting area and a rain garden. The conceptual plan will be implemented as funding is available.
- Z. Park Phase II Restroom, Playground and Site Improvements**  
The Phase II improvements at Witmer Park include the construction of a three-season restroom, a drinking fountain, benches, a playground area with new equipment and a small play mound.
- AA. Women of Achievement Bridge Lighting**  
New LED floodlights and center span fixtures were installed to compliment this iconic feature of Des Moines.





# VOLUNTEER PROGRAM AND AWARD WINNERS

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Winners of the 2020 Des Moines Parks and Recreation Department Volunteer Awards were announced at the January 2021 Parks and Recreation Board.

- Rex Coble, Lifetime Achievement Award
- Mike Rowley, Volunteer of the Year
- Confluence Brewing Company, Corporate Group of the Year
- Watchmen Communities, Volunteer Group of the Year
- Kristine Bartley, Friend of the Year
- Nathan Raske, Coach of the Year
- Lee Wheelock, Volunteer Supervisor of the Year
- Mark Kane, Special Volunteer Award
- City of Des Moines Police Department, Special Volunteer Award

## Lifetime Achievement Award- Rex Coble

Rex Coble's ongoing volunteer leadership in our community is to be commended. Coble, active in the Friends of Des Moines Parks, has donated his time, talents and treasures over the years. Coble happily advocates for and represents our Department during community outreach. He served on our Citizen Golf Advisory Committee and has worked hard to network, engage partners and build support for our parks and recreational opportunities. For years, Coble has served as our Santa in our Community Recreation Centers bringing the spirit of Christmas alive. His generosity has supported playgrounds, a pedestrian bridge, youth scholarships and swim lessons to make our community safer, happier and healthier. For his volunteer commitment to our community, we honored him with the 2020 Lifetime Achievement Award.

## Volunteer of the Year- Mike Rowley

Mike Rowley has been an outstanding volunteer over the years but in 2020, his service was beyond compare. Rowley was our first two-time winning Volunteer of the Year. Rowley again chaired the Cemetery Advisory Committee, continued to help with the Governor's Own Regiment project retiring over 3,000 flags, spearheaded 2020 Wreaths Across America efforts (finding donors, coordinating virtual ceremony, recruiting volunteers, placing wreaths and more), and donated hundreds of hours this year completing 120 government marker applications and installations. He helps maintain our cemeteries and walks Glendale and Woodland Cemetery almost daily. He spends countless hours continuing to support and honor those that served our community before him. For his dedicated service giving voice to our community's past, we honored him as our 2020 Volunteer of the Year.

“

I have had the privilege of working with many members of the Des Moines Parks and Rec staff over the years. It is amazing to me that every interaction I've had and observed with other residents has been so consistent. Without exception, each staffer was friendly, professional, and unfailingly considerate of my time. Such things as starting meetings on time, sticking to agendas, and listening to everyone's input. They do this naturally and seemingly without effort.

Part of this is hiring the right people but after that, the behavior of these people reflects the leadership of the department. For all the interaction I've had with these folks, their consistency sometimes leads me to underappreciate them. We should all work harder not to do that.

*Rex Coble*

”







#### **Corporate Group of the Year- Confluence Brewing Company**

Confluence Brewing Company is devoted to creating a confluence of great beer, good friends, and wonderful times. They are defined by their respect for tradition, a passion for innovation, and a relentless commitment to quality. Their values, dedication to building community, fun-loving attitude, and location next to Gray's Lake Park make them a perfect partner to the Des Moines Parks and Recreation Department, especially for the UPCYCLE program. UPCYCLE is a partnership between the City of Des Moines, Blank Park Zoo, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, Trees Forever, and Confluence Brewing Company. Volunteers remove unwanted vegetation at Gray's Lake Park which helps us improve our water quality, diversify our woodlands, and UPCYCLE our invasive plants into food and fun for Blank Park Zoo animals. After an evening of hard work, volunteers enjoy a free beverage next door, at Confluence Brewing Company, as a "thank you" for their efforts to improve the area. They have been a partner of UPCYCLE since 2017. Despite the challenges brought by the pandemic, they eagerly agreed to continue supporting our volunteer program in 2020, including the option of to-go orders for volunteers. Confluence Brewing Company truly cares about the park and trail users as well as its patrons, which often are one and the same. For their dedication to improving the surrounding area and building community, we honored them as the 2020 Corporate Volunteer Group of the Year.



#### **Volunteer Group of the Year- Watchmen Communities**

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, our staff was working hard to keep parks and trails open during our state's shutdown. There was a shortage of personal protective equipment. Watchmen Communities, led by outstanding community member Lokus Ngo, graciously volunteered to make and donate 110 face masks to keep our entire staff safe. They rose to the challenges that 2020 brought our community by being creative, flexible, and resourceful. Adhering to new safety protocols, Ngo organized small groups of children and their families to not only pick up litter but also help with derecho storm damage cleanup at Prospect Park and in the surrounding neighborhood. Watchmen Communities encourage the communities they are in to take care of each other and our natural spaces. For their leadership, organization and positive presence in our parks, exemplifying our mission to help Des Moines Live Well, Play Hard and Protect the Earth, we honored them as the 2020 Volunteer Group of the Year.





**Friend of the Year- Kristine Bartley**

Kristine Bartley has donated years of service as vice-chair of our Cemetery Advisory Committee. Her volunteer efforts helping spearhead Wreaths Across America, to honor our veterans, resulted in over 60 donations. Bartley has utilized her artistic capabilities to document restoration efforts, capture history in our cemeteries and inspire volunteers in our community. She has taken more than 5,000 photos and videos while documenting our Woodland Monument Restoration project, flag retirement, flag placement, cemetery tours, derecho and more. Bartley received a \$10,000 grant to create a Woodland Cemetery video telling the stories of local famous/notable figures and their contributions to our community and the world. For her ongoing support and dedication to preserving our community's history, we honored her as the 2020 Friend of the Year.



**Volunteer Coach of the Year- Nathan Raske**

Nathan Raske has volunteered to coach our youth flag football teams for the last three years. He is well-liked and his players and peers have the utmost respect for him. We appreciate his leadership and hard work, especially stepping up to coach young athletes in the midst of COVID-19. Raske's team, the 2nd and 3rd grade "Bulldogs" won the league and tournament championship this year. For his outstanding coaching, providing positive learning experiences and for his ongoing service to the City, we honored him as the 2020 Volunteer Coach of the Year.

### **Volunteer Supervisor of the Year- Lee Wheelock**

Despite COVID-19, Lee Wheelock, Park Planner III, worked over months planning a playground partnership project at the new Weeks Middle School Park. Wheelock worked closely with the COVID-19 Response Team and Volunteer Team to find avenues to safely build playground structures while minimizing risks to our volunteers. The result was a successful volunteer playground build day and a new recreational space benefitting the entire community. In the midst of a record year for construction projects, Lee also found time to meet with and coach our summer extern, a teacher volunteering to learn real-world applications for the classroom. Together, they created an interactive webpage for the Planning Department showcasing public projects. For his resiliency and determination to make it happen during a pandemic, commitment to safety and volunteer project implementation, we honored him as the 2020 Volunteer Supervisor of the Year.

### **Special Volunteer Award- Mark Kane**

About fifteen years ago, Mark Kane and several neighbors had a vision to transform a roundabout space in the Ingersoll Park neighborhood. Kane's passion for planting helped him choose plants and flowers over the past decade, that would thrive in the middle of the homes and traffic. He made it a welcoming place for the neighborhood to gather. Kane recruited the help of neighbors and together they transformed the bed into Ingersoll Park's crown jewel. He's been a great mentor to the neighbors teaching others how to care for and sustain the beautiful space. For Kane's countless hours beautifying his neighborhood, Ingersoll Park, and making our community a better place to live, we honored him with a 2020 Special Volunteer Award.



### **Special Volunteer Award- City of Des Moines Police Department**

Prior to COVID-19 shuttering most of our community, Parks and Recreation, Des Moines Public Schools, and members of the neighborhood surrounding the new Weeks Middle School Park, were planning a summer playground installation project. With COVID-19 restricting neighborhoods and students, the Department had to abandon the planned community build day. The City of Des Moines Police Department quickly stepped up to volunteer their off-duty time to make sure our community's needs were filled during uncertain times. Even with an extra layer of complexity due to COVID-19 protocols and extreme temperatures, under the leadership of Lt. Larry Davey, ten volunteers assisted organizing and assembling \$65,000 in playground equipment. For their professionalism, hard work, and grit helping complete a safe new neighborhood space, in the midst of a very challenging time in our community, we honored them with a 2020 Special Volunteer Award.

### Trust for Public Lands ParkScore

Des Moines Parks and Recreation maintained its position among the top park systems in the country in the 2021 The Trust for Public Land's ParkScore rankings for the 100 largest cities in the United States. Des Moines came in at 35, above cities such as Omaha, Tampa, Atlanta and Dallas on strength of projects such as the new park at Weeks Middle School.

Highlights from Des Moines' report include:

- 71% of residents live within a 10-minute walk of a park (National average is 55%)
- 9.6 splashpads (spraygrounds/splash pools/wading pools) per 100,000 people - ranks in 98th percentile among 100 largest cities
- 1.7 Dog parks per 100,000 people - ranks in 73rd percentile among 100 largest cities
- 3.1 Playgrounds per 100,000 people - ranks in 31st percentile among 100 largest cities

### 2021 RETIREES

**Terry Dotts**

Truck Driver *24 Years 9 Months*

**Sharon Neff**

Administrative Aide *31 Years 4-1/2 Months*

**Randy Powell**

Parks Technician (7 Month) *20 Years 3 Months*

**Dennis Streyffeler**

Park Maintenance Worker *25 Years 11-1/2 Months*

**Ron Ward**

Parks Manager *9 Years 5-1/2 Months*

### Gold Medal Award

For the third time since 2015, the National Recreation and Park Association selected Des Moines Parks and Recreation as a finalist for the National Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management in the Class II category, which includes cities with a population of 150,001 to 400,000.

