

2021 Metro Parks Budget



Board of Park Commissioners

Jim McGregor

JB Hadden

George McCue

Executive Director

Tim Moloney

METRO PARKS 2021 BUDGET

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Cover photo, Coneflowers in prairie, credit: Annette Boose

To: BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
COLUMBUS AND FRANKLIN COUNTY METROPOLITAN PARKS DISTRICT
Jim McGregor
JB Hadden
George McCue
From: Tim Moloney, Executive Director
Re: 2021 Proposed Budget

In accordance with applicable sections of the Ohio Revised Code and the fiscal policies of the Columbus and Franklin County Metropolitan Parks District (Metro Parks), the budget for fiscal year 2021 (January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021) is hereby submitted for consideration by the Board of Park Commissioners. In accordance with state law, the Board of Park Commissioners shall adopt a budget by board resolution, appropriating funds for the fiscal year, and the budget shall then be filed with the Budget Commission of Franklin County.

In addition to satisfying legal requirements, the Metro Parks budget is an important management tool, prioritizing the allocation of limited financial resources in accordance with its core convictions to *Put Customers First*, *Make Situations Better* and *Make Central Ohio Extraordinary*.

The mission of Metro Parks is: *To conserve open spaces, while providing places and opportunities that encourage people to discover and experience nature*. This mission encompasses a wide variety of efforts and initiatives undertaken by our dedicated employees. The budget for 2021 is our plan to accomplish that mission while being careful stewards of taxpayer funds.

Budget prepared and submitted by:

Tim Moloney	Executive Director
Lawrence J. Peck	Deputy Director
Rick McGivern	Finance Director and Treasurer
Renee Telfer	Human Resources Director

With considerable input from Metro Parks staff.

December 1, 2020

Jim McGregor
JB Hadden
George McCue

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS,
COLUMBUS AND FRANKLIN COUNTY METRO PARKS

Dear Park Commissioners:

On behalf of the staff and management of Metro Parks, please accept this 2021 Budget proposal for your consideration. With your support, Metro Parks will continue to provide safe, clean, well-managed parks, and will continue to plan for the open space and outdoor recreation needs of the residents of Central Ohio.

In 2020, Metro Parks was forced to adjust to the new realities of COVID-19, but unlike most organizations, we did not close our doors. Rather, we safely opened up to record attendance levels, as the business of parks was transformed from a desired recreational pursuit to a necessary source of relief for so many of our citizens. The Year in Review section will describe important operational impacts of the pandemic and how Metro Parks responded.

We are glad to report that the financial impacts of the pandemic are manageable. The overall financial position of Metro Parks is strong as expenses are carefully limited, revenues are stable, and reasonable fund balances allow flexibility as circumstances change.

Metro Parks continues to grow, in both land area and the offerings to our citizen-customers. We take pride in delivering outstanding value as the largest metropolitan parks system in Ohio. The remainder of this document will further detail how our financial resources support our mission.

The entire staff of Metro Parks is deeply appreciative of the careful guiding direction and spirit of stewardship provided by the Board of Park Commissioners. We look forward to 2021 as a new chapter in implementing the Metro Parks' vision to *Change Lives... Naturally*.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'T. Moloney', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tim Moloney, Executive Director

2020 YEAR IN REVIEW

Metro Parks leads in response to COVID-19

Metro Parks started 2020 with an ambitious agenda to grow our parks and programs. When COVID-19 struck, major operational changes were needed quickly and Metro Parks responded.

In early March, Metro Parks activated Incident Command Management (ICM), a standardized system of communication, command and control used in emergency management situations by federal, state and local governments. A key goal of ICM is to create a single point of contact, the incident commander, to manage response activities during an emergency event.

Metro Parks implemented 14-hour shifts for designated employees on a rotating schedule in specific park zones. This minimized staff in parks and minimized contact across work groups, thus limiting the risk of virus spread. It also led to coordinated efforts to quickly procure sanitation supplies, limit mass gatherings and contact citizens with facility reservations.

With a core focus on sanitizing and social distancing, Metro Parks remained in ICM for the remainder of 2020. While difficult at times, the ICM structure was a major success as only three positive tests were recorded district-wide through late autumn. Our efforts were also appreciated by visitors, who spread the word of our Clean, Safe Parks.

The best evidence for our success during the pandemic is attendance, which increased dramatically. The table below compares 2019 to 2020 attendance through the third quarter.

2019 ATTENDANCE THRU Q3	2020 ATTENDANCE THRU Q3	VARIANCE	PERCENT GROWTH THRU Q3
8,602,850	11,145,130	2,542,280	30%

The numbers above are even more impressive considering that so many traditional programs were cancelled in the busy Spring and Summer months. Residents of Central Ohio came to our parks as a refuge from the stress of 2020, enjoyed their opened spaces and re-connected with nature in a safe and orderly manner.

Budgeting for the Future

By late summer 2020, the ICM structure had been in place long enough for managers to notice the trends, not only in attendance numbers, but in how visitors preferred to use the parks. It was important to capture these insights during the 2021 budget process. In a typical year, managers are asked how their budget requests fulfill our Levy Promises. However, due to COVID-19, managers were instead asked to focus on how their operations changed during the pandemic and what it might mean for the future of Metro Parks. Across many quality responses, a few themes emerged.

