

# METRO PARKS ANNUAL REPORT & 2024 BUDGET REQUEST





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[Front cover photo: Virginia Gordon]

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# OVERVIEW & HIGHLIGHTS



To: BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
COLUMBUS & FRANKLIN COUNTY METROPOLITAN PARK DISTRICT  
**Aryeh Alex**  
**JB Hadden**  
**George McCue**

cc: FRANKLIN COUNTY PROBATE COURT JUDGE  
**Jeffrey D Mackey**

From: **Tim Moloney**, Executive Director  
**Larry Peck**, Deputy Director  
**Rick McGivern**, Finance Director and Treasurer  
**Renee Telfer**, Human Resources Director

Re: **2024 Proposed Budget**

On behalf of the staff of Metro Parks, our Executive Team is pleased to present for your consideration the 2024 Annual Report and Budget Request.

With your approval, Metro Parks will maintain its focus of clean, safe parks and provide for the natural space and outdoor recreation needs of the residents of central Ohio at a low cost. Adoption of the annual budget by board resolution is both a legal requirement and a critical management tool, allocating limited resources to our most important priorities.

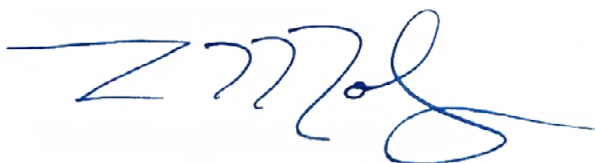
In 2023, Metro Parks forged ahead with several new and innovative projects designed to enhance the visitor experience and draw more central Ohio residents into the parks. We have also reclaimed areas to a natural state to benefit the environment.

In 2024, Metro Parks will continue to seek efficiencies in operations while investing in our people, equipment and facilities, as detailed herein.

The Vision of Metro Parks is to: *Change Lives...Naturally*. This budget provides the blueprint for achieving that vision while acting as a careful steward of taxpayer funds. Metro Parks will likely experience rapid growth and change in the years to come, which heightens our challenges and opportunities as the largest metropolitan parks system in Ohio.

The entire team at Metro Parks is deeply appreciative of the stewardship and guiding direction provided by the Board of Park Commissioners. We look forward to 2024 as another opportunity to share the wonderful natural resources and opportunities offered at Metro Parks.

Respectfully submitted,



Tim Moloney, Executive Director  
Columbus & Franklin County Metropolitan Park District

# Budget Summary

## Total Appropriations

The 2024 Budget Request totals \$54,015,136. This includes all appropriations for personnel, operating expenses, equipment purchases, capital improvements, land purchases, Blacklick Woods Golf Course operations and all Interfund transfers.

## Total Revenues

Total combined new revenues for the General Fund, Capital Improvements Fund and the Golf Course Fund are estimated at \$39,414,916 for 2024. Approximately 78% of this revenue is derived from our 0.95 mill operating levy. The Franklin County Auditor's office provides the official estimate which is used in this budget request, an estimate that includes the most recently available data on property valuations, effective tax rates and historical actual collections. An additional 8% is Local Government Funding from the State of Ohio, for which an official estimate is provided in August each year. Remaining significant revenues are reimbursement-based grants, fees for rentals and programs, and interest income.

## General Fund

The General Fund captures the bulk of the park district's operating costs, equipment, vehicles and the renovations not included in the capital improvements budget. Requested appropriations, exclusive of transfers to the Capital Improvements Fund, total \$28,563,133.

## Capital Improvements Fund

The specific capital improvement requests for 2024 are detailed on pages 63–65, including land acquisition. \$14,930,000 is budgeted for 2024.

## Blacklick Woods Golf Course Fund

The Golf Course is projected to earn revenues of \$1,525,000 in 2024, primarily from greens fees, driving range fees and rental of the Eagleview venue.

## Fund Balances

Year-end fund balances for all Funds are detailed on pages 51-52. Over the course of the 10-year levy cycle, Metro Parks expects to draw down these balances as revenues are expected to remain largely flat but expenditures will grow due to inflation, additional land purchases and increasing operating and capital costs as new parks come online.

# 2023 Year in Review

Throughout 2023, Metro Parks kept its core focus on Clean, Safe Parks, while forging ahead with several major projects, all designed to improve and expand the park experience for our visitors.

Bold and unique new projects such as the Canopy Walk at Blacklick Woods and the Fire Tower at Scioto Grove will offer fulfilling experiences for visitors for years to come. Other major capital projects focused on improved service and functionality for Metro Parks. Nearly 7 miles of trails were paved, trail access was improved, while fiber optic expansion increased parks connectivity and communications.

Our continued focus on natural areas restoration was evident by our completion of the first **H2Ohio** project in Franklin County in conjunction with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. The Walnut Creek Treatment Wetland Restoration project will improve water quality by allowing Walnut Creek to flow through wetlands, allowing pollutants to settle and slowing the flow of the waterway.

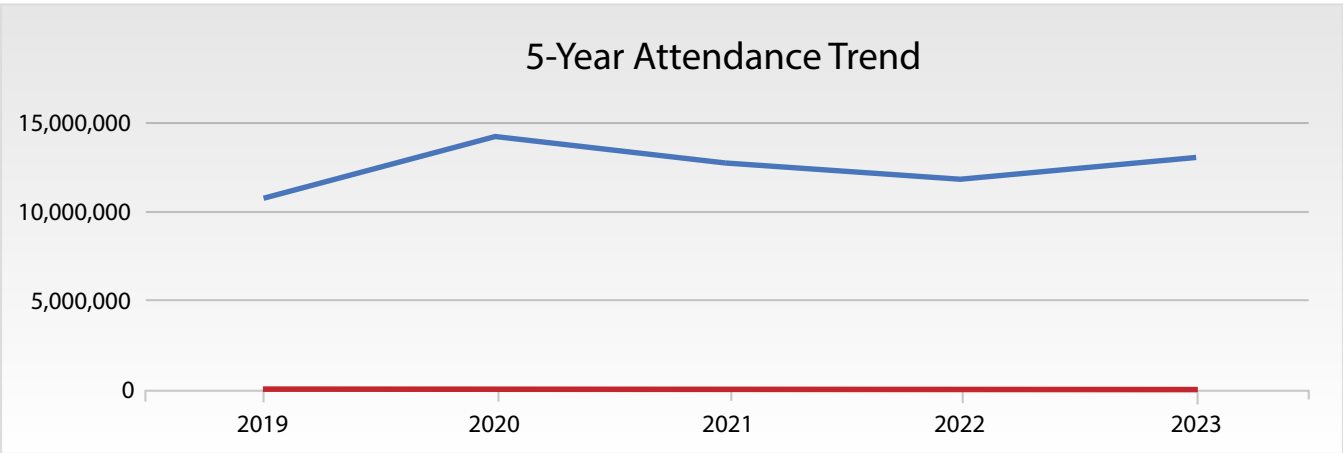
To serve our fast-growing customer base in central Ohio, Metro Parks continued to pursue unique options for park expansion, such as reclamation of former quarries to both expand recreational opportunities and provide waterway and bike path connectors across the region, even as land for parks becomes scarce.

Since the huge spike in attendance during the COVID restrictions of 2020, attendance appears to have stabilized at a new normal well above visitor attendance levels from 2018 and 2019. Metro Parks looks forward to the challenge of offering our parks to more visitors. Recent attendance trends are below.