We competed against eventual winner Tampa Parks and Recreation (Tampa, Florida), Chesterfield County Parks & Recreation (Chester, Virginia) and Wichita Parks and Recreation (Wichita, Kansas).



# GOALS FOR 2022

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## Administration

- Complete the Committees and Memberships Tracking Resource
- Complete the Department Wide Hiring and On-boarding Resources Guide
- Complete the National Service Enterprise Certification
- Fully Transition Earth Day Trash Bash into Earth Month
- Select, contract with and build-out new reservation and management software system
- Strengthen the Assigned, Required and Voluntary Training Tracking Resource

## Development and Planning

- Beaverdale Park Master Plan
- BRAVO Art Grant Trail Project Construction
- Brook Run Park Improvements
- Carlisle Connection - Design and Acquisition
- Central Place Levee Trail Phase I - Design
- City Greenhouse
- Cohen Park Improvements
- Commencement Chesterfield Park Construction
- Community Garden Relocation
- Completion of MacRae Park Phase III Improvements
- E911 System-wide install
- East 9th Street Basin Park - Design
- EMC Park
- Evelyn K. Davis Basketball Court Reconstruction
- Evergreen Park Improvements
- Four Mile Greenway Removal of Roads and Restoration Project Phase I
- Good Park - Conceptual Design
- Gray's Lake Landscape Plantings
- Gray's Lake Parking Lot and Hardscape Improvements
- ICON Iowa Confluence Water Trail Improvements at Birdland Park, Prospect Park, Harriet Street and Scott Sites
- Market District Greenspace and Park - Conceptual Design
- McHenry Park Playground

- Neal Smith Trail Rehabilitation
- North Side Community Recreation Center - Conceptual Design
- John and Mary Pappajohn Sculpture Park Lighting Improvements
- Pool Painting at Ashworth and Northwest Pool
- Stone Park Futsal Court
- SW 1st Street Bridge - Design
- System-Wide Inclusive Play Analysis and Strategy
- System-Wide LiveDSM/ParkScore/10-Minute Park Access Analysis and Strategy
- System-Wide Park Signage
- Wright Foundation Canopy Restoration Grant

## Parks

- Fleur Drive Medians, Phase II Plant Replacement
- Woodland Cemetery Monument Restoration
- Woodland stand improvement at Gray's Lake with UPCYCLE program
- Identify varieties and label lilacs in Ewing Lilac Arboretum
- Western Gateway Park Plant Replacement Phase 2
- Principal Riverwalk Plant Replacement Phase 1

## Recreation

- Create a family-focused special event at Brenton Skating Plaza
- Developing joint programming with Grubb YMCA
- Create and execute Des Moines Summer Camp, a free camp in four parks including Drake Park, Evelyn K. Davis Park, Martin Luther King Jr. Park and Weeks Park
- Provide Pop-up programming in various parks
- Open second concession stand at the beach at Gray's Lake Park
- Launch a new Sand Volleyball league
- Accept rentals for newly built Drake Enclosed Shelter





# **Our Impact**

# 2021

## BY THE NUMBERS

In Loving Memory 39

Bridge Plaques Sold

1,443 435

Shelters and Facility Rentals

Permits issued for Parks, Trails, Athletic Fields and Open Spaces

9,568 5,406

Boat Rentals at Gray's Lake Park

Instagram Followers

959 784

Facebook Posts

Instagram Posts

899

Tweets

4,504

Twitter Followers

233,080 91,235

Website Visits

Facebook Video Views

16,927 11,725

Number of Calls Taken Each Year

YouTube Views

250,620 593

Website Page Views

Interments at Our Seven Cemeteries

667

Burial Lots Sold

8,533

Cemetery Search Users



239

Total Garden Plots



41

New Gardeners



195

Total Gardeners



910

Pounds of produce donated



21,307

Volunteer Hours



2,873

Volunteers



72,142

Visited one of our Five Pools/Aquatic Centers



3,268

Learned to Swim



\$608,115

Value of Volunteer Time Donated



2,304

Participated in our Environmental Education Program



109,545

Golf Rounds Played at our Three Public Courses



269,275

Plants Grown by Our Greenhouses



1,939

Dog Park Permits Sold



1,844

Attended a Special Event



42,280

Community Recreation Center Attendance



1,934

Purchased a Swim Pass



3,832

Participated in Recreation Programs



2,600

Enjoyed Yoga in the Park



15,941

Brenton Skating Plaza Attendance

YRSP

16,726

Youth Recreational Scholarship Program Participants



# MILESTONES

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## ADMINISTRATION

Riverview Park (710 Corning Ave.) received a facelift! Riverview Park was a three-phase park renovation project that began in 2014 with a public-private partnership between the City of Des Moines and Parks Area Foundation. The multi-phase construction project included the construction of an outdoor concert stage, custom playground, donor/history plaza, walking loop, and historical lighting. One particular part of this project included the installation of almost an acre of sod rolls in front of the stage which was placed by hand with staff and volunteers.

On Friday, June 4, 2021, Des Moines Parks and Recreation and Parks Area Foundation hosted the Grand Opening at Riverview Park. Excitement filled the air that evening, which made the wait well worth it. The event featured an opening ceremony, a free concert with the Tony Bohnenkamp Band, along with food and beverage. That evening kicked off a season of concerts, community events, and festivals.



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Chapter 74 of the Des Moines Municipal Code is dedicated to the organization and management of the City parks and recreation facilities. The Parks and Recreation Rules is a separate, yet complimentary, document to Chapter 74. Both important documents underwent significant revisions that reflect the advancements of the Parks and Recreation Department, update specific fees for use of facilities and programs, and other various changes.

Highlights of Chapter 74 revisions include: incorporating approved facility name changes, modifications that support the implementation of the adopted Goose Management Plan, adding Evelyn K. Davis Park and Riverview Park to the parks that may accommodate food trucks, and updating fees to balance increased operating expenses with revenue and to simplify some fee structures that over time became overly layered.

The primary revisions to the Parks and Recreation Rules include: general modifications to enhance the formality of the language used and improve formatting, clarifying that staff cannot hold any patron's personal belongings except as noted at specific facilities, allowing non-season pass holding children between the ages of nine and 12 to be admitted to a pool if parent or guardian contact information is provided, new rules to address events at Gray's Lake Park, the addition of pickleball and futsal to what was just tennis court rules, the addition of Weeks Middle School Park to what was just Brody Community School Park, and a new section for Brenton Skating Plaza Rules.

Both Chapter 74 and the Parks and Recreation Rules will be updated almost annually going forward to continue to be in tune with the growth and progress of our dynamic facilities.

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Similar to the popular Gray's Lake bridge plaque program, residents can now purchase commemorative plaques on three different Des Moines parks bridges to support a variety of meaningful causes. For just \$200 each, you can have your custom text placed on a plaque on your location of choice:

- Chris and Marcie Coleman Bridge supporting the Youth Recreational Scholarship Program
- Riverview Park Bridge supporting Riverview Park Operations
- SW 5th Street Bridge supporting the Des Moines Trail System

Here's how it works:

1. Choose your bridge and place your order online at [dmparks.org](http://dmparks.org).
2. Our staff will review the submitted text. Names and dates only, two lines per plaque. Unapproved orders will receive a full refund.
3. Plaques will be installed quarterly see schedule below. These groups will include any combination of locations, not just limited to a single bridge.

Order Window	Plaque(s) Installed by
Jan. 1 - March 31	May 15
April 1 - June 30	Aug. 15
July 1 - Sept. 30	Nov. 15
Oct. 1 - Dec. 31	Feb. 15

4. You will receive notice once we install your plaque with its location so that you will be able to easily find it.

The program launched in late 2021 and is already gaining great traction with almost 40 plaques sold and installed. Special thank you to volunteers Ryan Clutter and Jacob Naumann for volunteering to install the plaques.

In July, Des Moines Parks and Recreation officially celebrated the renaming of the Greater Des Moines Softball Park to the George Davis Softball Park. For over 50 years, George has been supporting recreation – through leading, serving coaching, including softball, basketball, football, volleyball, track at East High, North High, Tech and more. Somehow, he still found time to work part-time at Parks and Recreation and umpire too. Davis has been a long-standing member of the Parks and Recreation Board and leader of the Southwestern Hills Neighborhood Association. He's been inducted into the Iowa Softball Hall of Fame, honored in the North High Athletic Wall of Fame, named conference Track Coach of the Year and winner of the Sporting Good Manufacturers Association Heroes Award.



I rented a paddleboat this summer with my 8-year-old son and he and I absolutely loved it. It's something that can break up the day for an hour or two and cheap (unlike most things fun). We enjoyed soaking up the sun and the view of downtown and cooling off on a hot summer day after our walk around the park



*Hilary Linderman - Adrian Rico*



In November 2021, the City Council approved a long-term, extended partnership with the Greater Des Moines Botanical Gardens that not only allows for additional improvements to facility and grounds but also increased their lease boundaries to take over management and programming of the recently improved Robert D. Ray Asian Gardens. Over the next 10 years, this partnership will invest up to \$23 million of improvements within these publicly owned assets.

Members of King Irving, Cheatom, and Mondamin neighborhood associations, along with representatives from Pro Iowa, Musco Lighting and Kick It Forward, joined us to celebrate the donation of three min-pitch courts. A delegation from the U.S. Soccer Foundation, including President and CEO Ed Foster-Simeon were onsite along with Mayor Frank Cownie, members of the City Council and the Parks and Recreation Board.

Des Moines Parks and Recreation has been a leader in COVID-19 response adapting our facility management, programs, and events, to keep our community and our staff safe. With Return to Play protocols in place, our team was able to offer a variety of activities including youth and adult sports, community gardening, swimming, environmental education programs, camps, volunteer opportunities and more. We were able to find ways to open our facilities, such as swimming pools, marina, concessions, shelters, and community recreation centers. Our team continued to come up with creative ways to continue our business, such as hosting our seasonal lifeguard training outdoors in Principal Park allowing youth enough space to learn job skills and safe socially distance.