The first is that our core focus of Clean, Safe Parks is more important than ever. Daily efforts to sanitize facilities and equipment and to maintain social distancing were recognized by our citizen-customers time and again. Both new and returning visitors found Metro Parks to be a reliably safe option for outdoor activities during a trying time. Across the social media platforms of Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, 253 positive comments were logged under the category *Thank You for Staying Open* between March and October.

The growing demand for trails, both within and between parks, is a second theme. As an example, Sharon Woods Metro Park reported a dramatic increase of 250,000 visits in 2020. Moreover, this increase was almost exclusively for trail usage as traditional visits for picnics and programs declined. To the extent such changes are permanent, capacity issues such as parking and extended hours will need to be closely monitored.

The final theme emerging from the COVID-19 response is that technology and social media will grow in importance as tools to maximize efficiency. The most evident use of technology to assist operations in 2020 was work-from-home tools. By setting up virtual private networks and secure connections to HQ, Metro Parks Information Technology staff allowed employees to work remotely. Without this capability, Metro Parks would have fallen far behind, particularly in all the necessary administrative support functions.

Social media also played an important role, particularly in notification and pre-registration for activities and events. For instance, paddle-boarding classes were booked in small groups via Facebook, making efficient use of resources while avoiding large gatherings. Scioto Fest also used pre-registration to manage attendance. To support technology development, Metro Parks will continue to pursue connectivity improvements to allow better communication and open the door to more remote monitoring tools.

Traditional large gathering events and programming options may need to change due to social distancing guidelines. This was a disappointing reality in 2020 as some of our great events such as WagFest and Red White and Boom were cancelled. However, Metro Parks is already using technology tools to better manage smaller and safer formats.

Making progress despite setbacks

While the COVID-19 response was the primary focus, Metro Parks still accomplished many of its traditional goals in 2020. Among the most visible accomplishments was continuation of Summer Camps in 2020. Although at a lesser capacity than past years, Summer Camp activities remained open in 2020 when other options for summer were closed, providing 38 days of summer camp to 1,005 campers.

Other significant 2020 milestones included renovations to the activities building and banquet center at the golf course and a single-track mountain bike course at Quarry Trails.

Beyond the daily activities of keeping parks clean and safe, several important operational tasks continued during 2020, including controlled burns of prairies to control invasive species, deer management activities to promote healthy and sustainable wildlife, and honeysuckle removal along the Olentangy River to promote the health and beauty of a popular bike route.

In all, Metro Parks managed COVID-19 with great success, keeping our parks open and welcoming new and grateful visitors, all while improving our operations and facilities.

2021 Financial Summary

Combined General, Capital and Golf Course Funds

ESTIMATED ENDING CASH BALANCE - 12/31/20		\$16,032,146
Add: New Revenues		\$36,963,140
Total Available Cash Resources		\$52,995,286
Less Budgeted Expenses		
Salaries and Benefits, excluding golf course	\$17,278,611	
Operating and Administrative	\$5,979,828	
Enterprise Fund - Golf Course		
Salaries and Benefits	\$850,515	
Operating Load Payment	\$350,750	
 Total Operating Budget	 \$24,459,704	
Capital Improvement Projects	\$11,430,000	
Capital Improvement Projects - Golf Course	-	
 Land Acquisition	 \$3,000,000	
Total Budgeted Expenses		\$38,889,704
ESTIMATED 12/31/21 CASH BALANCE, IF ALL APPROPRIATIONS ARE FULLY EXPENDED		\$14,105,582

Projected Changes in 2021 Fund Balances

BUDGET AMOUNTS:

	FUND 27 GENERAL FUND Total	FUND 29 CAPITAL FUND Total	FUND 30 GOLF COURSE FUND Total	ALL FUNDS Total
Projected New Revenue				
Public Sources:				
Tax Levy Revenues	29,731,542			29,731,542
Local Government Fund	2,116,613			2,116,613
Grants	-	3,605,000		3,605,000
Total Public Sources	\$ 31,848,155	\$ 3,605,000	\$ -	\$ 35,453,155
Income from Operations:				
Golf Courses	-		835,150	835,150
Shelter Fees, Concessions & Special Events	212,000			212,000
Interpretive Program	115,000			115,000
House & Land Rental	129,635			129,635
Total Operational Income	\$ 456,635	\$ -	\$ 835,150	\$ 1,291,785
Interest Income	\$ 25,265	\$ 2,175		\$ 27,440
Land Acquisition Municipal Contributions		\$ -		\$ -
Donations & Bequests	\$ 12,000	\$ 70,000		\$ 82,000
Miscellaneous Receipts	\$ 108,760	\$ -		\$ 108,760
Total 2021 Projected Revenue by Fund	\$ 32,450,815	\$ 3,677,175	\$ 835,150	\$ 36,963,140
Projected Expenditures:				
Salaries	12,191,828		597,664	\$ 12,789,492
Fringe Benefits	3,134,616		161,474	3,296,090
PERS	1,783,419		82,773	1,866,192
Medicare	168,748		8,604	177,352
Salaries & Benefits	\$ 17,278,611		\$ 850,515	\$ 18,129,126
Admin	\$ 1,574,362		\$ 2,950	\$ 1,577,312
Education/Interpretive Operations	\$ 314,530			314,530
Park Maintenance	\$ 2,192,434		24,500	2,216,934
Promotion	\$ 342,900			342,900
Rental Properties	\$ 213,190			213,190
Natural Resource Management	\$ 213,275			213,275
Revenue Programs	\$ 64,935		293,300	358,235
Safety & Law Enforcement	\$ 278,262			278,262
Special Facilities	\$ 365,940			365,940
Renovations	\$ 420,000		30,000	450,000
Operating Expenses	\$ 5,979,828	\$ -	\$ 350,750	\$ 6,330,578
Capital Improvement Projects		\$ 11,430,000	\$ -	\$11,430,000
Land Acquisition		\$ 3,000,000		\$ 3,000,000
2021 Projected Expenditures by Fund	\$ 23,258,439	\$ 14,430,000	\$ 1,201,265	\$ 38,889,704
CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES	\$ 9,192,376	\$ (10,752,825)	\$ (366,115)	\$ (1,926,564)
Projected Balance 12/31/2020	\$ 11,546,243	\$ 4,344,277	\$ 141,626	\$ 16,032,146
Loan Proceeds				\$ -
Loan Payment			\$ -	\$ -
Transfer to / (from) Fund	\$ (7,375,000)	\$ 7,000,000	\$ 375,000	\$ -
Estimated Balance 12/31/2021	\$ 13,363,619	\$ 591,452	\$ 150,511	\$ 14,105,582