Metro Parks Attendance, 2019–2023

2019 (Actual)	2020 (Actual)	2021 (Actual)	2022 (Actual)	2023* (Projected)
10,689,240	14,192,470	12,715,771	12,139,620	12,824,120

\* 2023 figures are actuals through September 2023, plus 2022 figures for October through December





Outdoor recreational opportunities were once again popular in 2023. The Outdoor Adventure programs expanded to offer more chances for visitors to kayak and paddleboard on our many lakes and even offered our new and unique Via Ferrata at Quarry Trails. It was also a year of festival-like experiences, as evidenced by strong attendance at **SciotoFest**, **WagFest**, and **FallFest**, among many other events.

Metro Parks also expanded its acreage through targeted land acquisition, upgraded facilities, equipment and vehicles despite supply chain challenges, improved roads and trails, added playgrounds and expanded the use of technology. Also, the Blacklick Woods Golf Course had another banner year of attendance while offering recreation for free at our learning course.

By all accounts, 2023 was another great year for Metro Parks.



Liz Christian

# ABOUT METRO PARKS





# Metro Parks History & Community Profile

Columbus & Franklin County Metro Parks, better known as Metro Parks, was created in 1945 with broad community support. An independent political subdivision of the State of Ohio, Metro Parks is governed now, as it was then, by a three-member, unpaid Board of Park Commissioners, appointed by the Probate Court Judge of Franklin County to alternating three-year terms.

The early years of Metro Parks saw many important accomplishments, such as hiring its first leaders, finding office space and identifying lands for future parks. By 1948, the park district had its first parcel of land, a 113-acre tract that became the core of what is now Blacklick Woods Metro Park.

A big obstacle in those early days was funding to support daily park operations, popular nature programs and land purchases. Donations of time and land helped the fledgling park district immensely, but more was needed for the park district to grow.

By the late 1950s the park district’s few small parks were bursting at the seams with guests and demand was high for picnic areas, nature programs and open spaces. The post-WW II suburban expansion was transforming the American landscape and Columbus was no exception. The suburbs were here to stay and so was the demand for more parks.

In 1960, 15 years after its founding, the first levy was approved, a 0.30 millage (mill) levy to purchase land. All these years later, despite fast-growing land prices and tax laws that restrict the revenue growth of levies, Metro Parks has maintained a funding mechanism below 1.00 mill.

## Levy Growth Over the Decades

Levy Year	Levy Request	Millage	Approval Rate
1960	Initial Levy	0.30	61.00%
1970	Renewal	0.30 + 0.00 = 0.30	55.40%
1979	Renewal	0.23 + 0.00 = 0.23	64.16%
1989	Replace & Increase	0.23 + 0.32 = 0.55	62.36%
1999	Replace & Increase	0.55 + 0.10 = 0.65	58.96%
2009	Replace & Increase	0.65 + 0.10 = 0.75	57.83%
2018	Replace & Increase	0.75 + 0.20 = 0.95	67.26%

The consistent generosity of Franklin County residents has provided Metro Parks with the necessary resources to serve a population of more than two million residents in central Ohio, with a wide diversity of parks, conservation efforts and recreational outlets, all of which are detailed in this document.

Metro Parks benefits from, and contributes to, a consistently strong central Ohio economy. Central Ohio has outperformed the state of Ohio and the nation across a number of economic metrics for several years, such as unemployment rates and economic growth per capita. These measurements reflect a job market characterized by above average education levels and wages.

The foundation of this economic strength is a diversity of employers. Growth is driven by a wide range of private sector employers across many industries, complimented by the stability of major public sector employers and large-scale institutions of higher education and healthcare.

The table below indicates how central Ohio compares to Ohio and the US, across a number of categories.

## Central Ohio Economic Indicators

	Metro Area	Ohio	U.S.
Bachelor's Degree %	37.9%	29.3%	33.1%
Median Age	36.4	39.6	38.5
Median Household Income	\$71,839	\$62,262	\$69,717
Below Poverty Line	12.2%	13.4%	12.8%
Employment Rate	63.6%	59.1%	58.6%

Sources: US Census Bureau (Census Reporter Community Profiles 2019)

In summary, Metro Parks operates in an economic region that is predicted to experience above average growth for years to come and the need for parks will continue to grow as well.



Susan Moore

# Strategic Planning

## Mission, Vision, Values and Core Convictions

Metro Parks actively engages in strategic planning as a way to focus efforts and resources toward the achievement of goals that our guests expect. The core of the strategic planning process is our **Statement of Mission, Vision, Values and Core Convictions**, which are detailed below:

### Mission

To conserve open spaces, while providing places and opportunities that encourage people to discover and experience nature

### Vision

Change Lives... Naturally

### Values

Excellence, Integrity, Respect, Teamwork, Leadership, Accountability, Communication

### Core Convictions

We put customers first. We make situations better. We make central Ohio extraordinary.

## Levy Promises

Metro Parks tied strategic planning to specific, measurable goals during the 2018 Levy campaign, with the **Levy Promises** detailed below. This focuses our daily efforts for the duration of the levy cycle.

- ✓ Clean, safe parks
- ✓ Three new parks
- ✓ New or remodeled nature centers at Blacklick Woods and Blendon Woods Metro Parks
- ✓ Reforest 1,000 acres, create 500 acres of wetlands, reintroduce 500 acres of native prairie
- ✓ Technology improvements at parks
- ✓ Fifty miles of new trails
- ✓ Reinvestment in all existing parks
- ✓ Non-traditional opportunities for guests age 50 and older
- ✓ Overnight camping opportunities in the parks
- ✓ Expand non-traditional hours
- ✓ Linking of parks to other locations via the Greenway Trails



# Community Partnerships

Metro Parks continually works with a number of government agencies, non-profits and local businesses to grow, enhance and connect the park district. Whether preserving a wetland, building a bike trail, improving a park or planning for the future, Metro Parks is active with our community partners.



# PARKS, PROGRAMS & SUPPORT FUNCTIONS



# Bank Run Metro Park

## PARK HIGHLIGHTS

The 61-acre Bank Run Metro Park is another new southside park, and a future hub for major events that require rental space with plenty of outdoor access for various activities. With several existing structures in good repair and ample utilities, this property is adjacent to a quarry lake and just a short distance downriver from Three Creeks Metro Park, providing exciting opportunities as a key waterway connector and natural area corridor through a busy part of town.



Virginia Gordon

## 2024 BUDGET ITEMS OF NOTE

### New Park Capital Improvements

\$1,300,000

### SUV

\$26,000

### Tree Plantings

\$5,000

## BANK RUN METRO PARK AT A GLANCE

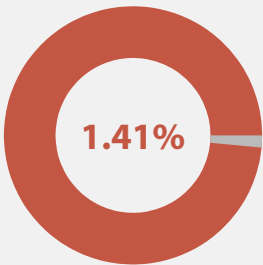
### Number of Employees \*

FULL-TIME  
2

PART-TIME  
6

SEASONAL  
0

### Percentage of Total Budget



### 2024 Operating Park Budget

Personnel	\$299,878
Operating Costs	\$115,445
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$415,323</b>

\* The full-time, part-time and seasonal numbers represent the estimated peak of employment, typically in the summer



# Battelle Darby Creek Metro Park

## PARK HIGHLIGHTS

The largest Metro Park, Battelle Darby Creek features more than 7,000 acres of forest, prairies and wetlands. Stretching along 13 miles of the Big and Little Darby Creeks, both State and National Scenic Rivers, it has more than 1,600 acres of restored wetlands and prairies.

Bison have been reintroduced to the park and roam in two large enclosed pastures. A major nature center, premier shelters and a section of the Ohio to Erie Trail are other highlights.