After another challenging year for recruitment in 2020, extensive interdepartmental collaboration between Human Resources and Parks and Recreation brought about two separate wage increases for hundreds of seasonal positions. Not only is this the highest pay rate these positions have seen, but many are now at the highest level in the metro.

	2021 Posted Rate	Updated Rate Effective 5/31/2021	Updated Rate Effective 12/14/2021
Utility Worker	8.57	10.00	13.00
Parks and Recreation Associate	9.45	11.00	13.00
Seasonal Recreation Specialist	11.55	12.00	14.00
Seasonal Cashier	8.54	10.00	12.00
Lifeguard	9.98	11.00	13.00
Swim Instructor	11.03	11.50	13.50
Head Lifeguard	12.08	12.50	14.50
Swimming Lesson Supervisor	12.60	13.00	15.00
Swimming Pool Supervisor	15.23	15.50	17.00

In honor of Día del Niño (Day of the Child), numerous city departments and organizations teamed up to host an outdoor celebration of the joy that children and reading bring to our community! Children and families met community helpers from the Library, Fire, Police and Parks and Recreation while learning more about city services. Families enjoyed the open playground at Birdland Park and walked through the bilingual story walk that was up for a week following the event. 1,500 Día del Niño Library Learning Bags were distributed to kids across Des Moines, including to the 500+ attendees that joined us that afternoon!

## AQUATICS

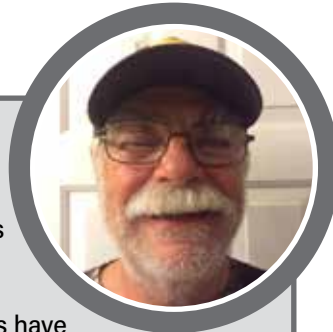
- Provided swim lesson scholarships to 803 people
- Proposed seasonal pay increased after researching neighboring agencies
- Recruited two new scholarship groups for swim lessons
- Implemented successful springboard diving program
- Increased lap swim, water walking offerings and increased attendance number from 168 to 870
- Implemented Aqua Zumba Program





## ATHLETICS

- Created and successfully ran a new Spring Pickleball Tournament
- Created and successfully ran a new Pickleball League
- Created a new Esports League
- Implemented new Spring Youth Baseball Program
- Saw a record number of Adult Volleyball participants where divisions by skill level was implemented
- Saw a record number individual sign-ups in Youth Flag Football and Youth Recreational Scholarship Program participants
- Saw a record number of individual sign-ups in Youth Basketball and Youth Recreational Scholarship Program participants
- Maintained registration numbers for Youth Soccer comparable to pre-pandemic levels



The Des Moines Metro Pickleball Club (DMMPC) has supported each of the 3 pickleball tournaments held by the Des Moines Park and Rec Department. These tournaments take place at the McCollum Waveland Tennis (pickleball) Complex. Significant improvements have been made with each ensuing event. Pickleball players are enjoying the format and friendly competitive play offered by this tournament. If you have ever thought about trying out a tournament just to see what it might be like, this is the one for you! While the play is competitive, the environment is friendly and more social than highly competitive tournaments. Give it a try in the spring. Hope to see you there!

*Chuck Golliver*

## BRENTON SKATING PLAZA

- Opened for the season for the first time under Des Moines Parks and Recreation management on November 19, 2021
- Held promenade activities in conjunction with the Historic East Village
- Hosted three Learn to Skate events that reached maximum capacity
- Hired and trained new seasonal staff members
- Partnered with Des Moines Public Schools to offer free admission and skate rental to students



Our family loves Brenton Skating Plaza! We hosted our daughter's 5th birthday party here with 25 family and friends and a fabulous time was had by all. With attendees ages as young as 4, we were pleased that Brenton was so accommodating with assistive devices for the young skaters. They all loved skating in this festive and fun atmosphere. The staff also played "Happy Birthday" over the speakers so everyone could sing for our birthday girl. I highly recommend Brenton for all-ages winter fun in Des Moines. 10/10!

*Abbie Sawyer*



## BRIDGE LIGHTING

Lighting of bridges promotes the City, its civic institutions, state and federal holidays, and other public events of community significance. Des Moines Parks and Recreation is accepting community requests for special lighting to recognize a specific cause or to commemorate or enhance a specific event consistent with this purpose. The following features are equipped with multi-color L.E.D. lights to illuminate.

- Chris and Marcie Coleman Bridge: The Chris and Marcie Coleman Bridge crosses the Raccoon River connecting Gray's Lake Park to Gray's Station development.
- The Iowa Women of Achievement Bridge: The Iowa Women of Achievement Bridge links the east and west sides of Des Moines at the northern edge of the Principal Riverwalk Trail loop.

Applications must be submitted 30 days in advance and are limited to no more than three (3) consecutive days and cost \$150 per day. Learn more at [dmparks.org](http://dmparks.org).

## CEMETERIES

Raised \$12,645 for the Wreaths Across America program. Performed a Ceremony on December 18, 2021, where 1,154 wreaths were placed on veterans' graves by 84 volunteers.

In our continued effort to honor veterans 4, 900 flags and standards were placed on Veterans' graves in Glendale, 1,500 flags at Laurel Hill and on all known veterans' graves in all other cemeteries from May 14 to May 28.



The partnership with the City of Des Moines Municipal Cemeteries is a win-win. We are proud to play a role in supporting the maintenance of over 10,000 veterans buried in City cemeteries. Funds are used to maintain the grounds, monuments and to beautify the final resting place for our Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors and Marines who paid the ultimate sacrifice.



*Pat Sweeney*

*Executive Director - Polk County Veterans Affairs*



Cemetery volunteer and veterans advocate Mike Rowley located 83 unmarked graves for a project to obtain headstones for veterans from the Federal Government. Along with the support from additional volunteers, the new monuments were placed in Woodland, Laurel Hill and Glendale Cemetery.

Volunteer Archie Cook was once again willing to host the Woodland Cemetery tours this summer. Throughout 8 events, 220 participants soaked in the rich history. Thanks to changes in CDC guidelines, we could adjust our COVID-19 protocols and increase the number of attendees that could safely attend. New in 2021, we welcomed cemetery volunteer historian Jeff Kluever to the "tour team" and gave two tours in Woodland Cemetery.

Despite the pandemic still in full force, year four of the Woodland Cemetery monument restoration project was another successful one. Over 5,500 monuments were cleaned, leveled and reset by volunteers, contractors and Parks and Recreation staff. The volunteer effort on the project remains vital as 154 participants donated 574 hours (valued at \$16,296.34) and cleaned 3550 stones. To fill holes and finish additional grounds near the base of the monuments, nine tons of dirt were used. To date, 12,590 stones have been restored through this program.

The Digitizing Historical Records is a two-step process. Step one involves scanning a document in a PDF format and uploading to a network server (the document is either a block book, a receipt or a Right of Interment). Step two involves making that PDF file searchable (we call this indexing) by various searchable fields (names on the documents, alternative names or spelling, burial location, dates of purchase, date of interment, cemetery and other reference information). Since many of the documents are hand-written, we have to decipher and confirm with other records. To date, 41,961 scans have been completed as part of this project. We estimate maybe 50,000 records can be scanned. This would include receipts and right of interments. We continue to add information as we do sales of burial spaces. Each sale results in 3 additional scans (updated block book, receipt and right of interment). In 2021 2,653 records have been indexed. Since we started the project, we have indexed 11,507 names.

The customer service team at the cemetery sales office resolved 307 customer requests regarding monuments or cemetery grounds for items such as resetting stones, reviewing damaged stones, ground maintenance - such as holes/

seeding, litter removal, stolen decor, removing weeds, flagging lots, vandalism and issues about wildlife.

In 2021, 77 signs were installed in Glendale and Laurel Hill Cemeteries to help locate burial locations. The markers are flush to the ground, as opposed to upright headstones, so it can be challenging to find a burial location. The signs have numbers that identify the assigned lots located on burial maps. When a map is provided to a person seeking the burial location, it can be difficult to find a location however the wayfinding signs provide a solution to this challenge. Since our records go back 150 years, we have inconsistencies but staff is working with the public to provide a way to find the locations using the signs.



Thanks to the creativity and dedication of volunteer Kristine Bartley, the interactive Woodland History Quest project kicked off in May. Visitors to Woodland Cemetery can now scan QR codes found on signs throughout the facility. Each sign/code links to a video story about the individual buried in that location. There are 70 short videos narrated by descendants of people buried in Woodland and stories from local historians Mike Rowley and Archie Cook. The films feature a wide range

of subjects such as the family of one farmer that donated land for Woodland, an inventor of an electric car, abolitionists, suffragists, veterans of the Civil War and the War of 1812. For those who cannot make it to the cemetery, all the videos are available on the Des Moines Parks and Recreation YouTube channel. By the end of 2021, the History Quest had over 27,000 views.

Bartley was recognized by the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) for her volunteerism in our cemeteries with the DAR Historic Preservation Medal. This is a national honor for her service in historic preservation, including the Quest.

“

We knew when the Woodland History Quest was shared with the public we were doing something valuable for the community but we had no idea how big the project was. Awareness of the efforts after it was shown on KCCI-TV8, went to over 25 media markets, the New York Post, CBS Radio and the AAA Living. This truly has been a unique way to share Des Moines's unique Pioneer history but more important, so many people have reached out to me because they have been inspired by our efforts to tell the story at Woodland Cemetery.

*Kristine Bartley*

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### ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Drake University Gallery Manager and 2018 Iowa Fellow, Julia Franklin, volunteered to lead a free Art in Nature exploration in Greenwood Park alongside Joel Van Roedel, Parks and Recreation Supervisor - Environmental Education. She led 19 participants through wander and wonder to collect found natural materials from around the park, which were turned into paintbrushes. Everyone made a one-of-a-kind, mixed media work preserved in a glass jar.