Sources of Revenue

Metro Parks receives revenue from multiple sources, which can be generally classified under three categories: public sources such as property tax levies and governmental grants, operational fees such as golf course revenues and fees for programs, and other sources such as donations and interest income. Total new revenue estimated for 2021 for Funds 27, 29 and 30 is \$36,963,140. This amount does not include any carryover cash at year-end 2020. An explanation of the primary sources of revenue is below.

PUBLIC SOURCES

Property Tax Levy: The 0.95 mill property tax levy is the primary source of revenue for Metro Parks. Approved by Franklin County voters in November, 2018 this levy is in place through 2029. Revenue is projected at \$29,731,542 for 2021.

Local Government Fund: This allocation from the State of Ohio to Franklin County is determined by formula per the Ohio Revised Code. Metro Parks in turn receives 5.5% of the total Franklin County allocation. The amount budgeted to be received in 2021 is \$2,116,613 per official estimates.

Governmental Grants: Metro Parks projects to receive \$3,605,000 in grants for 2021 as of the date of the budget submission. These funds are allocated to the Capital Improvements and Land Acquisition Fund (Fund 29). Should additional grant funding become available in 2021, the budget can be amended accordingly.

OPERATIONAL FEES

Golf Course receipts generated from the operation of the Blacklick Woods Golf Courses include: greens fees, cart rentals, food and beverage sales and the operation of the Eagleview rental facility. Total revenues for the golf course are projected at \$835,150 for 2020. This is a projected 13% decline from 2020 budgeted revenues as COVID-19 decreases to facility rentals are anticipated to continue into 2021.

Metro Parks has several other fee-based revenue sources, including:

- Reservable facility fees to cover the cost of maintaining picnic shelters, lodges and meeting rooms
- Special Event fees for events in the parks for which participants pay a fee
- Interpretive receipts to cover costs of providing nature education presentations
- Rental income for various properties and agricultural lease payments

Total General Fund fee-based revenues for 2021 are projected at \$341,635.

Sources of Revenue, continued

OTHER SOURCES

Investment Income: Due to the federal reserve reducing interest rates to near zero in 2020, investment income dropped significantly relative to projections. For 2021, investment income is projected at \$27,440, a decrease of 90 percent. This coincides with the percentage drop in interest rates from 2019 to 2020. The assumption that rates will stay near zero for the next few years has been drawn from multiple sources. To maximize available returns and liquidity, Metro Parks will continue to request tax advances and make deposits in an expeditious manner.

Miscellaneous: Other revenues of an unpredictable nature include, but are not limited to: court fines, damage settlements, refunds on prior year payments of property taxes, reimbursements, and sales of assets.

Donations and Bequests: Metro Parks receives donations of varying amounts from many sources with various levels of restrictions upon those receipts. Unrestricted donations are recorded in the General Fund.

Four special revenue funds have been established in honor of Allen F. Beck, J.C. Hambleton, E.S. Thomas, and Marian K. and Albert H. Thomas, which are in the Metro Parks' treasury. The Beck Fund and the Marian K. and Albert H. Thomas funds are expendable (i.e. principal and earnings are expendable), while the other two funds are classified as non-expendable (only interest earned on the principal may be spent).

Additionally, the Columbus Foundation manages the investment of assets of the *Inniswood Fund of Metro Parks*. The focus of this fund is to support the cost of capital improvements and the maintenance of the Inniswood Metro Gardens. A withdrawal of \$250,000 from this fund in January, 2020 supported the replacement of irrigation systems at Inniswood Gardens.

