

Spring 2023

Dear Friends,

Great parks help bring communities together, creating real connections. These connections grow even deeper when people are asked to give back to those parks. As the primary philanthropic partner for the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, the Minneapolis Parks Foundation has witnessed that the simple act of contributing time and money to our parks—participating in a neighborhood clean-up day, serving as a youth athletics coach, setting up a small monthly donation, or becoming a major donor—helps people feel invested in their community and connected to others.

How can we harness that power of generosity to grow an even better park system in Minneapolis? It's a question we've been exploring in new ways this year, as we mark our 20th anniversary and launch a new Strategic Plan to guide our priorities. While we know Minneapolis parks are widely used and treasured by the public, only a relatively small number of park users become park *contributors*. In a city where philanthropy and generosity are ingrained in our culture, and where our parks are seen as critical to our health and wellbeing, there remains tremendous opportunity to expand how people contribute to our parks.

Changing that equation could have enormous benefits, not only for parks, but also for people. As we've seen at the Water Works Park and Pavilion, combining community support with public funding can elevate what's possible. And as we heard from the record-setting number of supporters who joined us for our Posters for Parks Show, the act of giving — no matter the amount — makes us feel happier in the moment, more hopeful about the future, and connected to something greater than ourselves. (Coincidentally, many of the same benefits that come from spending time in a park!)

As we look ahead to formally launching a capital campaign to support a transformation of North Commons Park, we're grateful to the individuals, corporations, and foundations whose support in 2022 helped strengthen our case for the value of investing in the public realm. With your generosity, you're helping the Minneapolis Parks Foundation provide a service to our region and connecting the power of philanthropy to the promise of the parks. *Thank you!*



Tom Evers
Executive Director



Sarah Duniway Board Chair

Minneapolis Parks Foundation Guiding Principles

While celebrating all the varied benefits of Minneapolis's nationally renowned and locally treasured system, the Minneapolis Parks Foundation focuses on elevating the capacity of our parks to deliver the following outcomes.

- Advance equity and cultural inclusion:
 When all people have access to valued parks and public spaces, feel welcome, and see themselves reflected in those spaces, a community is healthier, safer, and happier.
- Foster community health and well-being:
 Parks provide healthy air, water, and soil,
 and places to play and exercise, on both
 the individual and community level. Parks
 also provide places where we can learn
 about our neighbors and form new and
 deeper connections.
- Deepen connections to the natural world: In our increasingly urbanized world, maintaining places of natural beauty, respite, and awe helps us maintain our humanity.
- Strengthen climate change resiliency: Cities must adapt and develop new methods to protect and restore natural systems and clean water and to mitigate the economic impact of climate change.
- Spark economic vitality: Thriving parks and public spaces can attract investment and bring prosperity to the broader community without sparking displacement.



Scan to learn more about how our Strategic Plan will guide our work through 2027.





Farview Walk & Talk

Emerging slowly from the COVID pandemic in 2022, parks remained the place to

Find Community on Common Ground

In September 2022, and after a two-year delay, Reimagining the Civic Commons held Studio 6 in Minneapolis. The convening of nearly 150 place-making practitioners from 11 other cities around the U.S. was just one of several events hosted by the Minneapolis Parks Foundation that highlight the role parks play in fostering human connections to each other and the natural world.



In-person Walks Got People Talking

In 2022, the Parks Foundation added three new tours to our Walk & Talk Event Series. Farview Park to the 26th Ave N Overlook, Hall's Island Restoration, and Lake Nokomis drew capacity in-person participation and were also tapped more than 600 times as download-and-go self-guided tours. Altogether, the Parks Foundation has compiled eight unique experiences—many featuring the knowledge of experienced guides—that traverse our beautiful and fascinating park system.