The video series "Walk in the Park with Joel" brought 44 new videos and nearly 26,000 views across Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube. Joel featured a variety of topics and guest stars throughout the year, with the most popular posts educating viewers on wild bergamot, beaver signs and the American toad.

## EQUITABLE SERVICES

The summer fun and enrichment program at Evelyn K. Davis Park had 42 program participants. During the 11-weeks, kids enjoyed a variety of activities including environmental education, STEM and multi-cultural awareness programs, swim lessons, arts and crafts instruction, and field trips. Field trips included Blank Park Zoo, Science Center of Iowa, local parks, splash pads and pools. We closely followed Return to Play protocols, increased our efforts to wash and sanitize our areas, as well as, followed all City policies and procedures regarding COVID-19.

A new partnership with Central Iowa Shelter & Services (CISS) expanded the free meal options at Evelyn K. Davis Park. CISS served over 1,800 meals to our program participants this summer. This provided the kids with a hot lunch as well as healthy snacks throughout the day and dinner to take home.

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Des Moines Parks and Recreation teamed up with two different neighborhoods to get kids ready for back to school.

- At Martin Luther King Jr. Park, we gave away 200 backpacks along with free soda, hot dogs and hamburgers. The evening also featured a Free Flicks movie and Summer City Hoops on the basketball court.
- Local non-profit ICC joined in for Back 2 School events at Cheatom Park. They provided free food and school supplies for those in attendance.

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On July 24, 2021, the Grubb YMCA hosted Peace Day, which was a collaboration between Des Moines Parks and Recreation, Grubb YMCA, and local non-profits. We provided the main stage and manned a recreation area where kids played games and won small prizes. The day included performances from local artists, food giveaways and an overwhelming sense of peace in the neighborhoods. The event drew approximately 300 people throughout the day.

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Long Shots (3 on 3 Basketball Tournament), co-hosted by B.Well Foundation and The Dojo, is an opportunity for the community to give back to the metro schools and programs. Each of the five metro high schools received a \$1,000 award from the event to begin an opportunity to pay it forward in their schools. Each of the high schools had at least one team from both the girls and boys basketball programs.

Drake University's basketball program hosted a free basketball clinic for boys and girls under 13 years old. This collaboration has led to an expanded partnership with Drake Athletics.

## Additional highlights:

- Held full spring after-school programming at Evelyn K. Davis Park in May
- Partnered with King Elementary School to host 5th grade graduation for the first time at Evelyn K. Davis Park
- Completed 8-week Evelyn K. Davis Park Fall after-school program
- Drop-in futsal program at Birdland and Evelyn K. Davis Futsal Courts



Evelyn K. Davis Park is a beautiful, safe, and inviting place to gather for ASAP's annual Summer Arts Camp. I am so grateful for our continuing partnership with Parks and Recreation, which makes it possible. For thirteen years running, rain or shine, ASAP has hosted children of all ages in the Park, connecting them with enriching and fun arts experiences. Davis Park truly feels like home and holds so many happy memories of welcome, community, and creativity.

*Michelle Bolton King*

*Executive Director - After School Arts Program (ASAP)*



## GRANTS

- Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) Grant from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources
  - Project: Beaverdale Park Woodland Restoration
  - Award: \$300,000
- Land and Water Conservation Fund from the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program Iowa Department of Natural Resources, National Park Service
  - Project: Central Place Trail Phase 1
  - Award: \$500,000
- Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Set-Aside / Transportation Alternatives Program from the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
  - Project: Central Place Levee Trail Phase 2
  - Award: \$300,000
- Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources
  - Project: Chesterfield Park Master Plan Implementation
  - Award: \$200,000
- Unite to Thrive Grant from the United Way
  - Project: Evelyn K. Davis Park Basketball Court Renovation
  - Award: \$50,000
- Polk County Betterment Grant
  - Project: Fleur Drive Median Plantings
  - Award: \$100,000
- Dahl Trust Grant
  - Project: MacRae Park Phase 3
  - Award: \$50,000
- Polk County Betterment Grant
  - Project: MacRae Park Phase 3
  - Award: \$99,999
- Easter Lake Watershed Improvement Grant from the Natural Resources Conservation Service
  - Project: Ewing Park Turf-To Prairie Conversion
  - Award: \$37,500
- Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources
  - Project: SW 1st Street Bridge Improvements
  - Award: \$200,000
- Wright Foundation Grant
  - Project: Easter Lake Trail Spine Tree Plantings
  - Award: \$50,000

## GOOSE MANAGEMENT

The Goose Management Plan is a collaborative effort between the City of Des Moines Parks and Recreation, Public Works and the Iowa DNR. The goal of the plan is to provide a working tool that helps address human-goose conflict throughout the city of Des Moines. The plan provides background information on Canada geese, their use of urban areas in Iowa, and methods for handling nuisance situations. The plan provides recommendations for the city as a whole, and site-specific recommendations for areas that experience human-goose conflicts. By adopting methods to reduce conflict, incorporating goose-savvy strategies into planning and development, and using targeted management actions, the City of Des Moines can see real improvements in how it interacts with Canada geese.

## GRAY'S LAKE PARK

Gray's Lake Park expanded the rental fleet with the donation of two sailboats from the Gray's Lake and Meredith Trail Advisory Group. In addition, a private donor gifted two kayaks with a total value of over \$11,000. With those additions, the rental opportunities were robust during the May 1 – Labor Day operations.

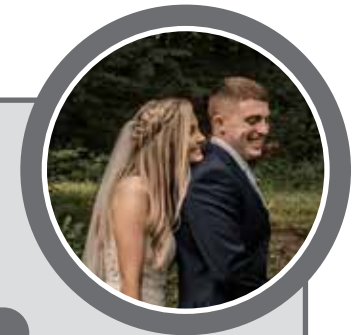
- In addition to concessions and rentals at Gray's Lake, over three acres of woodland was cleared of invasive material with assistance from Earth Day Trash Month and UPCYCLE Volunteers.



I got married at one of the Des Moines parks this last summer. I am thankful for the excellent work they did and do to keep the parks looking great.

*Brandon Decker*

*Fire Medic - Des Moines Fire Department*





## PARKS

- Converted 72,000 square feet of turf to prairie in Witmer Park
- Used the forestry mower on 21 acres of invasive species at Ewing Park
- Seeded six acres along the Carl Voss Trail with sunflowers
- Assisted Public Works with snow operations, then removed snow on park roads, parking lots and trails for a significant winters worth of snow.
- Installed a native monoculture of grasses in Gray's Lake SE parking lot beds. Planted 1200 Little Blue Stem plants.
- Replanted Union Park raingarden
- Burned 75 acres of parkland prairie
- Converted a four acres storm water basin to a pollinator mix to reduce mowing and aid in water quality
- Continued using and improving GIS for mowing inspection and cycle documentation
- Prepared and chemically balanced over 2,000,000 gallons of water at the municipal pools for the 2021 swim season
- Provided seven day a week, 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. custodial service in the parks during the summer including open shelter cleaning and trash removal during a worldwide pandemic.
- Coordinated the Urban Deer Hunt in city limits of Des Moines, with 118 harvested total in January. 15-year total is over 2100 deer. Began 2021/22 season in September.
- Greenhouse Volunteer Transplanting Program – 18 volunteers donated 175 hours
- Ornamental Staff transplanted 157,300 annuals and 6,325 natives
- Organized 45 orders for the Neighborhood Flower Program.
- Planted:
  - o 6,325 native plants for Parks and Neighborhood flower program
  - o 250 roses at Clare and Miles Mills Rose Garden
  - o Staff and volunteers planted 1000 strawberry plants at Chris Coleman Bridge
  - o 66,000 plants planted in parks, City facilities and recreational complexes.
  - o 23,000 plants in the downtown municipal buildings, containers and planting beds

- o 400 containers downtown through Operation Downtown's Small Container program
- o 22 trees and 16 Lilacs during the fall
- o Planted 4,500 bulbs at Gray's Lake and neighborhood parks
- Utilized volunteers for Earth Month on 10 different projects
- Maintained more than 50 annual beds in neighborhood parks

The annual neighborhood flower program implemented a new pickup protocol for association members to sign up for a time slot to pick up flowers online. This worked well enough that even in the future, we will continue the pickup program this way. The program remains popular with groups, as 45 orders were placed this fall for Spring 2022.

## PLANNING

During the planning and funding phase of the MacRae Park Phase 3 project, the department reached out to Confluence to see if they would help fundraise for another Park project near their brewery. While pitching to Confluence, a hand-rendered graphic that Derek Hansen, a member of the park planning team, had drawn for a grant application, appeared in the presentation. Confluence pledged to donate a portion of sales of a MacRae Park beer. When it came time to create the graphic for the can, they asked if we could get the artist's permission to use the hand-rendered graphic they had seen in the initial pitch, Derek was thrilled to see his graphic appear on the can label for MacRae of Sunshine. Confluence reported that the contest to name the beer after the park was the greatest website traffic generator they had ever done. The beer itself was so popular Confluence may make a second batch for the grand opening of the park project for the fall of 2022.



In partnership with EMC Insurance Companies, a new downtown park project is underway. The proposed plan for the “pocket” park, or small urban open space, play equipment, pickleball court, half-court basketball, seating, canopy trees, raised flower beds, and public art.

The plans have included a public engagement and input meeting, numerous Board reviews and approvals including the Plan and Zoning Commission, Access Review Advisory Board, Parks and Recreation Board and was approved by the City Council in January of 2022. The project also involves the repair and replacement of sections of the skywalk near the site and the addition of new a stair access from the skywalk down to the park.

Work has begun on the section of the skywalk on the north side of EMC’s building at 700 Walnut Street, across from the park site. Cranes will be brought in to remove the damaged section of the skywalk and the opening will be replaced with windows. Work will be done to prep the 701 Walnut site and fill in the old building foundation. In spring 2022, work will tentatively begin on the park, new skywalk sections and new stairwell.