Revenues and Combined Fund Balances

	2019 Actual	2020 Projected Actual 11/24/20	2020 Budget	2021 Budget	2020 Budget v. 2021 Budget Inc (Dec)	% Change Inc (Dec)
NEW REVENUES: GOVT (27, 29) & ENTERPRISE (30) FUNDS						
Public Sources:						
Property Tax Levy - 0.75 mill, 0.95 as of 2020	20,481,092	29,512,111	28,903,215	29,731,542	828,327	2.87%
LGF	2,541,167	2,507,965	2,570,763	2,116,613	(454,150)	-17.67%
Grants	2,021,361	1,729,027	2,512,915	3,605,000	1,092,085	43.46%
Total Public Sources	25,043,620	33,749,103	33,986,893	35,453,155	1,466,262	4.31%
Operational Sources:						
Revenues from Golf Course Operations	958,000	738,523	961,120	835,150	(125,970)	-13.11%
Revenues from Park Operations:						
Shelter Fees, Special Events & Concessions	436,247	56,745	425,000	212,000	(213,000)	-50.12%
Interpretive Programs	239,650	141,657	240,000	115,000	(125,000)	-52.08%
House & Land Rental	154,149	125,440	112,000	129,635	17,635	15.75%
Total Income from Operational Sources	1,788,046	1,062,365	1,738,120	1,291,785	(320,365)	-25.68%
Governmental Partnership Contributions	-	-	-	-		
Income from Investment	285,932	90,834	284,000	27,440	(256,560)	-90.34%
Wetlands Credits	26,000	306,000	-	-		
Donations & Bequests	19,999	8,101	312,000	82,000	(230,000)	-73.72%
Miscellaneous Receipts (settlements, refunds, salvage sale)	338,105	111,876	126,450	108,760	(17,690)	-13.99%
TOTAL NEW REVENUES	27,501,702	35,328,279	36,447,463	36,963,140	515,677	1.41%
Transfer From - Columbus Foundation		250,000				
BEG FUND BALANCES	11,354,102	11,980,400	11,980,400	16,032,146 (proj. 11/24/2020)	4,051,746	33.82%
FUND BALANCES PLUS NEW REVENUES (exc. Interfund transfers)	38,855,804	47,558,679	48,427,863	52,995,286	4,567,423	9.43%
OTHER FUNDS PRIOR BALANCE						
Expendable (Beck & Thomas)	406,821	446,730	446,534	481,521		
Expendable (E.S. Thomas, Hambleton)	114,381	122,557	122,588	127,813		
Non- Expendable (E.S Thomas, Hambleton)	97,796	97,796	97,796	97,796		0.00%
Columbus Foundation Inniswood Fund	497,003	324,160	497,003	284,452		-42.77%
Plus: Current Year Projected Income	12,066	2,615	7,000	207		-97.04%
Plus: Donations & Bequests	36,020	37,430	34,000	34,000		0.00%
GRAND TOTAL ALL FUNDS	40,019,890	48,589,967	49,632,784	54,021,075	4,567,423	8.84%

Summary of Expenditures

Administrative and Park Operations

The materials and supplies, services, equipment and renovations portion of the budget includes all of the operating expenses required to maintain the park district, exclusive of employee salary and benefits costs and those large dollar items classified as capital improvement projects.

The total 2021 budget for these items is \$6,330,578, of which \$5,979,828 is allocated to the General Fund (Fund 27) and \$350,750 to the Golf Course (Fund 30).

Specifically, this portion of the budget contains: materials and supplies, contracted services, equipment, renovations, information technology items, community partnership expenses and other miscellaneous costs. These budget items are carefully reviewed annually during budget meetings with a focus on achieving Metro Parks' goals.

The materials and supplies request includes: vehicle fuel, building and grounds maintenance materials, office supplies, uniform expenses, housekeeping items, educational supplies for programs, and minor equipment and tools for all of the district's park locations and programs. From road salt and grass seed to light bulbs and paint, this category captures all the district's operating supplies costs.

The services category includes: utilities, trash removal, vehicle maintenance, telephone and internet access, equipment rental and other necessary services. Whether a regular expense like the electricity bill or a special need such as rental equipment, this category captures required outside services items.

Equipment purchases for 2021 are budgeted at \$744,600 to meet the needs of the district and will be approved by Resolution of the Board of Park Commissioners prior to purchase if the cost exceeds \$50,000. This category includes items such as trucks and grounds maintenance equipment along with safety items such as surveillance cameras and radio equipment. Page 14 details the equipment requests for 2021.

Summary of Expenditures Administrative and Park Operations

Renovations for 2021 of \$420,000 are also incorporated into this portion of the budget to maintain, improve and expand the wide variety of facilities and structures across the district.

Sample categories of renovation expenditures include:

- Improvements to buildings and shelters such as roof repairs, painting, power washing and flooring (\$166,000).
- Various replacement items such as outdoor recreation equipment and dog park improvements (\$66,000).
- Trail, bridge and walkway repairs or improvements (\$59,000).
- Landscaping and grounds improvements such as trees, parking lot repairs and signage upgrades (\$36,500).

The expenses of the Information Systems section are part of both the materials and supplies and contracted services categories for budgeting purposes, but were singled out in the budget process to maintain information systems that are integrated district-wide while meeting applicable security and compatibility standards. Software, hardware and technical support contracts are increasingly being budgeted within this budget center rather than at the park level.

The 2021 budget reflects the continuing desire of Metro Parks to meet or exceed the existing standards of service to the community that we have established in terms of administration, maintenance, programming, customer service, law enforcement and natural resource management.