Tina Copeland

## 2024 BUDGET ITEMS OF NOTE

**Restrooms for  
Reserved Areas**

\$90,000

**Replace Fuel Tanks**

\$50,000

**Shade Structure for  
Bison Viewing**

\$5,000

## BATTELLE DARBY CREEK METRO PARK AT A GLANCE

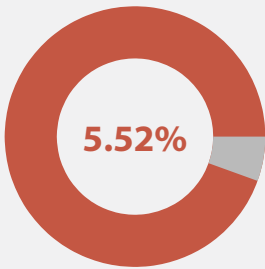
### Number of Employees \*

FULL-TIME  
14

PART-TIME  
9

SEASONAL  
5

### Percentage of Total Budget



### 2024 Operating Park Budget

Personnel	\$1,361,796
Operating Costs	\$259,930
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,621,726</b>

**Park Attendance (2022)** **910,780**

\* The full-time, part-time and seasonal numbers represent the estimated peak of employment, typically in the summer

# Blacklick Woods Metro Park

## PARK HIGHLIGHTS

Blacklick Woods Metro Park, the oldest Metro Park in the park district, features 643 acres of woods, fields, swamps and prairies, with a tremendous beech-maple forest. A unique canopy walk among the trees will soon offer a wonderfully-different experience for guests.

The park is pet-friendly and caters to family gatherings with several shelters and picnic areas. An extensive trail system winds through the entire park, allowing fitness enthusiasts plenty of options for hiking, biking and walking, along with two exercise stations to make fitness fun.



## 2024 BUDGET ITEMS OF NOTE

### Nature Center Interior Improvements

\$250,000

### Multiple Roofing Projects

\$20,000

### Mower

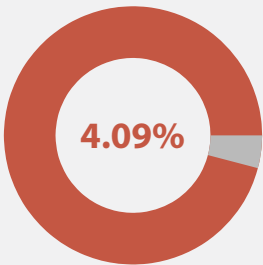
\$17,000

## BLACKLICK WOODS METRO PARK AT A GLANCE

### Number of Employees \*

FULL-TIME  
10  
  
PART-TIME  
5  
  
SEASONAL  
6

### Percentage of Total Budget



### 2024 Operating Park Budget

Personnel	\$968,487
Operating Costs	\$234,100
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,202,587</b>

**Park Attendance (2022)** **911,010**

\* The full-time, part-time and seasonal numbers represent the estimated peak of employment, typically in the summer

# Blacklick Woods Golf Course

## PARK HIGHLIGHTS

The Blacklick Woods Golf Course is carefully managed so birds and birdies peacefully coexist. Developed with a long-range vision of protection and enhancement of the natural environment, the Championship Course offers tree-lined fairways and quality greens. Golf carts allow for easy mobility.

With no charge for play, the Learning Course is perfect for beginners, families or just practicing iron play. A full-service driving range and practice holes, bunkers and greens allow our guests to fine-tune their game.



Cheryl Blair

## 2024 BUDGET ITEMS OF NOTE

### Golf Shop Merchandise for Resale

\$105,000

### 15 Replacement Golf Carts

\$75,000

### Mower

\$15,700

## BLACKLICK WOODS GOLF COURSE AT A GLANCE

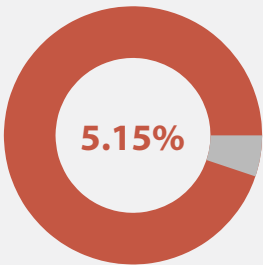
### Number of Employees \*

FULL-TIME  
8

PART-TIME  
12

SEASONAL  
3

### Percentage of Total Budget



### 2024 Operating Park Budget

Personnel	\$966,553
Operating Costs	\$546,450
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,513,003</b>

**Park Attendance (2022)** **434,230**

\* The full-time, part-time and seasonal numbers represent the estimated peak of employment, typically in the summer



# Blendon Woods & Rocky Fork Metro Parks

## PARK HIGHLIGHTS

Blendon Woods Metro Park contains spectacular stream-cut ravines and open fields surrounded by beech-maple and oak-hickory forests. The 653-acre park is a great place to see a variety of songbirds, waterfowl and other wildlife, especially the flock of wild turkeys meandering about in search of food.

The 118-acre Walden Waterfowl Refuge with its 11-acre Thoreau Lake provides a sanctuary for hundreds of birds, ducks and other wildlife. Nearby Rocky Fork Metro Park provides open spaces and extensive trails winding through woods and fields.



Gill Sears

## 2024 BUDGET ITEMS OF NOTE

**Nature Center  
Interior Improvements**

\$500,000

**Waterline Project**

\$300,000

**Ranger Truck**

\$56,000

## BLENDON WOODS & ROCKY FORK METRO PARKS AT A GLANCE

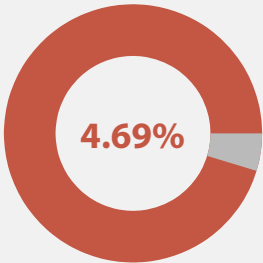
### Number of Employees \*

FULL-TIME  
10

PART-TIME  
8

SEASONAL  
6

### Percentage of Total Budget



### 2024 Operating Park Budget

Personnel	\$1,066,709
Operating Costs	\$310,210
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,376,919</b>

<b>Park Attendance (2022)</b>	<b>1,012,890</b>
Blendon Woods	645,240
Rocky Fork	367,650

\* The full-time, part-time and seasonal numbers represent the estimated peak of employment, typically in the summer

# Clear Creek Metro Park

## PARK HIGHLIGHTS

Clear Creek Metro Park features over 5,400 acres of woodland interspersed with sandstone cliffs, ravines and creeks and is home to more than 2,200 species of plants and animals.

Forested areas range from Canadian hemlocks and ferns, to oak and hickory, to Ohio’s last remaining colonies of rhododendron. Home to Ohio’s largest state nature preserve, with 12 miles of trails for all levels of hikers and fishing spots for avid anglers, the park offers rugged beauty for all to enjoy.



## 2024 BUDGET ITEMS OF NOTE

### Starner House Improvements

\$12,000

### Trailer

\$6,000

### Trail Bridge Decking

\$6,000

## CLEAR CREEK METRO PARK AT A GLANCE

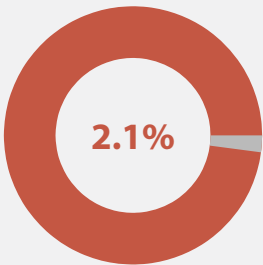
### Number of Employees \*

FULL-TIME  
4

PART-TIME  
6

SEASONAL  
2

### Percentage of Total Budget



### 2024 Operating Park Budget

Personnel	\$510,715
Operating Costs	\$107,400
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$618,115</b>

**Park Attendance (2022)** **63,320**

\* The full-time, part-time and seasonal numbers represent the estimated peak of employment, typically in the summer

# Glacier Ridge & Homestead Metro Parks/Heritage Trail

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## PARK HIGHLIGHTS

Glacier Ridge Metro Park was named for the end moraine or glacial debris left behind when the glaciers retreated some 12,000 to 17,000 years ago. Much of the 1,032-acre park was once covered with farmland.

Guests can traverse a boardwalk through the Honda Wetlands Area or climb a 25-foot observation tower to see waterfowl and other animals. An obstacle course, a dog park, playgrounds and miles of trails crossing diverse terrain make this park a popular destination.