EMC acquired the property in May 2018, four years after it was destroyed by fire. The site is adjacent to the company’s campus of four other buildings (700 Walnut Street, 717 Mulberry Street, 219 8th Street and the Hub Tower). EMC has more than 1,200 team members in Iowa.

EMC determined it has no near-term needs for additional office space, so it decided to improve the site and provide green space to the community for the foreseeable future. Through an agreement with the city, EMC will allow the land to be used as a park for at least 10 years.

Estimated completion date for the park is late summer 2022, pending approvals.

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The site of our current greenhouse at 2501 SE Maury will be relocated next to Municipal Service Center phase 2 and plans are underway for a new building.

The new greenhouse facility will be on a 2.86-acre site located on the south side of Maury Street and east of SE 15th Street. The project should enhance the greenhouse operation, which currently grows over 230,000 flowering annuals, perennials, and native plants with the help of over 200 volunteers each year. We provide plants to neighborhoods, community recreation centers and complexes, libraries, schools, Fleur Drive planters and many other public spaces, all of which have a positive effect on the community.



The facility will be designed and submitted for LEED certification, with a current projected construction budget of \$4 Million. The projected move-in date for the new greenhouse is Summer of 2023.

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With the approval of \$12 million in funding by the City Council, the first steps were taken towards the new North Side Community Recreation Center and park. The project site is the current location of the Grubb YMCA and Brian Melton Field between College Avenue and Jefferson Avenue, east of 11th Street. This first phase, called Programming/Planning, focuses on creating a clear plan for the next steps. Future phases will address fundraising, design, and construction, with an anticipated construction completion date in 2025.

The primary purpose of this Programming/Planning phase is to establish a set of project requirements and conceptual design options for the new North Side Community Recreation Center (CRC) facility and to develop a comprehensive vision for the site, including the adjacent Brian Melton Field. The results of this inclusive and comprehensive planning process will articulate an exciting, vibrant plan that maximizes the project’s potential to serve community groups through a wide range of recreation programs, shared facilities, and community services. Community engagement and equity are fundamental priorities for the project. We are ensuring that a broad range of perspectives, experiences, and ideas are heard, collected and incorporated into these planning efforts with our consultant team. The engagement will explore opportunities, identify priorities, and reach a consensus regarding key and priority considerations for the future facility. Three public meetings have been held in 2021 which included online engagement options as well as continuing to provide online on-demand access to meeting

videos, materials, presentations and outcomes. Three additional public meetings are already scheduled for 2022 to continue the engagement, feedback and interactive process for the Future North Side CRC. These three forthcoming public engagement meetings will include strategies, recommendations, and an open house presentation of recommendations and outcomes in late March of 2022.



#### Birdland Park and Marina Master Plan – Update from 2020 Adoption

- The master plan booklet has now completed a thorough copy-editing process and is expected to be available in early 2022. Progress on financial planning, design and implementation of initial sub-phases of the five-phase master plan kicked off in 2021 and will continue progressing in 2022.
- Working with City Staff, the Iowa Confluence Water Trails Project (ICON) has completed the design phase for water trail improvements at Birdland Park and is expected to initiate construction in 2022. That project is expected to implement portions of the improvements called for in Phases 4 and 5 of the master plan. The improvements will greatly improve safety and access to in-river, water-based recreation while also restoring and beautifying segments of the shoreline in Birdland Park.
- Financial planning and grant fundraising are also underway for master plan Phase 1A, which calls for relocating the powerboat ramp, parking improvements, multiple open-air shelters, natural resources improvements, and more. To cap off 2021, we submitted a grant funding request for \$1 million to the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration to support the implementation of Phase 1A.

Following the completion of several recent improvements related to stormwater, Cohen Park has several exciting improvements planned for 2022. The major feature includes the construction of an outdoor bouldering area that offers a wide variety of experiences – including adaptive climbing features. We planned a half basketball court along with an interactive ball wall called Sutu, which offers fun and interactive challenges for individual and group use. Permanent poles for slacklining and hammocking will also be provided.

Cohen Park currently boasts a historic watering trough that is planned to be moved out of the street right-of-way, to a more aesthetic and accessible location. This water trough is only one of two in the nation that still functions. The trough's new location will include site furnishings, plantings and historic signage displays highlighting the rich history of Sam Cohen, the namesake for Cohen Park.

Principal Park is among the oldest Minor League Baseball (MiLB) stadiums in the country. The new facility standards for MiLB ballparks introduced in late 2020 allow facilities to incrementally come into full compliance by April 2025. The master plan details twenty-six distinct opportunities that could be developed in the coming years to enhance Principal Park for all members of the community and better integrate the entire complex into the surrounding context of downtown Des Moines. Some of the key opportunities considered are:

- New main entry to enhance the stadium's presence and identity.
- Confluence park provides passive recreation areas and an event lawn space.
- Raccoon River park offers a synthetic turf event space and a new playground.
- Upgraded premium amenities including a new VIP entry and upgraded mezzanine club space.
- Off-site economic development opportunities including a new parking garage with adjacent mixed-use retail.

Phase 1 construction of the incremental compliance requirements at Principal Park is anticipated to begin in late 2022 and extend 18 months, with the potential to occur over two off-seasons, to meet April 2023 and April 2024 deadlines established by Major League Baseball (MLB) for facility standard compliance. Phase 1 addresses critical priorities identified in the Master Plan. These include 1. Compliance with MiLB facility standards by specified deadlines, the first of which is April 2023; 2. Updates to or replacement of aging building systems in the project area; and 3. Repairs to aging or failing building infrastructure in the project area.



The Planning and Volunteer teams teamed up once again to recruit and utilize an Iowa STEM Teacher Extern to support the GIS Asset Inventory project through data collection in the field and database management in the office. The externship program allows teachers to learn real-world S.T.E.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) applications to take back to their classroom while giving back to the community. Our summer extern, Mary Lazard, donated 240 hours this summer logging 1,364 assets to help create a baseline facility inventory. Utilizing geographic information systems (GIS) to capture information helps us identify gaps, create capital improvement plans, and improve preventative maintenance in our 76 parks and 4,000+ acres.

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The Department's E911 signage program is well underway with the fabrication of both the graphic identities and signs halfway completed. Residents may have seen some of these signs already installed along the Carl Voss Trail. After coordination efforts with first responders, dispatchers and the GIS team, the sign locations were updated into their system and are now ready to be fully implemented along the trail system. Currently, we expect to have all fabricated signs and graphic identities needed to complete the E911 signage installment system-wide by Spring of 2022. The department will wait on certain segments under construction next year, such as the Neal Smith Trail, before implementation. This effort was funded by the Friends of Des Moines Parks, who are volunteering to install the signs as well.

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The Planning Division has been hard at work researching and analyzing the park system's current playgrounds to update four to be more inclusive for play. Inclusive play allows for a playground to be inclusive to children who may have mobility and/or cognitive disabilities. The department already has some regional parks with inclusive play playgrounds like the Ashley Okland Star Playground at Ewing Park and the Variety Star Playground at Riverview Park. The department has received funding to add four additional accessible playgrounds to complement the existing inventory. The team is now researching and analyzing the best locations for implementing inclusive play elements to existing playgrounds around the metro.

Parks and Recreation have partnered with Des Moines Public Schools to help facilitate the areas in need and helped provide crucial information for the planning department to cross-reference and decide on which existing playgrounds are best suited for improvements of inclusive play. The next steps for the department are to locate playgrounds in need and determine where funds can be allocated appropriately to accommodate the need for inclusive play playgrounds.

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Eco-Counters provide valuable trail use data that the department can use to leverage grant funding, staffing needs, percent usages, and allocate funding for the trail system and we are currently looking at a system-wide install of Eco-Counters along the trail system.

The planning division is working on an implementation strategy to build out the eco-counters to the entire trail system, and currently has 5 eco-counters planned in the next couple of years. The counter at Gray's Lake Park provided a 2021 yearly count of roughly 800,000 residents within the year. Other locations with counters currently in place are the Meredith Trail, Bill Riley Trail and the 1st Street Bridge. Plans are in place to expand the program to the Neal Smith Trail, Central Place Levee Trail, Carlisle Connection Trail, Principal Riverwalk Hub, and Iowa Women of Achievement Bridge by the end of 2024.

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Part of the E. Douglas Avenue Project involves the installation of a quarter-mile paved walking loop around the adjacent basin next to the playground. The basin will have a wet prairie-style seed mix to bring in natural forbs and perennials to the park and stormwater basin to help beautify the massive infrastructure system.

The Parks and Recreation Department will implement updates to the eastern pathway to Village Run Drive. This includes paving this connection and improving stormwater infrastructure to handle the newly paved E. Douglas Roadway stormwater runoff. This pathway will be ADA accessible for the residences within Brook Run Development to help provide access to the park. The Department will also update the playground to include brand new accessible safety surfacing and additional accessible playground equipment to provide an inclusive playground for the neighborhood.

## RECREATION

Captain Roy's expanded its operations and presence along the Des Moines River, partnering with Quarry Springs Outfitters to offer kayak rentals. Between the July 4th weekend and the end of the season on Labor Day weekend, 163 kayaks were rented. Many of the paddlers had never floated on the Des Moines River and had never been to Birdland Marina or Captain Roy's. The floats averaged around two hours, which was about the right time for most paddlers to enjoy the natural beauty of the river.



## SPECIAL EVENTS

- Hosted Virtual Trivia Nights in January, February, and March, in partnership with The Rook Room, with 11 teams in January, 10 teams in February, and 15 teams in March, with 184 individuals taking part.
- Hosted a successful *31 Miles Your Way and More* in March with 485 participants, up from 467 in 2020.
- Created and implemented Rec Packs with various themes for each quarter;
  - 28 Rec Pack #1: Little Hiker sold*
  - 30 Rec Pack #2: Water Warrior sold*
  - 23 Rec Pack #3: Bird Watcher sold*
  - 23 Rec Pack #4: Basketball Pro sold*
- Created a Virtual Spring Break Activity Center on the website with many resources. This page had 350 pageviews during March.