Expenditure Summary

Comparison of 2020 Projected Actual and 2021 Budget

CATEGORY	2019 Actual	2020 Projected Actual	2020 Budget	2021 Budget	% Change Budget to Budget
Personnel (from Fund 27)					
Salaries (including merit increases)	10,335,637	10,884,758	11,687,502	12,191,828	4.32 %
Employee Benefits	2,975,941	2,921,986	3,081,102	3,134,616	1.74 %
PERS	1,526,467	1,609,926	1,734,568	1,783,419	2.82 %
Medicare	140,848	147,956	166,929	168,748	1.09 %
Total Benefits	4,643,256	4,679,868	4,982,599	5,086,783	2.09 %
Other - Prior Year	-	-	-	-	-
Subtotal	14,978,893	15,564,626	16,670,101	17,278,611	3.65 %
Park Ops & Admin (from Fund 27)					
Admin	1,194,764	1,471,161	1,491,828	1,574,362	5.53 %
Education/Interpretive Operations	293,877	191,242	310,080	314,530	1.44 %
Park Maintenance	2,103,995	2,232,984	2,443,989	2,192,434	(10.29) %
Promotion	549,521	302,595	486,808	342,900	(29.56) %
Rental Properties	194,634	187,637	218,380	213,190	(2.38) %
Natural Resource Management	165,052	217,439	213,275	213,275	- %
Revenue Programs	46,699	44,674	60,245	64,935	7.78 %
Safety & Law Enforcement	294,614	336,733	309,224	278,262	(10.01) %
Special Facilities	178,761	163,995	363,440	365,940	0.69 %
Renovations	410,658	476,306	424,400	420,000	(1.04) %
Other - Prior Year	-	-	-	-	-
Subtotal	5,432,575	5,624,766	6,321,669	5,979,828	(5.41) %
Capital Improvement Projects (Fund 29)					
Capital Improvement Projects	-	-	-	-	- %
Miscellaneous	2,212	1,170	-	-	- %
Building Construction	214,461	203,190	3,500,000	5,100,000	- %
Facility Improvements	77,185	194,385	140,000	80,000	- %
Natural Resource Improvements	60,505	1,029,605	350,000	1,000,000	- %
Planning	407,176	503,130	-	-	- %
Site Improvements	2,171,652	5,275,653	3,857,000	4,480,000	- %
Utilities	57,834	49,710	1,050,000	770,000	- %
Other - Prior Year	-	-	-	-	-
Subtotal	2,991,025	7,256,843	8,897,000	11,430,000	28 %
Land Acquisition	2,124,461	1,861,375	2,500,000	3,000,000	- %
Other - Prior Year	-	-	-	-	-
Land Acquisition (from Fund 29)	2,124,461	1,861,375	2,500,000	3,000,000	20.00 %
TOTAL ANTICIPATED EXPENDITURES - FUNDS 27 & 29					
	25,526,954	30,307,610	34,388,770	37,688,439	9.60 %
ENTERPRISE FUND EXP. - Golf Course Personnel					
Salaries (including merit increases)	573,191	582,785	625,242	597,664	(4.41) %
Employee Benefits	150,107	141,969	148,756	161,474	8.55 %
PERS	79,909	78,417	85,983	82,773	(3.73) %
Medicare	7,222	7,622	7,913	8,604	8.73 %
Total Benefits	237,238	228,009	242,652	252,851	4.20 %
Subtotal	810,429	810,793	867,894	850,515	(2.00) %
Operations	538,043	408,130	385,150	350,750	(8.93) %
Capital Improvement Projects	-	-	-	-	- %
Other - Prior Year	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL ENTERPRISE FUND FUND 30	1,348,472	1,218,923	1,253,044	1,201,265	(4.13) %
TOTAL ANTICIPATED EXPENDITURE ALL FUNDS					
	26,875,426	31,526,534	35,641,814	38,889,704	9.11 %

Equipment Budget Highlights

Below is the recommended 2021 equipment budget, with items equal to or exceeding \$20,000 in value listed with a brief item description. While not listed individually below, a total of \$340,300 is also allocated for equipment items at locations across the district with unit costs below \$20,000. Purchases over \$50,000 must be approved by a Board of Park Commissioners resolution.

Park Location	Item Description	Budget for 2021
Clear Creek	Truck with plow and salt spreader	\$35,000
Pickerington Ponds	Truck with plow and salt spreader	\$35,000
Glacier Ridge	Toro Workman w/ accessories	\$34,000
Quarry Trails	Ranger Truck	\$30,000
Battelle Darby Creek	Ranger Truck	\$30,000
Operations	Fleet Truck	\$30,000
Golf Course	Turf Sprayer	\$28,000
Golf Course	Turf Vehicle	\$28,000
Blacklick Woods	Toro Workman	\$26,300
Pickerington Ponds	Replace Polaris UTV	\$25,000
Scioto Grove	UTV	\$23,000
Slate Run	Kubota RTV	\$20,000
Clear Creek	Mower	\$20,000
Operations	Surveillance Cameras	\$20,000
Scioto Audubon	Ranger Truck (no 4x4)	\$20,000
Multiple Park locations	Includes: lawn mowers, leaf blowers, chainsaws, power washers, trash cans, tools, recreational equipment, information technology equipment, security equipment and other equipment items	\$340,300
	Total 2021 Equipment Budget	\$744,600

Summary of Personnel Expenditures

Metro Parks persevered through one of its greatest challenges ever in 2020 when COVID-19 struck. While a difficult period, the pandemic demonstrated that our employees are adaptable, responsive and customer-focused.

As a result, the 2021 performance evaluation merit systems will look different. Employees' merit will reflect their roles under the ICM structure as well as other performance factors. Development goals will be established looking forward to new projects, timelines and achievements in a post-pandemic scenario.

As a result of the new collective bargaining agreement that went into effect February 1, 2020 with full-time park rangers, those employees will now be part of the merit system in 2021.

The employee recognition program is funded in the personnel expenditures budget. This program allows for timely recognition of employee efforts that significantly contribute to meeting the district's goals and objectives.