Amazing Sunrise

Nearly 250 people gathered under the big tent in September 2022 for our annual breakfast benefit, **Sunrise on the Mississippi**. Minneapolis Parks Superintendent Al Bangoura shared his vision for Minneapolis parks, saying, "Because parks offer something for everyone—like nothing else in our society—it's not enough to be good enough, we have to be amazing." Donors responded in kind: Rising to a standing ovation, and contributing more than \$130,000 to help us support transformative parks projects and programs.

Warm Reception on a Winter's Day

The Next Generation of Parks Event Series got off to a bright and bold start in 2022, featuring Ambreen Tariq for a two-part talk-then-walk in February. Founder of @BrownPeopleCamping,

Sunrise on the Mississippi

Ambreen is an adventurer, activist, and author of the semiautobiographical children's book, *Fatima's Great Outdoors*. Her in-person walk at North Mississippi Riverfront Regional Park was our first face-to-face event since March 2020 — bringing together a diverse audience to share a chilly-in-temperature but warm-in-spirit afternoon.







ADVANCE EQUITY AND CULTURAL INCLUSION



FOSTER COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLBEING



DEEPEN CONNECTIONS TO THE NATURAL WORLD

Charting a New Course

Now in its second year, People for Parks Fund grants are helping to introduce new parks users to new pastimes

With the wind in our city's sails, the imagery and iconography of Minneapolis has long been connected to the sport of sailing. But with people of color making up fewer than one percent of sailing participants worldwide, the signature symbol of leisure in the City of Lakes leaves many residents out of the picture.

But sailing enthusiasts at the Minneapolis Sailing Center (MSC) believe a sea change is possible. With help from a People for Parks Fund grant from the Minneapolis Parks Foundation, the MSC—one of the largest and most diverse sailing schools in the Midwest—invited more than 500 kids and grown-ups to climb into keelboats on Bde Maka Ska and experience the freedom and fun of learning how to sail. With a series of four Free Sailing Sunday events held throughout the summer, the Minneapolis Sailing Center also combined forces with groups like Outdoor Afro MN, Urban Ventures, Inner City Ducks, and Outdoor Latino MN to remove barriers and bring people of color together to discover what's possible with your hand on the rudder and the wind at your back.

"The core goal of this project is not a quick fix or one-time opportunity, but part of a longer culture change in our organization and the sport of sailing," says Ted Salzman, MSC's Executive Director.

MSC's sailing outreach initiative was just one of nine

exciting parks projects made possible in 2022 by the People for Parks Fund, the Minneapolis Parks Foundation's grant program aimed at supporting community-driven ideas for making our parks more equitable and inclusive. Funded by donations and proceeds from

Scan to read stories of impact from all our grantees.







our popular Posters for Parks Show, the program distributed more than \$48,000 in its second year to MSC, Armatage Neighborhood Association, Cultural Wellness Center. Friends of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area, Friends of Lake Nokomis, Urban Bird Collective, and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. Though the competitive grant process yielded a wide range of pitches—from communal bike tours through our city's parks and neighborhoods and extending invitations to wider audiences in the city's Winter Bird Count, to free swim lessons, and yoga and wellness classes with an Afro beat—the common denominator is about connecting people to each other through our parks.

"One thing we're really excited about is supporting so many great programs for BIPOC youth," says Marsha Yang, a member of the People for Parks Advisory Committee that selects each year's grantees. "We're now starting our third grant round, and the great ideas we're getting from the community tell us the word about the People for Parks Fund is really getting out there."



Parks Foundation board member Jasmine Russell, who chairs the People for Parks Fund Advisory Committee, says that seeing how people are using the parks at ground level is inspiring. "Sometimes philanthropy can seem very high level, like only certain people have access to it, but the People for Parks Fund has become a bridge that creates more direct connection between the Parks Foundation and the people who use the parks every day," she says. "There's a different energy when you're directly connected with people who use the park, and the best part is they're coming up with great ideas for making them even better."



Artsy-Parksy

This year, 41 local artists shared their vision of Minneapolis parks at the seventh annual Posters for Parks Show, an event co-hosted by LoveMplsParks that benefits the People for Parks Fund while bringing greater visibility to Minneapolis's creative community.