Live from Gray's Lake Park, Yoga in the Park returned each Saturday, June through the end of September with a new online check-in process. Guests scanned a QR code and walked to their distanced spot. We had 14 great volunteer instructors who filled 17 shifts.

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As a resident of Des Moines, and a participant of the many activities offered by Des Moines Parks and Recreation I've enjoyed the Saturday morning "Yoga in the Park" at Gray's Lake, and learned how to maneuver "Stand-up Paddle - boarding" this summer. The Parks and Recreation department is such a vital commodity, and definitely represents the community centric focus.

Val Jenkins

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With the pandemic still in effect, a new COVID-19-safe holiday program was created, allowing over 300 people to celebrate the season safely. The inaugural Jingle Bell Stroll took place at the southeast corner of Gray's Lake Park. Participants walked a loop full of activities including Minute to Win It games, snow slime, build your own birdfeeder kits, and a hot chocolate bar. Santa Claus made an appearance, and families could take socially distant photos with the big man in the red suit.

In a continued partnership with the United States Marine Corps Toys for Tots program, we offered pick-up over four days at both of our Community Recreation Centers. Approximately 1,610 kids from 588 families received toys.



## VOLUNTEERS

With another generous donation, The Friends of Des Moines Parks have offered up a great new way to clean up the park/trail system. Interested volunteers can now check out one of five bike trailers for day or weekend projects. Here's how it works:

- Call our office at 515-237-1386 to reserve at least 48 hours before your project date
- Must be 18-years-old, or at least 14-years-old with parent/guardian supervision
- Free to use and we provide all litter cleanup supplies (trash grabbers, trash bags, etc.)
- Will connect to any bike, and the bike trailer breaks down for easy transportation in a vehicle if needed
- Pickup and return to the Richard A. Clark Municipal Service Center (1551 E. MLK Jr. Parkway)

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The Adopt-a-Park and Adopt-a-Trail program is a partnership between Des Moines Parks and Recreation, community members, public or private organizations and local businesses to assist in the cleanup and beautification of parks and trails. We require volunteers to maintain their adopted location by picking up litter at least once every quarter for a minimum of one calendar year. The program launched this spring with 14 parks and 7 trail segments adopted throughout the year for a total of 21 locations being taken care of by various families, neighborhoods, and organizations. Volunteers are provided litter cleanup supplies such as trash grabbers, trash bags, and gloves to maintain their designated location. All adopted areas receive a posted sign with the adopter's name to recognize their efforts. The program was popular and had a total of 1,222.5 volunteer hours recorded for the year, valued at \$34,890.

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UPCYCLE expanded, in 2021, to Riverview Park and Blank Park Zoo for five events throughout the summer and early fall. Volunteer retention, at the Gray's Lake Park location, remains high, thanks in part to a partnership with Confluence Brewing. They continue to offer the first 30 adult volunteers a thank-you beverage. At Gray's Lake alone, we had 120 hours valued at \$3,424.80 with 47 unique volunteers and 67 volunteers that took part citywide.

The National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project was held over three dates in September, with 77 volunteers donating more than 354 hours (valued at more than \$10,000). Participants counted bicyclists and pedestrians at 28 locations throughout Des Moines. Volunteers earned Bike Ped Bucks as a thank you and free Mayor's Annual Ride and Run (MARR) registration for volunteering multiple times. This year's MARR was held in Fall 2021 (moved because of COVID-19) and volunteers were able to ride in the morning and volunteer in the afternoon.

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On Thursday, September 30, volunteers from Captain Roy's, adjacent neighborhoods, and the Des Moines Police Department gathered at Union Park to kick off the assembly of two new playgrounds. The equipment, purchased in part by funding from Meredith Corporation Foundation, is tailored to ages 2-5 and 5-12. 21 volunteers donated 193 hours (valued at \$5,508.22) and Captain Roy's donated lunch.

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The Drake and Beaverdale Neighborhood Associations have been actively involved with the Witmer Park projects dating back to late 2017 when each neighborhood provided a support letter for the Phase 1 project. Their support help leverage a REAP grant from the Iowa DNR to support the Phase 1 improvement and leadership from both neighborhoods have been intimately involved ever since.

As of 2018, funding for the Phase 2 project was yet to be secured, so the neighborhoods collaborated to develop a fundraising committee led by Jennifer Sayers and Jay Kozel. The group developed a project website and engaged individual residents and local businesses to raise nearly \$30,000 to support the playground component of the project. Volunteering numerous hours of their time, the committee collected donations for the project and played a major role in keeping residents informed and ensuring that questions and concerns were considered and appropriately addressed.

The neighborhood committee assisted with recruiting volunteers to help construct the new playground. Between the time spent fundraising, collecting cash donations, and volunteering for the playground build, we estimate that residents and leadership from the Drake and Beaverdale Neighborhood's contributions to the Phase 2 project exceed \$80,000 in value. On the day of the build, Drake and Beaverdale Neighborhood Associations teamed up, with local volunteers and staff, to construct the Witmer Park Playground in October. 22 volunteers donated 126 hours (valued at \$3,596.04).

Impacts from COVID-19 caused many to become food insecure. Thanks to a USDA grant, and a team effort, with Eat Greater Des Moines' Operation Fresh Produce program, we were able to fill these food gaps with 560 free food boxes.

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An AmeriCorps NCCC crew of 6 volunteers came to Des Moines to help the Parks and Recreation Department for four weeks this spring. Donating 993 hours they:

- Helped with a variety of projects, including monument restoration at Woodland Cemetery; mulching at Clare and Miles Mills Rose Garden, Ewing Park Lilac Arboretum, and Franklin Community Garden; cleaning and prepping our pools and aquatic centers for the summer; and removing invasive species from several locations.
  - Removed 200 cubic yards of mulch and placed 415 cubic yards of mulch between the rose garden, lilac arboretum, and community garden.
  - Removed invasive species from 8 acres of land.
  - Lifted and reset 97 headstones and cleaned more than 30.
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It was "all hands on deck" when the Dew Tour event came to Des Moines. As a part of this Olympic qualifying event, Dew Tour pro athletes Alana Smith (USA) and TJ Rogers (CAN) along with 22 other volunteers helped clean up the shoreline and build fish habitat at Gray's Lake Park. A total of 52 hours were donated during this joint effort with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

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After a year and a half without volunteer projects because of COVID-19 closures, litter built up along the Hartford Avenue corridor. Eight Drake 515 Service Day Athletic Department volunteers donated 32 hours to clean up this key corridor that leads to the James W. Cownie Soccer Park.

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In 2021, we brought Earth Day Trash Bash back reimagined. Throughout April, the Cities of Clive, Des Moines, Johnston, Norwalk, Pleasant Hill, Urbandale, and West Des Moines, along with Polk County Conservation, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, Living History Farms, and Des Moines Water Works, hosted teams of volunteers for Earth Month. With the theme, "Apart But Together For Change", 222 volunteers donated more than 480 hours in Des Moines to pick up litter, plant trees, and protect the earth...all pandemic-style. Following COVID-19 protocols, volunteers could get outdoors safely and give back across the entire Metro.

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The Adopt-A-Block program continues to have a valuable presence in our cemeteries, with 62 areas/blocks adopted by 174 volunteers. Participants contributed time to clean up cemetery blocks of litter, leaves, decorations, and maintain plantings at city cemeteries. Totals for the year were more than 896 hours (valued at \$25,578.50).