As recruitment for several positions was placed on hold during 2020, attention will be directed on filling those vacancies. The past year has allowed for a review of such vacancies and, in some cases, positions will be eliminated or reclassified in 2021. Metro Parks continues its process for evaluating positions for necessity, functionality and proper placement within the organization.

The Franklin County Benefits program offered to Metro Parks was able to realize savings in 2020, primarily due to the reduction of medical appointments, surgeries and treatments during the Governor's stay-at-home order in the early months of the pandemic. Therefore, the insurance premiums did not increase for 2021, keeping both Metro Parks and the employees' contributions at the same rate as 2020.

Proposed Positions FY 2021 Budget

In 2020, many seasonal, part-time and even some full-time positions were not filled. Going into 2021, each vacant position will be reviewed for operational necessity, proper classification, location and maximum efficiency. In the event of changes to existing positions, Metro Parks will stay within budgeted levels provided by these vacancies.

For 2021, a summary of all proposed newly created positions are below.

Four New Full-Time Positions (Total cost: \$244,489)

The 2021 budget includes four additional full-time staff additions, three FT Park Technician positions and one FT Ranger.

Full-time Park Technicians (3 total) are requested for Blendon Woods, Sharon Woods and Quarry Trails, respectively. These positions will perform general maintenance for parks, including grounds maintenance, basic repairs and maintaining the general cleanliness of park trails and facilities. These positions will assist in achieving the proper standard of care for these established and growing parks. These positions will likely be filled at different times during 2021 as needs dictate.

Quarry Trails requires a full-time Ranger position to cope with growing needs as this park becomes operational. Duties will include: opening and closing of park facilities, patrolling park areas, emergency and incident response, general maintenance, park sanitation, assisting with event coverage and programming, safety inspections and emergency medical response.

Personnel Analysis

Budget vs Budget

TOTAL PERSONNEL COSTS:

	2021	2020 Budget	% Change	\$ Change	Notes
EXCLUDING NEW POSITIONS	17,884,637	16,676,564	7.24%	1,208,073	
INCLUDING NEW POSITIONS	18,129,126	17,537,995	3.37%	591,131	1

Notes

1

This incorporates several current budgeted vacancies

Projected Actual vs Budget

	2021 Proposed Budget	2020 Projected Actual	% Change #	2020 Budget	% Change ##
PERSONNEL COSTS:					
Staffing/FT & PT positions:					
Salaries	11,980,456	\$ 11,290,543	6.11%	\$ 10,899,711	3.94%
New Positions	244,489			861,431	
Health Care Benefits	3,265,756	3,044,955	7.25%	3,086,808	5.80%
PERS	1,866,192	1,688,343	10.53%	1,820,550	2.51%
Medicare	177,352	155,578	14.00%	174,842	1.44%
Salaries and Benefits Total	17,534,245	16,179,419	8.37%	16,843,342	4.10%
OTHER APPROPRIATIONS:					
Merit	292,912	-		388,803	-24.66%
Uniform Allowance	36,800	-		36,800	0.00%
Claims-based Expenses:					
Retirements*	127,500	55,000	131.82%	105,000	21.43%
Unemployment	25,000	19,000	31.58%	21,000	19.05%
Workers Comp	112,669	122,000	-7.65%	143,050	-21.24%
Total Other Appropriations	594,881	196,000	203.51%	694,653	-14.36%
TOTAL PERSONNEL	\$18,129,126	\$ 16,375,419	10.71%	\$ 17,537,995	3.37%

* (Accrued vacation / sick leave payments)

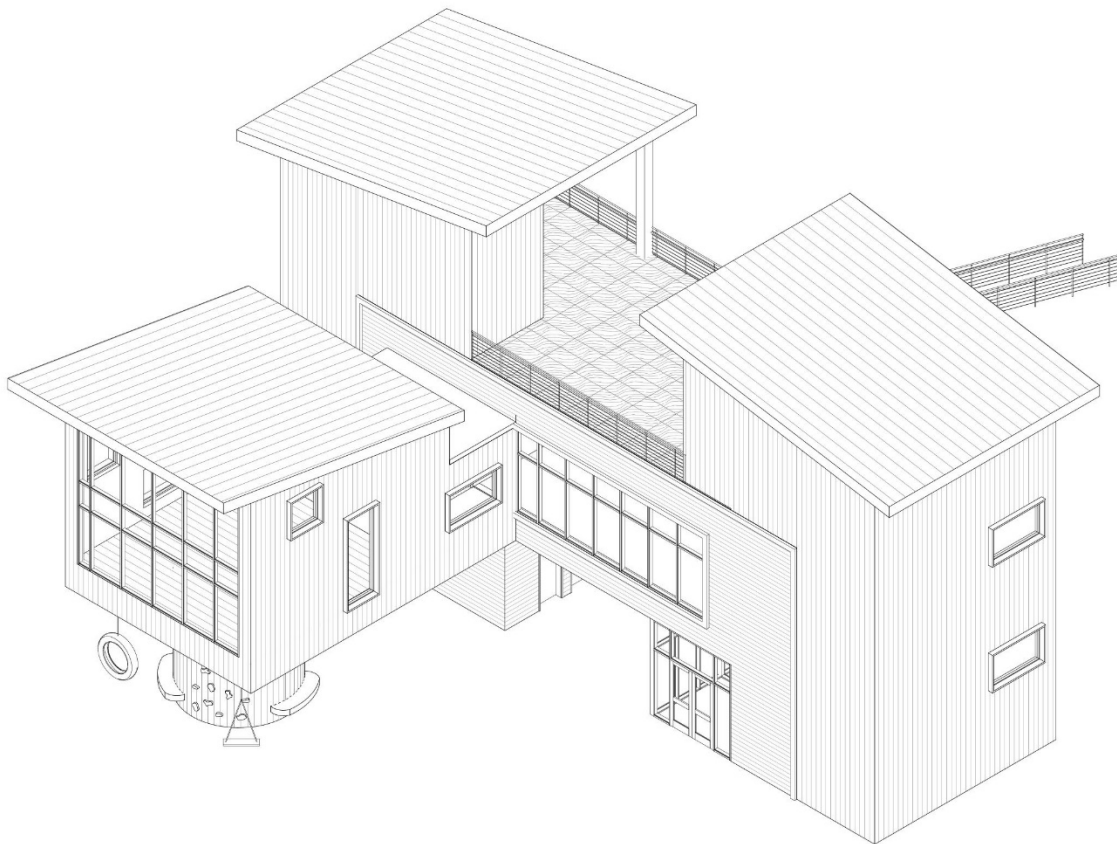
% Change is showing the change from 2021 proposed budget to the 2020 projected actual