"Local artists who participate in the Posters for Parks Show have the opportunity not only to sell their art—but provide a visual view and creative perspective of the Minneapolis park system," says Jasmine Russell, Chair of the Fund's Advisory Committee. "One of the high sellers from last year, "Night Sky of the North" by



Studio on Fire was a depiction of astrology Inspired by the night sky, imagining what the constellations might represent if based on traditional park activities and Minnesota lore. Art is intimately tied to the awe and wonder of parks, a moment to escape, dream, and imagine a world beyond the cityscape."

With a week-long online sale following a festive opening at Royal Foundry Craft Spirits, Posters for Parks sold more than 1,000 numbered prints, while helping to raise \$48,000 to support the artists and the People for Parks Fund. Mark your calendar for 2023's event, coming October 14 at the Royal Foundry.



- **ADVANCE EQUITY AND CULTURAL INCLUSION**
- 🧩 FOSTER COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLBEING
- SPARK ECONOMIC VITALITY

Reconnecting Through North Commons

Could parks be the cure for fragmented communities?

While the social distancing demands of the pandemic may be dwindling, the public health impacts of persistent loneliness and social isolation are drawing growing alarm. In fact, a new U.S. Surgeon General's report finds that Americans are lonelier than they've ever been, and warns that a lack of social support can have long-term health impacts equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day.

But the problem of loneliness can depend on where you live. As a recent community health needs assessment from North Memorial Health discovered, adults living in Minneapolis were nearly three times as likely as those in outer ring suburbs to report that they feel isolated. Some 25 percent of adults in the city reported that they rarely or never get social or emotional support—a rate nearly 50 percent higher than adults from the city's inner ring suburbs. *Could parks be part of the solution?*

That's one of the questions the community of North Minneapolis has been asking as it explores plans for a major transformation of North Commons Park. One of the oldest and most established parks in the city, North Commons serves one of the youngest and most diverse communities in the state—including nearly 12,000 youth who live within a one-mile radius. As the Minneapolis Parks Foundation prepares to launch a capital campaign in support of North Commons, the nonprofit fundraising partner of the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board has also been meeting with a host of neighbors and nonprofits, parks users, and community youth groups to listen and learn more about how parks programs can help promote the overall health of the community.

"When we look at the social determinants of health, we know that our environment is important, so that's why we're signing on and saying, 'Yes, we want to be a part of collaborating with the



parks," says Sherrie Simpson, Director of Planning, Communication and Engage-

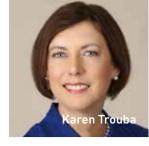


ment at NorthPoint Health. "Having safe outdoor spaces is good for our mental health and wellbeing, and the parks are

trusted places where people show up to be part of the fabric of a neighborhood."

Vicky Soukaseum

Over the last year, community engagement sessions with other community partners have yielded new ideas for addressing neighborhood needs, from hosting community food shelves and kids' dental clinics, to offering makers' spaces for carpenters and mechanics, to hosting career training events at North Commons. "This community is so creative about what parks can be," says the Minneapolis Parks Foundation's Director of Projects, Vicky Soukaseum, a North Minneapolis resident and frequent North Commons visitor. "As we hear more about what communities want to see in their space, the power of partnership is expanding our thoughts and opening the door for creativity and transformation."



It's an approach that resonates with Bank of America, whose support helps make the Parks Foundation's growing community engagement work possible.

"Through our charitable giving, Bank of America is focused on racial equality, economic growth, social justice and environmental sustainability and we see all of those elements at work in what the Minneapolis Parks Foundation is doing for the community," says Karen Trouba, Senior Vice President, Market Manager, Bank of America. "Parks are a great equalizer because everyone has access to parks—they contribute to community health and wellbeing, but they also provide opportunities for people to connect to others in meaningful ways. Supporting the Minneapolis Parks Foundation has been a great partnership for Bank of America, because it allows us to live our values by investing in sustainable change in our communities."