Renata Ramsini

## 2024 BUDGET ITEMS OF NOTE

### Multiple Homestead Improvements

\$800,000

### Repave Ironwood Trail

\$300,000

### Replace Restroom Furnaces

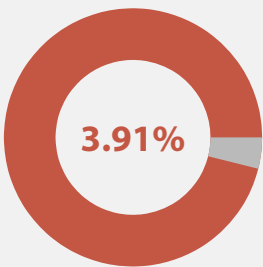
\$20,000

## GLACIER RIDGE & HOMESTEAD METRO PARKS/HERITAGE TRAIL AT A GLANCE

### Number of Employees \*

FULL-TIME
9
PART-TIME
8
SEASONAL
6

### Percentage of Total Budget



### 2024 Operating Park Budget

Personnel	\$923,521
Operating Costs	\$224,355
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,147,876</b>

<b>Park Attendance (2022)</b>	<b>1,180,230</b>
Glacier Ridge	460,240
Homestead	418,070
Heritage Trail	367,650

\* The full-time, part-time and seasonal numbers represent the estimated peak of employment, typically in the summer



# Glacier Ridge & Homestead Metro Parks/Heritage Trail

(page 2 of 2)

## PARK HIGHLIGHTS

The 43-acre Homestead Metro Park offers a quiet, country atmosphere with a covered bridge, wonderful pavilions, and great views within fast-growing suburban neighborhoods. A popular spot for picture-taking, the park features a fishing pond, play equipment and recreational courts.

Connected to the Heritage Trail, it is popular with bikers, runners and walkers of all ages. Further improvements to roadways, paths, parking, facilities and equipment are currently underway to make this park better than ever.



Leslie Dybiec

## 2024 BUDGET ITEMS OF NOTE

### Salt Spreaders

\$10,000

### Barn Improvements

\$5,000

### Trail Crack Sealing

\$5,000



Mike Heisey

# Great Southern Metro Park

## PARK HIGHLIGHTS

Stretching along the Scioto River on the south side of Columbus near State Route 23 and I-270, this 51-acre site will be reclaimed from a mining use and provide both a new park and bike trails in an underserved area.

Lush wetlands and riverfront access along a scenic wooded bend in the river are among the hidden gems of this future park. Much like Quarry Trails, a vision for repurposed land is the driving force at Great Southern.



Liz Christian

## 2024 BUDGET ITEMS OF NOTE

### Wetland and Trail Development

\$500,000

### New Entrance and Gate

\$15,000

### Mower

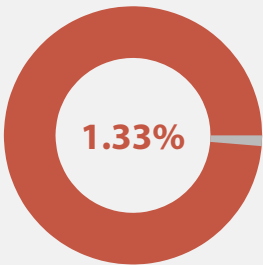
\$15,000

## GREAT SOUTHERN METRO PARK AT A GLANCE

### Number of Employees \*

FULL-TIME
3
PART-TIME
4
SEASONAL
0

### Percentage of Total Budget



### 2024 Operating Park Budget

Personnel	\$325,377
Operating Costs	\$64,760
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$390,137</b>

\* The full-time, part-time and seasonal numbers represent the estimated peak of employment, typically in the summer



# Highbanks Metro Park

## PARK HIGHLIGHTS

Highbanks Metro Park is named for its massive 100-foot-high shale bluff towering over the Olentangy State Scenic River. Tributary streams cutting across the bluff have created a number of deep ravines in the eastern part of the 1,203-acre park.

Ohio and Olentangy shales, often containing outstanding large concretions, are exposed on the bluff face and sides of the ravines. One of the most visited parks, Highbanks offers wonderful picnic areas, great trails and incredible views.



Virginia Gordon

## 2024 BUDGET ITEMS OF NOTE

### Replace Arch Bridge

\$300,000

### Big Meadows Parking Lot Repaving

\$150,000

### Patrol Vehicle

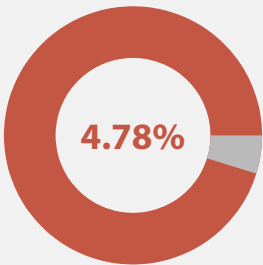
\$37,000

## HIGHBANKS METRO PARK AT A GLANCE

### Number of Employees \*

- FULL-TIME  
11
- PART-TIME  
8
- SEASONAL  
5

### Percentage of Total Budget



### 2024 Operating Park Budget

Personnel	\$1,131,263
Operating Costs	\$272,710
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,403,973</b>

**Park Attendance (2022)** **1,217,880**

\* The full-time, part-time and seasonal numbers represent the estimated peak of employment, typically in the summer



# Inniswood Metro Gardens

## PARK HIGHLIGHTS

Nestled within a scenic nature preserve, the 123-acre Inniswood Metro Gardens is a source of inspiration for all ages. Streams and woodlands filled with wildflowers and wildlife provide a majestic backdrop to the beautifully landscaped areas.

Inniswood boasts more than 2,000 species of plants, specialty collections and several theme gardens. Inniswood Garden Society volunteers and park team members maintain these wonderful gardens for all to enjoy.



Brenda Layman

## 2024 BUDGET ITEMS OF NOTE

### Pave Walkways

\$30,000

### Replace Restroom Floors

\$10,000

### Golf Cart

\$8,000

## INNISWOOD METRO GARDENS AT A GLANCE

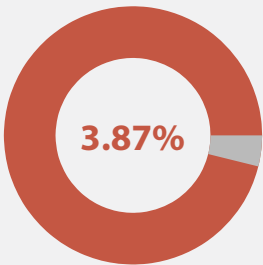
### Number of Employees \*

FULL-TIME  
9

PART-TIME  
9

SEASONAL  
4

### Percentage of Total Budget



### 2024 Operating Park Budget

Personnel	\$996,051
Operating Costs	\$140,453
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,136,504</b>

**Gardens Attendance (2022)** **614,900**

\* The full-time, part-time and seasonal numbers represent the estimated peak of employment, typically in the summer

# Pickerington Ponds Metro Park

## PARK HIGHLIGHTS

Pickerington Ponds Metro Park is a premier spot for birdwatching, with more than 260 species seen. The combination of seasonal ponds and rich wetland vegetation, with bordering woodlands, serve as a magnet for migrating waterfowl, shore birds and land birds.

Deer, beaver, fox and other wildlife can be seen near the ponds and adjoining woods and fields of this 1,608 acre park. It's also a vital connector in the larger 16-mile Blacklick Creek Greenway Trail, popular for biking.



## 2024 BUDGET ITEMS OF NOTE

### Greenway Erosion Restoration

\$100,000

### Burning Lake Path Paving

\$15,000

### Aeration System

\$4,500

## PICKERINGTON PONDS METRO PARK AT A GLANCE

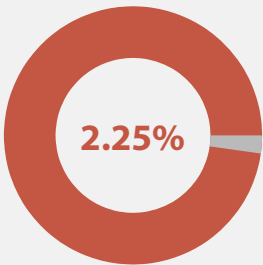
### Number of Employees \*

FULL-TIME  
5

PART-TIME  
5

SEASONAL  
3

### Percentage of Total Budget



### 2024 Operating Park Budget

Personnel	\$559,668
Operating Costs	\$101,745
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$661,413</b>