% Change is showing the change from 2021 proposed budget to the 2020 Budget

2021 Capital Improvement Program

The total allocation for the 2021 Capital Improvements Program is \$14,430,000. Amounts by project are listed below. As with all capital projects and land acquisition efforts, supporting funds through grants or other means will be sought. Several projects are, in whole or in part, a continuation of projects proposed in the 2020 Capital Improvement Program, but due to the COVID-19 operational focus on clean, safe parks, these projects were deferred to 2021. Any project meeting that criteria is identified with an asterisk (*) after the project name.

Blacklick Woods Treehouse * (\$4,500,000): Construction of a new, 3-story nature center at Blacklick Woods to replace the current structure which is too small and beyond its useful life. This new nature center will include public restrooms servicing that area of the park, an observation roof deck, a canopy-walk, a children's activity area known as *The Fort*, along with flexible program space. See the artist rendering below.



2021 Capital Improvement Program

Land Acquisition (\$3,000,000): To continue the growth of Metro Parks, these funds are allocated for strategic land acquisition as opportunities arise. As in years past, Metro Parks actively pursues grants to support land acquisition, potentially increasing this item in 2021.

Quarry Trails Development * (\$2,500,000): Numerous facilities and land improvements will be constructed in 2021 with the goal of opening much of the park by the fall of 2021. Specific projects include construction of a roadway, parking lot, dog park, numerous trails, a park office, maintenance building, restrooms and utilities.

Homestead Park Improvements * (\$1,000,000): This will fund a major overhaul of the park. Current issues with poor traffic flow and congestion, along with antiquated recreational equipment and facilities will be remedied. Specific improvements include new traffic patterns, parking, upgraded trails, additional restrooms and shelters, a redesigned play area and improved connection to the Heritage Trail.

Clear Creek WRSSP Project: (\$750,000): This project will address major stream erosion issues along Clear Creek and Clear Creek Road. As the largest dedicated state nature preserve in Ohio, the bank stabilization needs are critical, along with removal of dilapidated bridges and habitat restoration along lengthy stretches of the creek. Continued erosion will compromise Clear Creek Road, presenting a potentially unsafe condition for visitors. Much of the project cost will be paid through an approved WRSSP grant.

District-wide fiber connectivity * (\$650,000): After completing district-wide assessment of internet, phone and alarm systems, Metro Parks determined that legacy communications systems often fail to provide basic connectivity and cannot offer reliable, high-speed services that are increasingly expected. Development of connectivity solutions for several parks will continue in 2021.

Hoover YMCA Initial Development: (\$400,000): Since the purchase of the property in 2020, plans have developed to transform this site into an operational park. Funds will focus on trails development, building renovations, upgrading of restrooms and utilities and water access.

District-wide Paving and Trail Repair projects (\$320,000): These funds will address major repaving at Glacier Ridge's Ironweed Trail and paving and repairs to asphalt along the Greenways trails. Funds will be used to supplement ODOT funds that are expected to be available on July 1, 2021 to facilitate major road and parking lot repaving.

Pickerington Ponds Burning Lake (\$300,000): These funds will continue development of the Burning Lake area of Pickerington Ponds with a specific emphasis on visitor amenities including picnic shelters, restrooms, trail and deck development, and completion of the roadway and parking lot. These efforts will complement other projects funded in prior budgets.

2021 Capital Improvement Program

Clear Creek Maintenance Shop (\$300,000): The current maintenance facility is dilapidated and too remote and small to be of practical use to park staff. This will fund a structure, likely pre-fabricated, to allow for efficient and effective park maintenance operations.

District-wide resource management (\$250,000): Priorities in resource management include invasive species removal, tree plantings, and development of vernal pools and other resource management features at property acquired in 2020 that will expand Battelle Darby Creek Metro Park. Funds will also be used for replacement trees and reforestation efforts throughout Metro Parks.

Blendon Woods waterline replacement (\$120,000): This request is to replace the water distribution system at the park as the original system dates to 1975. This was proposed as a 2020 Capital Improvement Project but was deferred due to a focus on the impact of COVID-19.

Blendon Woods Cherry Bottom Trail Connection: (\$100,000): This project will develop a trail connection between the Big Walnut Greenway Trail and Blendon Woods Metro Park, making Blendon Woods more accessible to a large number of neighbors. This trail will eventually connect to the Big Woods property, Hoover Reservoir and Rocky Fork Metro Park.