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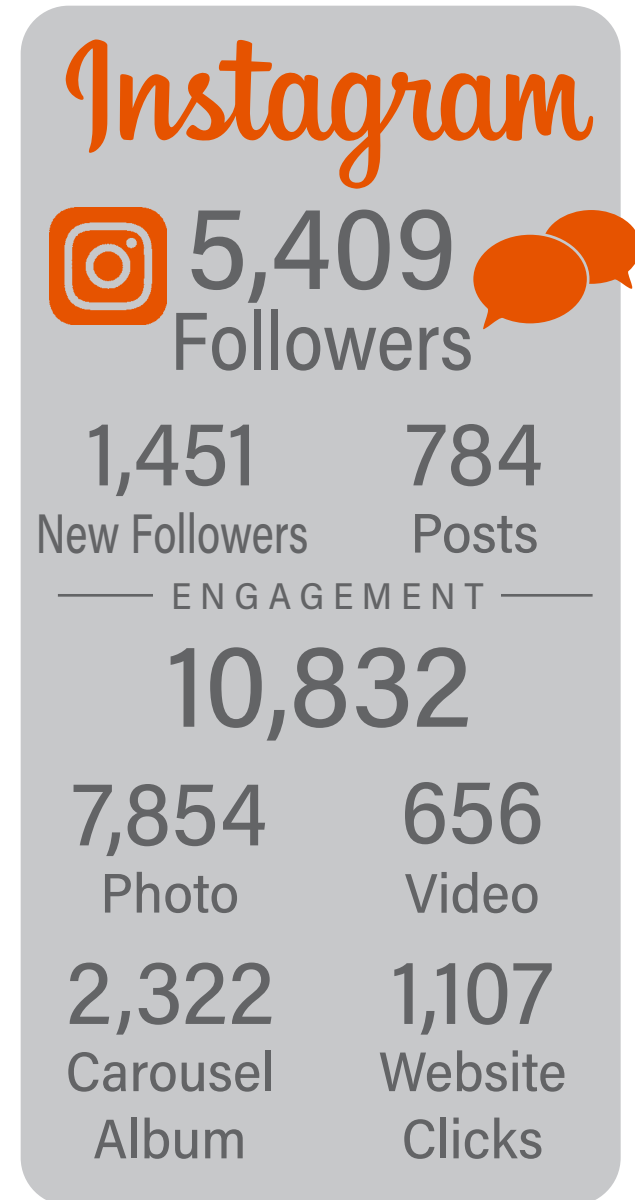
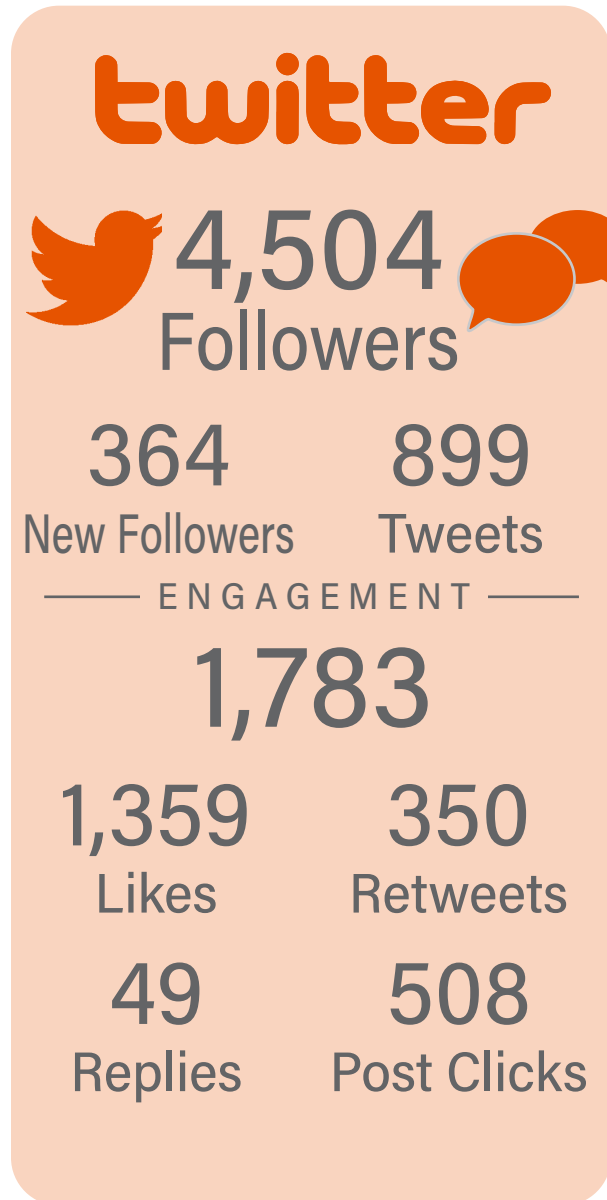
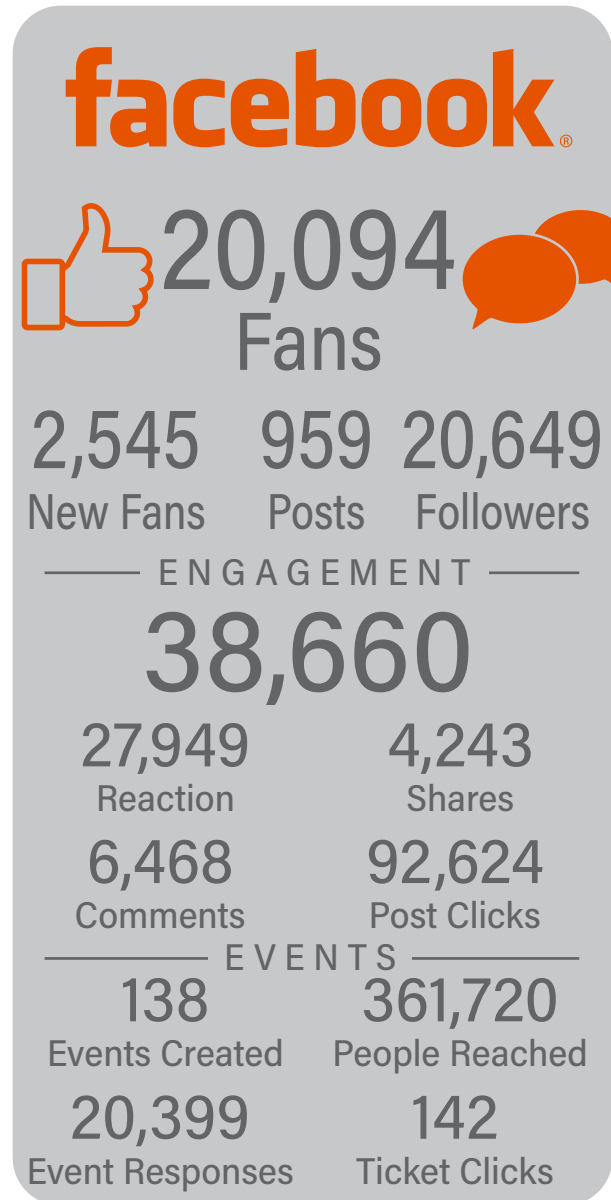








# SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

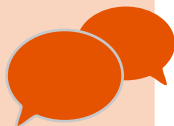


# LinkedIn



90

Followers



90

New Followers

37

Posts

— ENGAGEMENT —

95

59

Reaction

33

Shares

2

Comments

204

Post Clicks

# Video

102 new videos				
Views for the year	70,105	8,223	15,124	1,328
Subscribers				1,000
Total views for the year	91,235			11,725
Hours Watched	475			261
Minutes Watched	28,552			15,660
Impressions				309,305