Investing in Equity: A Campaign for North Commons

As the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board continues its work in North Minneapolis, creating a community-driven design for North Commons Park, the Minneapolis Parks Foundation has been meeting with parks supporters in preparation for a major capital campaign set to launch in 2023. "Based on our feasibility studies, we're seeing a great deal of interest from donors who want to be part of building a next generation park at North Commons," says Jennifer Downham, the Parks Foundation's Chief Development Officer.

With early support from the WEM Foundation, Bank of America, and Parks Foundation Board Members, more than \$11 million in donations and commitments has already been successfully secured for the project. As the Parks Foundation prepares a public announcement of the campaign, donations toward the effort are also being matched dollar for dollar, up to \$250,000, thanks to a generous challenge grant from the Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation. To learn more about how you can support the promise of parks in North Minneapolis, email Jennifer at jdownham@mplsparksfoundation.org.

Scan to learn how you can join the Campaign to Reimagine North Commons.





**

STRENGTHEN CLIMATE CHANGE RESILIENCY

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SPARK ECONOMIC VITALITY

Reconnecting to the River

Parks users are continuing to discover two hidden gems on the Mississippi River



Since its opening, Water Works is well on its way to becoming the cornerstone of the city's downtown park system, catering to an ever-changing list of community needs.

"We're seeing different groups using the park in different ways and at different times, from people who exercise here in the morning, or who bring a book in the afternoon, or come for a concert at night," says

the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board's Erica Chua, Recreation Supervisor for the city's downtown parks. This season, she's planning an even more robust set of programs, from live theater events to community chess tournaments and movies in the park. "It's still a hidden gem that we want people to discover."

Making sure that Minneapolis residents know all about their newest park assets has also been a focus for Shawn Lewis, Project Coordinator at the Minneapolis Parks Foundation, which led the RiverFirst Campaign behind Water Works and the Great Northern Greenway Overlook. "North

Minneapolis has had its back to the river for so long, that when you take young people biking in the area, or to visit the new Overlook, they often say they had no idea the river was so close to them," says Lewis, who is working closely with

the Great Northern Greenway Coalition and other community groups to get the word out. "Our goal is to connect people to the river, so they can enjoy it in new ways."

Shawn Lewis

Revealing Unseen Stories

Water Works Park and Pavilion was created as a space for celebrating the power of the Mississippi River and our relationship to it as people — from many cultures and backgrounds, and with many different stories to tell. In 2022, we began elevating unseen stories through a new multimedia project. A video and an interactive map explore the relationship of Dakhóta culture and language to this special place and allows visitors to hear the language spoken. And a companion video reintroduces Reiko Weston, whose Fuji-Ya Restaurant graced this space for more than a generation, ultimately leading to the riverfront rebirth we enjoy today.



Scan to watch the videos and experience the StoryMap.

Accolades for Water Works

Water Works has been recognized nationally and internationally, including these recent awards:

TIME 100 Most Influential People of 2023: Sean Sherman, The Sioux Chef and NATIFs

2022 American Society of Landscape Architects: Award of Excellence for Water Works at Mill Ruins Park

2022 James Beard Award for Best New Restaurant: Owamni by The Sioux Chef

2022 American Institute of Architects: Honor Award for Water Works Pavilion

Thank You, Donors

Thanks to your generous support this year, the Minneapolis Parks Foundation continues to help people feel invested in our community and connected to others by provided opportunities to give back to our parks. Since 2003, contributions from individual and institutional donors like those recognized below has totaled nearly \$29 million for transformative parks. Thank you!

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\$50,000 and above

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\$10,000-\$49,999

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Recognizing donors who have thoughtfully included the Minneapolis Parks Foundation in their estate plans.