Sharon Woods Annehurst Connector: (\$100,000): This project will fund construction of a trail access to the multi-use trail at Sharon Woods Metro Park from Main Street, providing increased accessibility to Sharon Woods Metro Park from the Annehurst neighborhood in Westerville and numerous neighborhoods in Columbus on the west side of Interstate 71. Currently, those residents must drive to the Cleveland Avenue entrance. This project will also facilitate programming in conjunction with the Annehurst School.

Highbanks Powell Road Barn Improvements (\$50,000): These funds will extend the useful life of the largest remaining barn in Delaware County. Improvements will be made to the roof, siding, windows and other miscellaneous features. In time, the barn will become a programming destination in the park.

New windows at Sharon Woods HQ (\$30,000): This will fund replacement of windows in the center section of the headquarters building. Due to poor insulation, storm windows and increasing need for repairs, this expense is determined to be a necessary expense to significantly extend the life of the building.

District-wide signage: (\$30,000): Metro Parks will continue to upgrade signage for visitor orientation and interpretation at various parks as needs and opportunities arise.

District-wide demolition: (\$30,000): These funds are dedicated to demolishing structures that were inherited or which have fallen into disrepair and for which the district has no public use.

Land Acquisition

The 2021 Metro Parks budget proposal allocates \$3,000,000 for land acquisition. These funds will allow Metro Parks to pursue strategic land acquisition opportunities and to participate in grant programs that require matching funds.

The land acquisition budget supports several of the Levy Promises outlined in the 2018 levy campaign, including:

Levy Promise #2: Open three new parks (in various areas of Franklin County)

Levy Promise #4: Reforest 1,000 acres and foster wetlands and native prairie

Levy Promise #6: Create 50 miles of new trails

Levy Promise #11: Link parks to other points of interest via Greenway trails

Metro Parks will continue to apply for grants to support land acquisition whenever possible.

No properties will be purchased unless specific authorization for each property is received from the Board of Park Commissioners and funds are available at the time of purchase.

Blacklick Woods Golf Course

2021 GOLF COURSE BUDGET

Revenues. Golf course earned revenues of \$835,150 are projected for 2021, consistent with the actual revenues received in 2020, but a 13% decline from the 2020 budgeted amount of \$961,120. While greens fee revenues are projected to remain steady in 2021, assumptions about the lingering effects of COVID-19 on facility rentals, program revenues and pro-shop sales are the cause of the projected decreases. Should rental activity at the Eagleview facility return to or exceed levels seen before the pandemic, revenue could increase significantly.

Expenditures. No additional staff are budgeted at the golf course for 2021 and equipment requests have been limited to necessary maintenance equipment, including vehicles to maintain and improve course turf.

While a major funding of half the golf cart fleet (35 carts) was funded in 2019, no additional carts are funded in 2021. In 2022 and beyond, the golf course should be on a limited pattern of purchasing replacement golf carts, to maintain a sustainable annual capital equipment replacement schedule.

The projected net of all golf course revenues and expenditures for 2021 results in a budgeted transfer amount of \$375,000 from the General Fund.

Golf Course Projected Income

	2020 Budget	2020 Projected (As of Nov 2020)	2021 Budget
<u>REVENUES</u>			
Golf fees, cart rental, merchandise, concessions	\$ 961,120	\$ 738,523	\$ 835,150
<u>EXPENSES</u>			
Personnel:			
Salaries	625,242	582,785	597,664
Benefits, PERS, Medicare	242,652	228,009	252,851
Total Personnel Costs	\$ 867,894	\$ 810,794	\$ 850,515
Operating Costs (non-personnel)	385,150	408,130	350,750
Capital Improvement Projects			-
Loan Payment	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 1,253,044	\$ 1,218,924	\$ 1,201,265
NET INCOME	\$ (291,924)	\$ (480,401)	\$ (366,115)
BEGINNING YEAR FUND BALANCE	\$ 97,627	\$ 142,027	\$ 141,626
TRANSFER FROM OTHER FUNDS	\$ 300,000	\$ 480,000	\$ 375,000
YEAR-END FUND BALANCE	\$ 105,703	\$ 141,626	\$ 150,511

Transfers to the Golf Course will only be made as necessary for cash flow purposes

Appropriations

Based on 2021 Budget Proposal

The proposed budget for Metro Parks for the fiscal year 2021 is summarized below. The total budget is appropriated by fund, and the amount to be appropriated by each fund is listed below. The appropriation for Fund 27 includes an interfund transfer amount which is the movement of monies between funds, but not an expense paid to others. Any disbursement of funds, including transfers between funds, must be an approved appropriation. These appropriations are being recommended for approval by the Board of Park Commissioners.

TOTAL 2021 APPROPRIATIONS

Personnel		17,278,611
Non-Personnel		5,979,828
Inter Fund Transfer		7,375,000
Fund 27 Total	\$	30,633,439
Capital Projects & Land Acquisition	\$	14,430,000
Fund 29 Total	\$	14,430,000
Golf Course Personnel	\$	850,515
Non-Personnel	\$	350,750
Fund 30 Total	\$	1,201,265
Grand Total	\$	<u>46,264,704</u>

Notes:

(1) The total budget for 2021 excluding interfund transfers is \$38,889,704

(2) 2020 encumbrances will be identified and carried forward as of 12/31/2020 and are not included above. The 2021 budget may be amended accordingly.