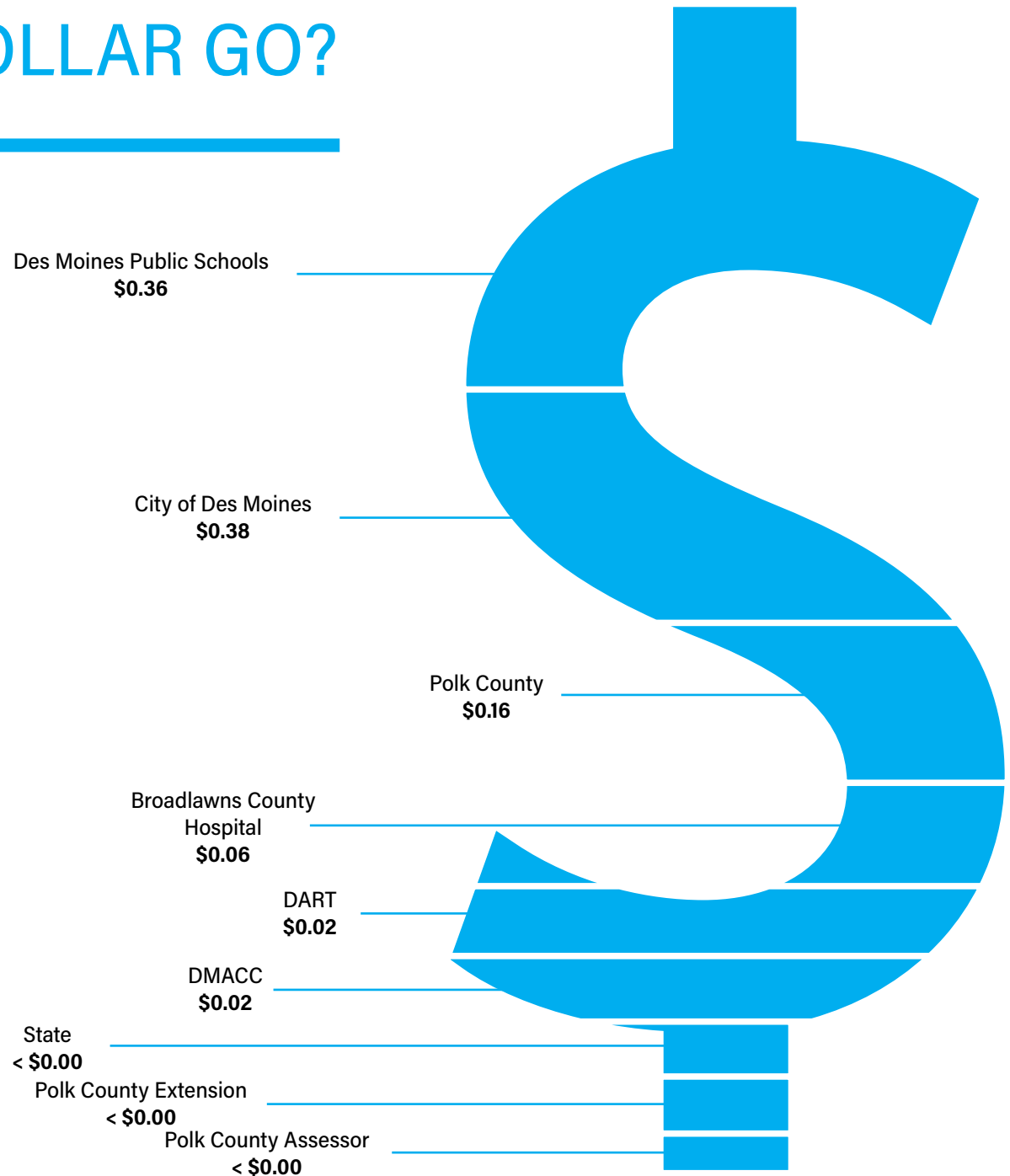


# **Our Financials**



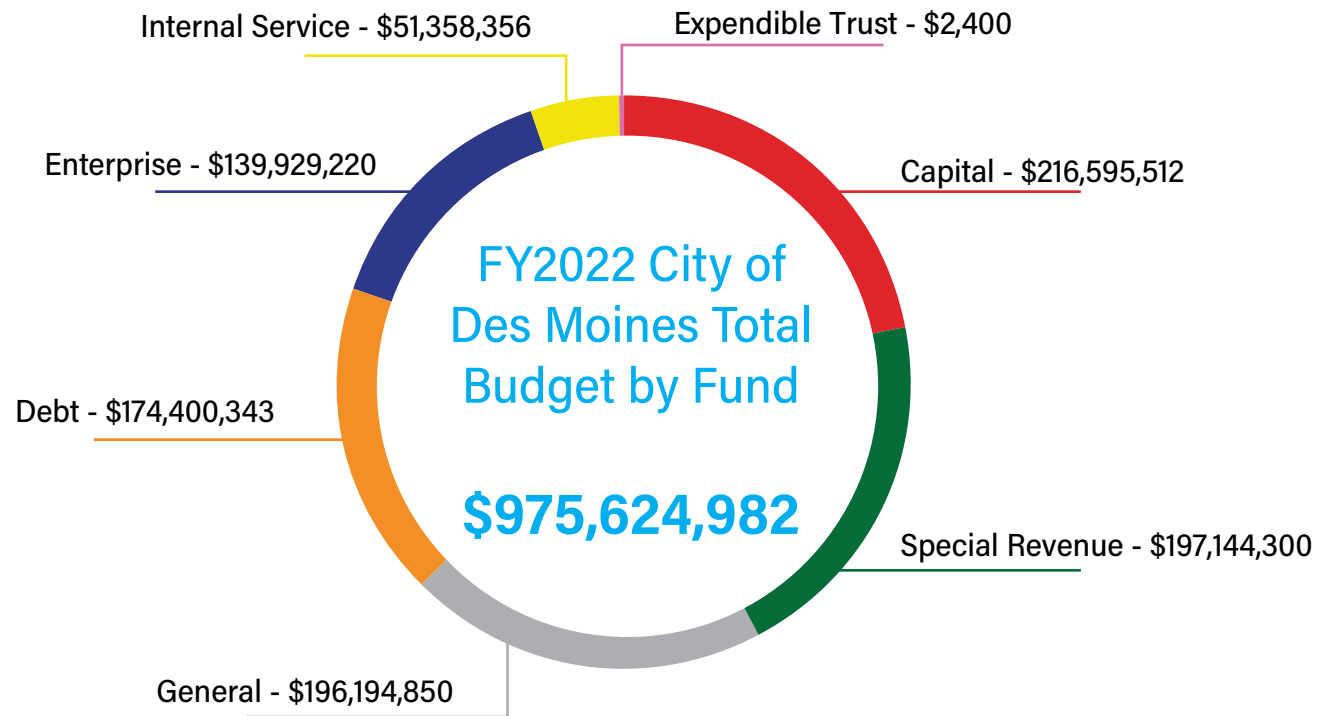
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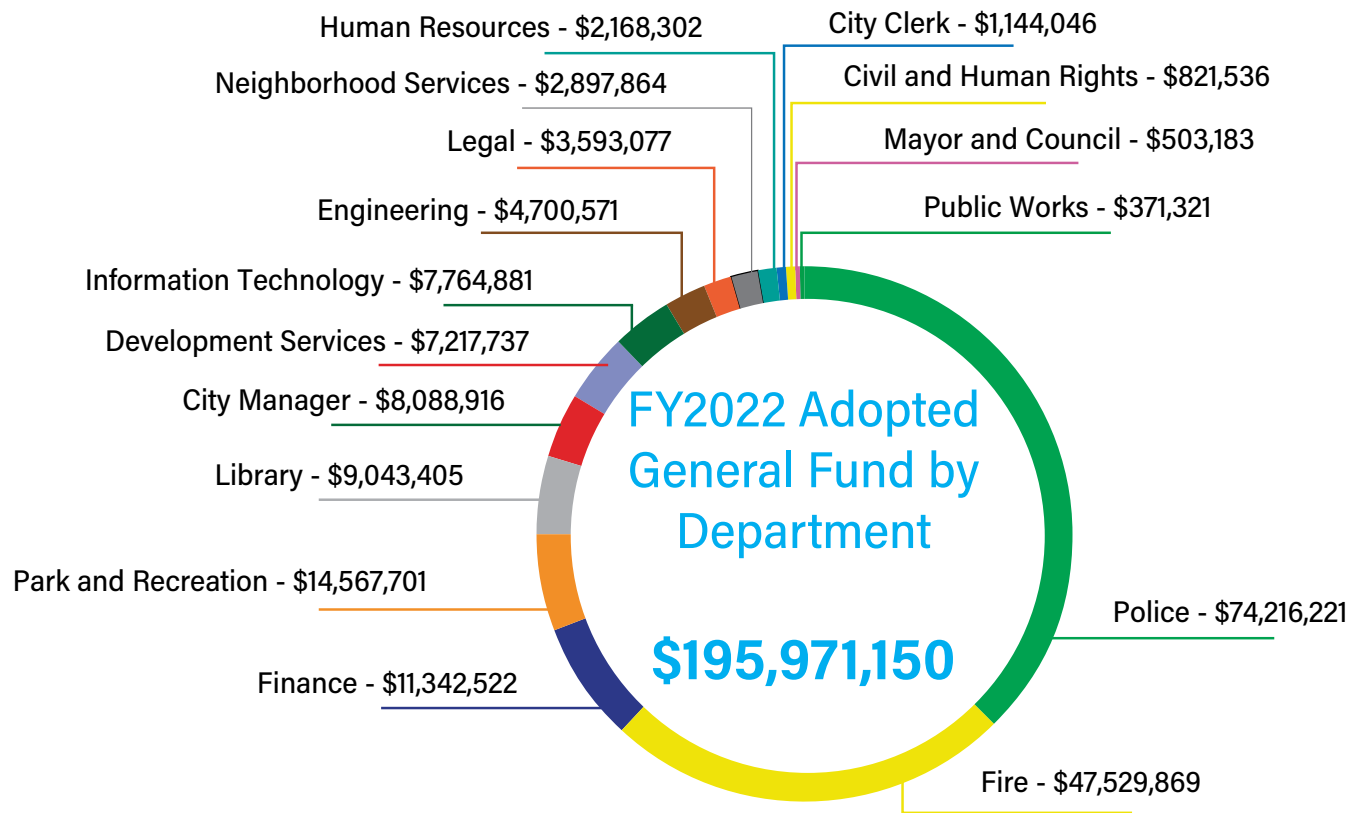
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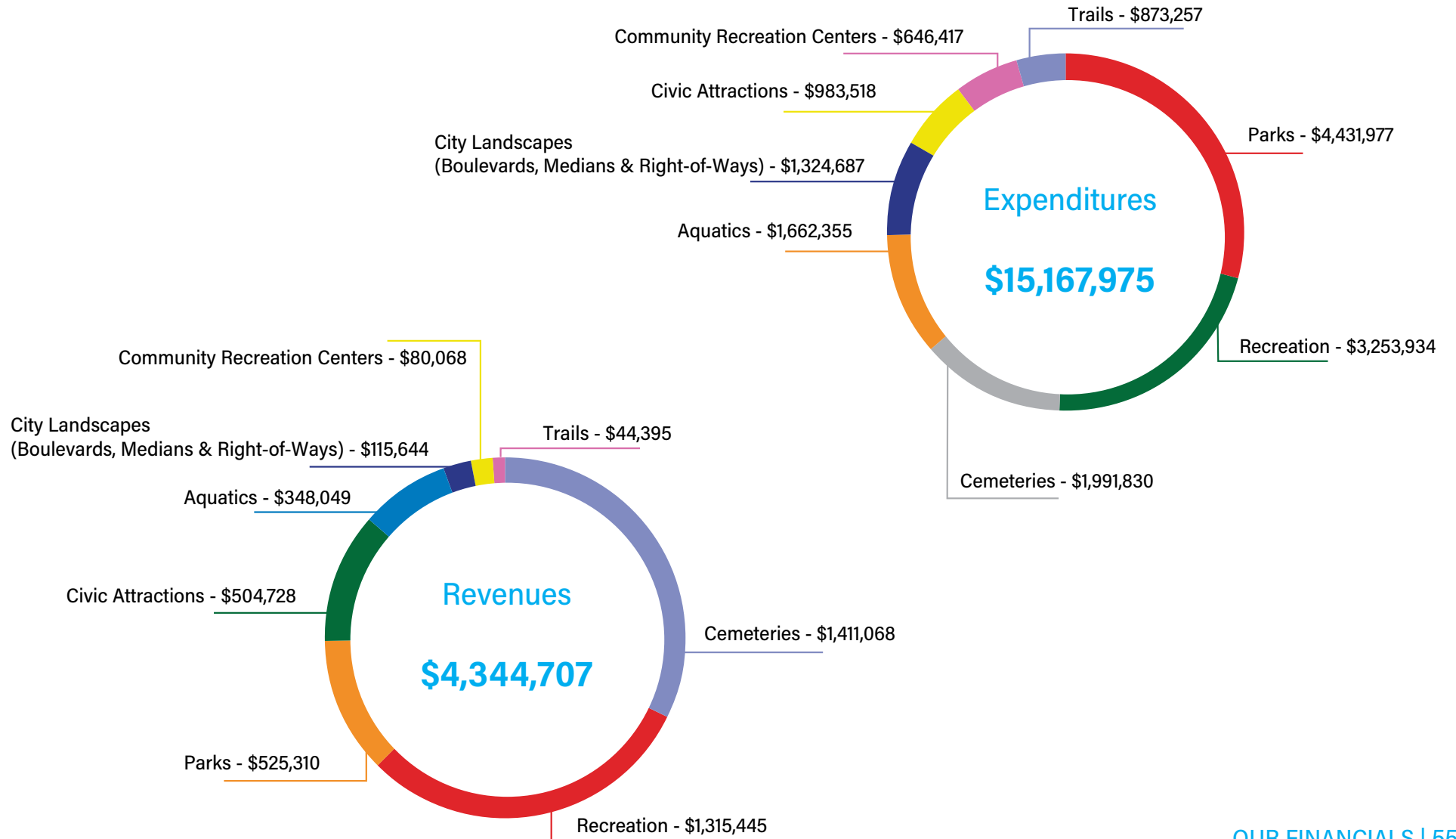
# CITY OF DES MOINES TOTAL BUDGET BY FUND

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# CITY OF DES MOINES PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT SERVICE LINES OF DES MOINES BUDGET







2021