**Park Attendance (2022)** **493,780**

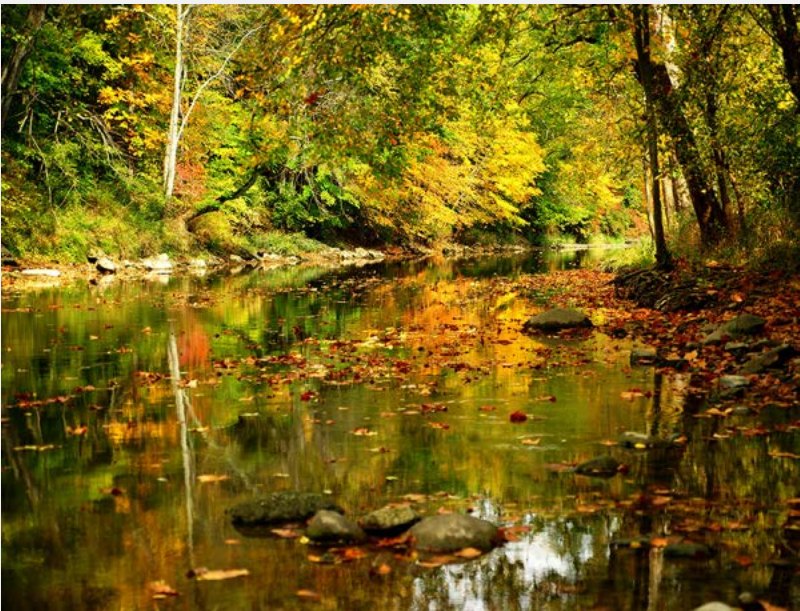
\* The full-time, part-time and seasonal numbers represent the estimated peak of employment, typically in the summer

# Prairie Oaks Metro Park

## PARK HIGHLIGHTS

Prairie Oaks Metro Park features nearly 500 acres of lush flowering prairies and grasslands that were restored using seeds native to the Darby Plains. The spectacular scenery of Big Darby Creek, a State and National Scenic River which flows through the 2,291-acre park, provides a beautiful backdrop for outdoor adventures.

The park also has several deep lakes for fishing and boating. Canoe access, a bridle trail and plenty of picnic areas make this park an outdoor experience for the entire family.



Mike Fetherolf

## 2024 BUDGET ITEMS OF NOTE

### Kayak Launches

\$40,000

### Ranger Vehicle

\$26,000

### Prairieview Shelter Repair

\$8,000

## PRAIRIE OAKS METRO PARK AT A GLANCE

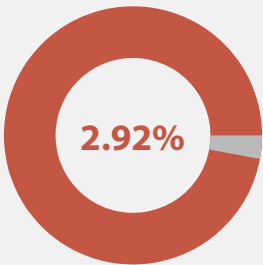
### Number of Employees \*

FULL-TIME  
7

PART-TIME  
6

SEASONAL  
2

### Percentage of Total Budget



### 2024 Operating Park Budget

Personnel	\$733,576
Operating Costs	\$125,375
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$858,951</b>

**Park Attendance (2022)** **663,740**

\* The full-time, part-time and seasonal numbers represent the estimated peak of employment, typically in the summer



# Quarry Trails Metro Park

## PARK HIGHLIGHTS

The 20th Metro Park is all-new in many ways. Adjacent to new housing, the 62-acre park packs adventurous challenges into an efficiently-planned design. Rock climbing, biking, canoeing, kayaking, paddle boarding and sledding are among the outdoor fun options.

What was once an abandoned rock quarry and a blighted property has been transformed into a hotspot of outdoor action and beauty. Guests can view a 20-foot waterfall from a new deck or descend limestone steps and wade into the water.



Tony Jackson

## 2024 BUDGET ITEMS OF NOTE

### Railroad Bridge Refurbish

\$300,000

### North Park Playground

\$150,000

### Cemetery Restoration

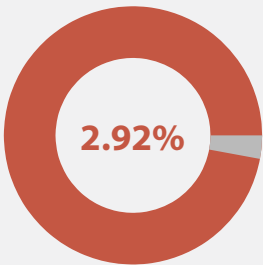
\$17,000

## QUARRY TRAILS METRO PARK AT A GLANCE

### Number of Employees \*

FULL-TIME  
8  
  
PART-TIME  
5  
  
SEASONAL  
1

### Percentage of Total Budget



### 2024 Operating Park Budget

Personnel	\$722,327
Operating Costs	\$136,030
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$858,357</b>

**Park Attendance (2022)** **454,960**

\* The full-time, part-time and seasonal numbers represent the estimated peak of employment, typically in the summer

# Scioto Audubon Metro Park / Greenway Trails

## PARK HIGHLIGHTS

Formerly an industrial landscape, Scioto Audubon Metro Park has been transformed from a blighted brownfield into a green oasis where wildlife and the community flourish. A recreational and educational destination for guests of all ages, the 119-acre park is located along the banks of the Scioto River just south of downtown Columbus.

Scioto Audubon Metro Park hosts a 35-foot climbing wall, a major nature center, sand volleyball and an iconic water tower, connecting fun and nature in the heart of the city.



## 2024 BUDGET ITEMS OF NOTE

**Olentangy Trail  
Repaving**  
\$300,000

**Honeysuckle Removal**  
\$50,000

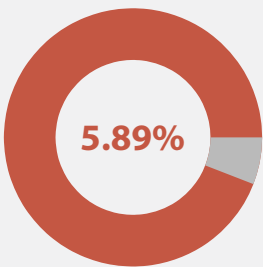
**Ranger Vehicle  
for Patrols**  
\$34,000

## SCIOTO AUDUBON METRO PARK & GREENWAY TRAILS AT A GLANCE

### Number of Employees \*

FULL-TIME  
16  
  
PART-TIME  
8  
  
SEASONAL  
4

### Percentage of Total Budget



### 2024 Operating Park Budget

Personnel	\$1,439,435
Operating Costs	\$290,380
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,729,815</b>

<b>Park Attendance (2022)</b>	<b>1,674,900</b>
Scioto Audubon	532,010
Greenway Trails	1,142,890

\* The full-time, part-time and seasonal numbers represent the estimated peak of employment, typically in the summer

# Scioto Grove Metro Park

## PARK HIGHLIGHTS

Scioto Grove Metro Park is a 620-acre park along the Scioto River in southern Franklin County with mature forests and scenic bluffs, featuring more than seven miles of trails, two picnic areas with shelters, tables and grills, a children’s play area and several overlook decks.

Beautifully situated on a scenic river bend, the park allows great views of waterfowl and other wildlife. Outdoor activities abound here, with an archery course, backpacking, biking, canoeing, kayaking, disc golf and fishing.



## 2024 BUDGET ITEMS OF NOTE

### Diesel Mower

\$24,000

### Drone Field Shade Structure

\$5,000

### Hammock Swings

\$2,000

## SCIOTO GROVE METRO PARK AT A GLANCE

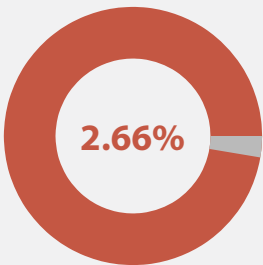
### Number of Employees \*

FULL-TIME  
5

PART-TIME  
9

SEASONAL  
0

### Percentage of Total Budget



### 2024 Operating Park Budget

Personnel	\$624,660
Operating Costs	\$155,955
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$780,615</b>

**Park Attendance (2022)** **334,820**

\* The full-time, part-time and seasonal numbers represent the estimated peak of employment, typically in the summer



# Sharon Woods Metro Park

## PARK HIGHLIGHTS

Sharon Woods Metro Park is a mixture of forests and fields with towering oak, hickory and beech trees and an 11-acre lake. Tucked inside the 761-acre park is the Edward Thomas Nature Preserve, named for the renowned Ohio naturalist and one of the founders of the park system.

Many seasonal pools provide critical breeding habitat for wildlife. Biking, fishing, canoeing, fitness trails, wonderful shelters and a popular sledding hill make the park a true urban oasis for outdoor enthusiasts.