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2022 Financial Statements

Balance Sheet	12/31/2022
Assets	
Cash & Cash-Equivalents	2,606,055
Pledges Receivable	20,000
RiverFirst Capital Campaign	243,770
Other Assets	18,802
Total Assets	\$2,888,627

Income/Expense Statement (Unrestricted)	2022
Income	
Contributions	901,792
Government Grants	89,161
Fundraising Events	135,413
Investment & Other Income	38,750
Total Income	\$1,165,116

Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	7,736
RiverFirst Capital Campaign	243,770
Other Liabilities	40,414
Total Liabilities	\$291,920
AL . A	

Expense	
Program Expenses	777,569
Core Mission-Support Services	
Finance, HR, Board, Operations	244,736
Development	202,436
Total Expense	\$1,224,436
Change in Net Assets	(\$59,625)

Net Assets
Unrestricted
Undesignated
Operating Res
Endowment

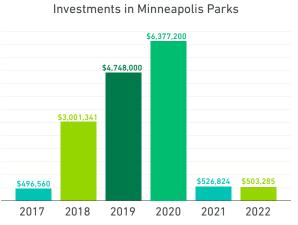
Officesignated	040,031
Operating Reserve	491,000
Endowment	25,000
Total Unrestricted	\$1,164,651
Temporarily Restricted (Programs)	\$995,893
Permanently Restricted (Endowment)	\$436,163
Total Net Assets	\$2,596,707

Investments from 2018 to 2020 include payments

to MPRB for two successfully completed parks:

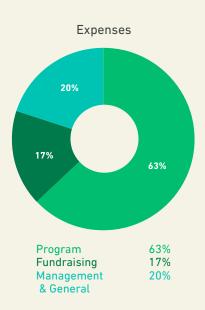
Water Works and 26th Ave N Overlook.

648 651





Sources of Income 16% 17% Individuals 54% **Special Projects** 17% Foundations 16% Government 8% 4% Corporations





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Jocelyn Hale

Partner MillerHale Associates

Jay Halvorson

Community Leader

Keith Holloman (VICE CHAIR)

Principal Clinical Research Specialist Medtronic

Joseph Humke

Executive VP, General Counsel and Secretary Graco, Inc.

Angelica Klebsch*

Director of Community Partnerships and Investment Second Harvest Heartland

Mary McCarthy*

Community Leader

Paul Revelts*

CFO (retired) Valspar Corporation

Heath Rudduck

Chief Creative Officer Padilla

Jasmine Russell

Founder & CEO Monicat Data

Jean Sazevich

Philanthropy Consultant

Heidi Schmidt

Marketing Manager RSP Architects

Michael A. Shelton

Executive Director Heritage Youth Sports Foundation

Karen Trouba

Senior Vice President Bank of America

Pahoua Yang Hoffman

Senior Vice President of Government & Community Relations HealthPartners

* completed term in 2022

Ex Officio

Al Bangoura

Superintendent, Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board

Jacob Frey

Mayor, City of Minneapolis

Becka Thompson

Commissioner, District 2 Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board

People for Parks Fund **Advisory Committee**

Jasmine Russell (CHAIR) Matt Bourque* Jay Halvorson Jennifer Herman Spiller Judy Hohmann Angelica Klebsch* Miluska Novota Dan Peterson Jean Sazevich Marsha Yang

Staff

Jennifer Downham

Chief Development Officer

Tom Evers

Executive Director

Matt Karl

Business & Administration Director

Madeleine Koski

Development Communications Coordinator

Janette Law

Director of Communications

Shawn Lewis

Project Coordinator

Christine Moir Development Manager

Vicky Soukaseum Director of Projects

Making An Impact

Parks exist at the intersection of today's most pressing issues. Scan to read about the five Guiding Principles represented on the cover that shape our work: Advance Equity & Cultural Inclusion, Foster Community Health & Wellbeing, Deepen Connections to the Natural World, Strengthen Climate Change Resiliency, Spark Economic Vitality.