Allison Shaw

## 2024 BUDGET ITEMS OF NOTE

**Park Road Trail  
over I-71**

\$1,000,000

**Brush Hog**

\$16,000

**Replace Spring Hollow  
Lodge Flooring**

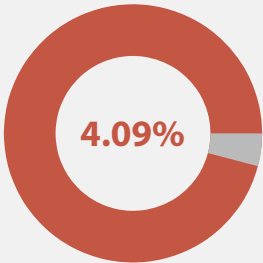
\$10,000

## SHARON WOODS METRO PARK AT A GLANCE

### Number of Employees \*

FULL-TIME
10
PART-TIME
7
SEASONAL
4

### Percentage of Total Budget



### 2024 Operating Park Budget

Personnel	\$994,810
Operating Costs	\$207,950
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,202,760</b>

**Park Attendance (2022)** **822,150**

\* The full-time, part-time and seasonal numbers represent the estimated peak of employment, typically in the summer

# Slate Run Metro Park & Living Historical Farm / Chestnut Ridge Metro Park

## PARK HIGHLIGHTS

The 1,705-acre Slate Run Metro Park provides critical species habitat. Northern bobwhite quail were reintroduced here and sandhill cranes nest in the 156-acre wetland.

Go back in time at the Living Historical Farm for an authentic view of farm life in the 1880s, with a barnyard of animals and a restored farmhouse. Nearby Chestnut Ridge Metro Park has the first ridge in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains, with diverse woodland beauty and a 9-mile Mountain Bike Trail.



## 2024 BUDGET ITEMS OF NOTE

**Repave  
Chestnut Ridge Road**  
\$300,000

**John Deere Tractor**  
\$72,000

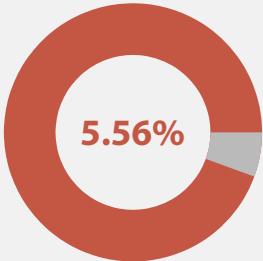
**Precast Restroom**  
\$50,000

## SLATE RUN METRO PARK & LIVING HISTORICAL FARM / CHESTNUT RIDGE METRO PARK AT A GLANCE

### Number of Employees \*

FULL-TIME
12
PART-TIME
11
SEASONAL
3

### Percentage of Total Budget



### 2024 Operating Park Budget

Personnel	\$1,357,503
Operating Costs	\$275,265
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,632,768</b>

<b>Park Attendance (2022)</b>	<b>518,350</b>
Slate Run (incl. Farm)	324,200
Chestnut Ridge	194,150

\* The full-time, part-time and seasonal numbers represent the estimated peak of employment, typically in the summer

# Three Creeks Metro Park

## PARK HIGHLIGHTS

Three Creeks Metro Park is named for the confluence of the Alum, Big Walnut and Blacklick Creeks. Owls, great blue herons and more than 100 other species of birds have been sighted. Guests may also catch a glimpse of beaver, mink, coyote and deer.

The 1,100-acre park is a partnership with the City of Columbus Recreation and Parks Department. Beyond connecting waterways, more than 40 miles of Greenway Trails converge at the park to connect people across central Ohio.



Stuart Seigfried

## 2024 BUDGET ITEMS OF NOTE

### Tractor with Attachments

\$72,000

### Bridge Decking

\$50,000

### Heron Pond Dock

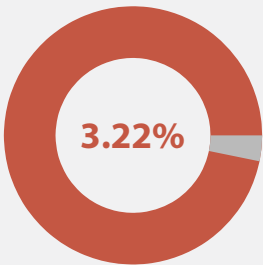
\$10,000

## THREE CREEKS METRO PARK AT A GLANCE

### Number of Employees \*

- FULL-TIME  
8
- PART-TIME  
4
- SEASONAL  
1

### Percentage of Total Budget



### 2024 Operating Park Budget

Personnel	\$742,480
Operating Costs	\$204,038
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$946,518</b>

**Park Attendance (2022)** **512,250**

\* The full-time, part-time and seasonal numbers represent the estimated peak of employment, typically in the summer



# Walnut Woods Metro Park

## PARK HIGHLIGHTS

Walnut Woods Metro Park features 1,455 acres of woodlands, fields and wetlands, bordered by Walnut Creek to the north. The Tall Pines Area features dramatic stands of pines and sweetgum trees, and the Buckeye Area has long rows of old nursery trees such as serviceberry, crab apple and red maples. A sledding hill, picnic areas and playgrounds make it family-friendly. Walnut Woods may also be a dog’s best friend, with separate dog parks for large and small dogs.



Mindi McConnell

## 2024 BUDGET ITEMS OF NOTE

**Maintenance Truck**  
\$58,000

**Repair and Stripe Trails**  
\$18,000

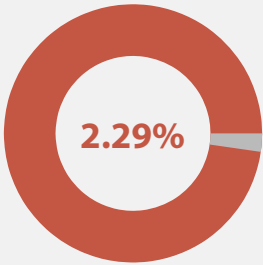
**Install Dog Park Tunnel**  
\$8,600

## WALNUT WOODS METRO PARK AT A GLANCE

### Number of Employees \*

- FULL-TIME  
4
- PART-TIME  
5
- SEASONAL  
2

### Percentage of Total Budget



### 2024 Operating Park Budget

Personnel	\$492,628
Operating Costs	\$179,550
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$672,178</b>

**Park Attendance (2022)** **319,430**

\* The full-time, part-time and seasonal numbers represent the estimated peak of employment, typically in the summer

# Metro Parks Education & Outdoor Adventure

## HIGHLIGHTS

Metro Parks are dynamic outdoor classrooms and exciting places for active learners of all ages. With a wide range of free educational opportunities and resources, our Naturalists and Outdoor Adventure team members will connect you to nature or help you learn new outdoor skills. Our programs engage people in hands-on experiences that promote appreciation and understanding of our area’s great cultural and natural resources.

Metro Parks Outdoor Adventure provides hands-on experiences, expanding your love of the outdoors and the natural resources we strive to protect each day. Perfect for all skill levels, from the novice to the seasoned pro, our team will be there each step of the way to help as you dip your paddle into the creek, climb a rock wall or load up your pack for overnight camping.



Fred Miller

## 2024 BUDGET ITEMS OF NOTE

### Kayaks and Paddles

\$6,500

### Via Ferrata Equipment

\$6,000

### Winter Hike Supplies

\$2,000

## METRO PARKS EDUCATION & OUTDOOR ADVENTURE AT A GLANCE

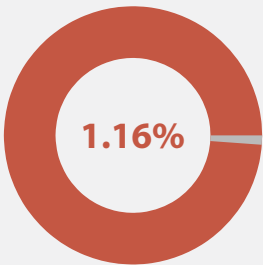
### Number of Employees \*

FULL-TIME  
4

PART-TIME  
4

SEASONAL  
1

### Percentage of Total Budget



### 2024 Operating Budget

Personnel	\$263,166
Operating Costs	\$77,725
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$340,891</b>

\* The full-time, part-time and seasonal numbers represent the estimated peak of employment, typically in the summer

# Metro Parks Summer Camp

## HIGHLIGHTS

Metro Parks Summer Camp is about fun and friends while providing lessons about the natural world for more than 1,500 young campers every summer.

Each Spring, Metro Parks hires the seasonal camp team members needed to manage the programs for summer campers. Whether a young animal scientist investigating backyard critters, getting wet feet while fishing or learning outdoor skills, campers have summer fun while taking home lessons of wildlife and natural preservation for a lifetime.



Liz Christian

## 2024 BUDGET ITEMS OF NOTE

### Equipment and Vehicle Rentals

\$12,000

### Special Event Supplies

\$6,000

### Kids Events Services (face painting, balloon artists, etc)

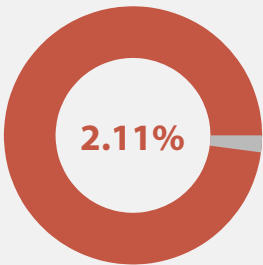
\$3,000

## METRO PARKS SUMMER CAMP AT A GLANCE

### Number of Employees \*

FULL-TIME
2
PART-TIME
0
SEASONAL
32

### Percentage of Total Budget



### 2024 Operating Budget

Personnel	\$544,837
Operating Costs	\$73,645
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$618,482</b>

\* The full-time, part-time and seasonal numbers represent the estimated peak of employment, typically in the summer



# Metro Parks Resource Management

## HIGHLIGHTS

Keeping our natural spaces truly natural within a large urban environment requires the specialized knowledge, training and skills found in our Resource Management professionals.

Successional mowing and controlled burns help native flora to stay dominant in our prairies and meadows, while inhibiting invasive species. Wildlife management tasks to control species health and populations include surveys of activity, water quality and chemistry monitoring. Species reintroductions also require specialized care, whether it be tiny frogs or huge bison.



Virginia Gordon

## 2024 BUDGET ITEMS OF NOTE

### Invasives Removal

\$150,000

### Reforestation at Solar Farm

\$100,000

### Brush Hog

\$16,000

## METRO PARKS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AT A GLANCE

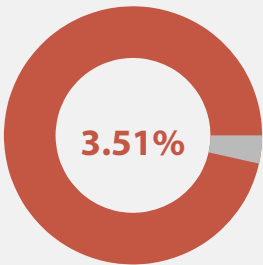
### Number of Employees \*

FULL-TIME  
8

PART-TIME  
0

SEASONAL  
2

### Percentage of Total Budget



### 2024 Operating Budget

Personnel	\$780,358
Operating Costs	\$250,250
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,030,608</b>

\* The full-time, part-time and seasonal numbers represent the estimated peak of employment, typically in the summer

# Metro Parks Roving Crew

## HIGHLIGHTS

The Metro Parks Roving Crew is a group of skilled trades workers and laborers that handle a wide variety of specialty construction, renovation and repair projects that are best suited for in-house professionals.

While Metro Parks regularly contracts out for major construction projects, the Roving Crew creates value by building decks and other structures, using earth-moving equipment to build wetlands, repairing and resurfacing trails and renovating interior work spaces, among other projects.



Diana Morse

## 2024 BUDGET ITEMS OF NOTE

**Carpenter Truck**  
\$60,000

**Equipment Maintenance**  
\$7,000

**Table Saw**  
\$5,000

## METRO PARKS ROVING CREW AT A GLANCE

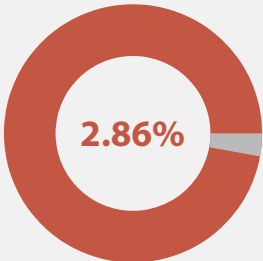
### Number of Employees \*

FULL-TIME  
7

PART-TIME  
0

SEASONAL  
0

### Percentage of Total Budget



### 2024 Operating Budget

Personnel	\$619,962
Operating Costs	\$218,930
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$838,892</b>

\* The full-time, part-time and seasonal numbers represent the estimated peak of employment, typically in the summer

# Metro Parks Administration

## HIGHLIGHTS

Providing direction and coordination among our many parks and programs across central Ohio is a primary function of our Administration. Keeping the Board of Park Commissioners updated on both current and planned activities is a priority at monthly board meetings.

Administration also interacts with outside agencies and partners such as the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) and the Nature Conservancy to promote and grow our offerings. Peer reviews and certifications with local, state and national parks organizations also helps to ensure efficient and effective management.



## 2024 BUDGET ITEMS OF NOTE

### Community Projects Support

\$75,000

### Utilities for Audubon Center

\$34,000

### MORPC Annual Membership

\$1,000

## METRO PARKS ADMINISTRATION AT A GLANCE

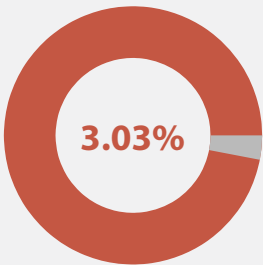
### Number of Employees \*

FULL-TIME  
1

PART-TIME  
0

SEASONAL  
0

### Percentage of Total Budget



### 2024 Operating Budget

Personnel	\$211,276
Operating Costs	\$679,907
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$891,183</b>

\* The full-time, part-time and seasonal numbers represent the estimated peak of employment, typically in the summer



# Metro Parks Operations

## HIGHLIGHTS

Metro Parks Operations helps maintain high standards of excellence by taking the lead in areas such as guest service, programming, land acquisition, development and equipment. This team also helps keep construction and renovation projects on track, and actively reviews the budget request of each park annually.

Under the Operations team, the Columbus City Schools Intern Initiative (CSI) offers summer jobs and mentoring for high school students. Many interns find a newfound respect for nature and have often been hired to positions within the parks.



## 2024 BUDGET ITEMS OF NOTE

**Security Cameras**  
\$250,000

**Radios**  
\$35,000

**Patrol SUV**  
\$30,000

## METRO PARKS OPERATIONS AT A GLANCE

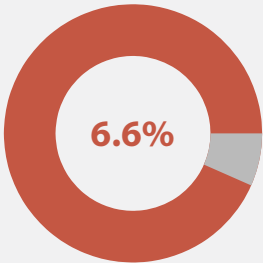
### Number of Employees \*

FULL-TIME  
13

PART-TIME  
1

SEASONAL  
26

### Percentage of Total Budget



### 2024 Operating Budget

Personnel	\$1,467,022
Operating Costs	\$471,103
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,938,125</b>

\* The full-time, part-time and seasonal numbers represent the estimated peak of employment, typically in the summer

# Metro Parks Planning & Design

## HIGHLIGHTS

Creating a vision for the future of Metro Parks is a key mission for our Planning & Design section. By working with architects, landscape architects, contractors and park team members, Metro Parks is able to plan, design and construct park facilities that preserve nature and provide positive outdoor spaces for our guests to experience and enjoy.

Other critical tasks include land acquisition, applying for state and federal grants, plus bidding and construction management for many of the park district’s complex projects.



## 2024 BUDGET ITEMS OF NOTE

### Engineering and GIS Support

\$10,000

### Project Consultants

\$2,000

### Field GPS Unit Services

\$600

## METRO PARKS PLANNING & DESIGN GROUP AT A GLANCE

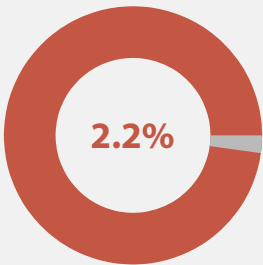
### Number of Employees \*

FULL-TIME  
6

PART-TIME  
0

SEASONAL  
2

### Percentage of Total Budget



### 2024 Operating Budget

Personnel	\$624,334
Operating Costs	\$22,800
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$647,134</b>

\* The full-time, part-time and seasonal numbers represent the estimated peak of employment, typically in the summer

# Metro Parks Finance

## HIGHLIGHTS

Using modern software, Metro Parks Finance manages daily banking, accounting, purchasing, payroll and investment functions, to serve all our guests and central Ohio residents.

Through monthly board resolutions and reports, annual budgets, regular audits and the posting of this information to our website, accountability and transparency are maintained. Free of long-term debt and with the lowest tax rate of any major park district in Ohio, the finances of Metro Parks demonstrate value and efficiency.



## 2024 BUDGET ITEMS OF NOTE

**Insurance Coverage**  
\$237,700

**Audit Services**  
\$18,000

**Postal Services**  
\$4,400

## METRO PARKS FINANCE AT A GLANCE

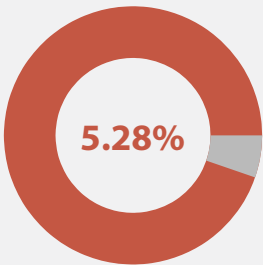
### Number of Employees \*

FULL-TIME  
5

PART-TIME  
0

SEASONAL  
0

### Percentage of Total Budget



### 2024 Operating Budget

Personnel	\$530,575
Operating Costs	\$1,020,235
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,550,810</b>

\* The full-time, part-time and seasonal numbers represent the estimated peak of employment, typically in the summer



# Metro Parks Information Technology

## HIGHLIGHTS

Information Technology (IT) is increasingly important for Metro Parks. Our IT team members are trained to handle a wide variety of technology challenges, from desktop support and IT security to technology procurement and software management.

Metro Parks uses information technology extensively to manage finances, help guests make reservations for reservable venues, book Blacklick Woods Golf Course tee times and interact on social media. Improvements are also underway for expanded IT connectivity through fiber-optic systems.



Liz Christian

## 2024 BUDGET ITEMS OF NOTE

### Software Purchases, Support and Licensing

\$112,300

### IT Equipment

\$25,000

### Equipment Maintenance

\$5,000

## METRO PARKS INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AT A GLANCE

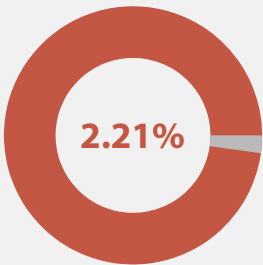
### Number of Employees \*

FULL-TIME  
3

PART-TIME  
0

SEASONAL  
0

### Percentage of Total Budget



### 2024 Operating Budget

Personnel *	\$257,776
Operating Costs	\$391,645
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$649,421</b>

\* The full-time, part-time and seasonal numbers represent the estimated peak of employment, typically in the summer

# Metro Parks Human Resources

## HIGHLIGHTS

Metro Parks Human Resources performs the critical role of ensuring the park district has dedicated and skilled team members who can properly manage our parks and programs. Team member interviews, training, policy updates, contract negotiations and performance recognition programs are among the numerous tasks performed.

The department also takes the lead on the annual surge of seasonal hiring, a major effort to find the Camp Counselors, Park Technicians, Park Rangers and other team members that keep Metro Parks running in the busy summer months.



Liz Christian

## 2024 BUDGET ITEMS OF NOTE

**Tuition Reimbursement**  
\$30,000

**Drug Testing**  
\$8,000

**Advertising  
for Vacancies**  
\$3,000

## METRO PARKS HUMAN RESOURCES AT A GLANCE

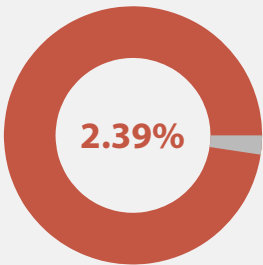
### Number of Employees \*

FULL-TIME  
4

PART-TIME  
0

SEASONAL  
6

### Percentage of Total Budget



### 2024 Operating Budget

Personnel	\$512,881
Operating Costs	\$188,075
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$700,956</b>

\* The full-time, part-time and seasonal numbers represent the estimated peak of employment, typically in the summer

# RETURN ON INVESTMENT





# Value of Metro Parks



Virginia Gordon

## Value of Metro Parks

The benefits of parks are well-known and numerous: fresh air, exercise, stress-relief, clean water, species protection, outlets for youth and a source of civic pride are just some of the benefits. But how efficiently does Metro Parks provide those benefits? By comparing Metro Parks to other park districts and county agencies, the value becomes clear.

**Metro Parks has the lowest voted tax rate and second-lowest effective tax rate of any major park district in Ohio. Among Franklin County agencies, Metro Parks has the second-lowest tax burden.** (see Levy Rates tables on following pages)

## Parks post-COVID

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Metro Parks saw attendance spike by one-third, an increase of more than 3.5 million visitors in 2020 alone! As social venues and traditional gathering places were shuttered, Central Ohio residents sought the safe distancing and tranquil atmosphere offered at their Metro Parks. While park attendance peaked in 2020, Metro Parks anticipates a permanent new normal of attendance well above 2019 figures.

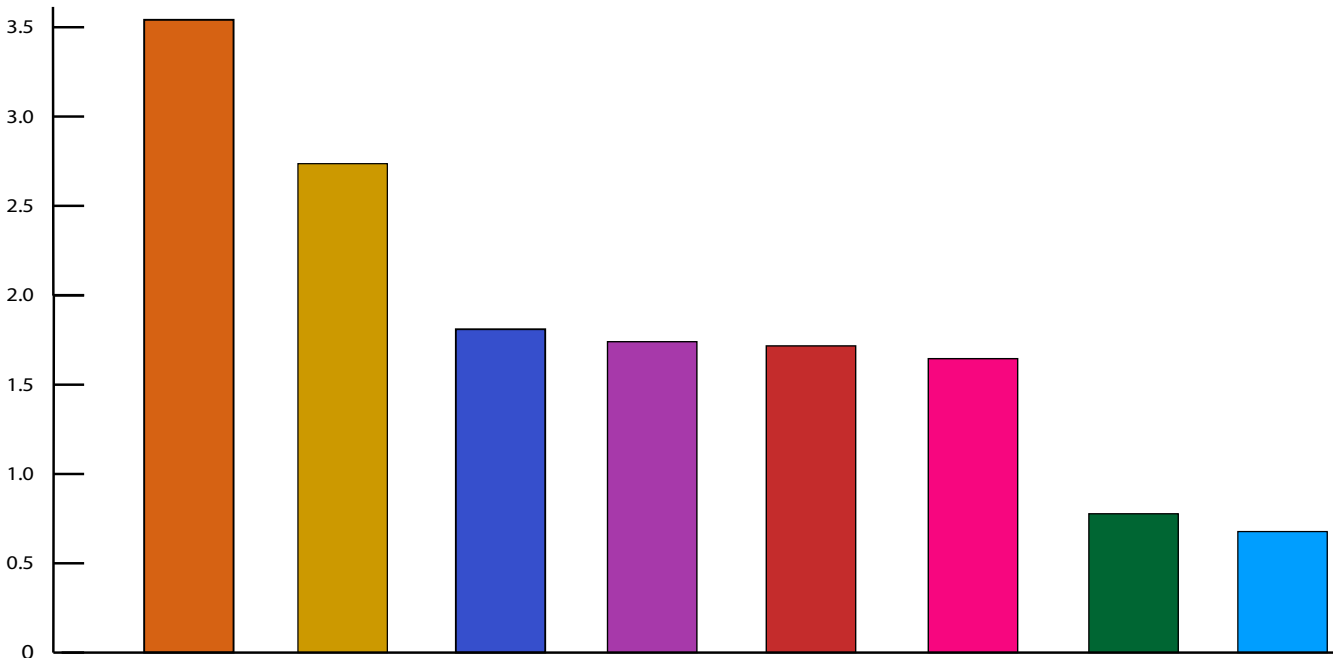
Should a COVID-19 resurgence occur, Metro Parks is prepared to cope with a spike in attendance due to our experience with social distancing protocols, our Incident Command Management emergency operating structure and specialized work groups to protect employees and the public.

# Levy Rates comparison

Columbus & Franklin County Metropolitan Park District ranking among large Ohio Park Districts

COUNTY	MAJOR CITY	PARK DISTRICT	VOTED TAX RATE	EFFECTIVE TAX RATE
LUCAS	TOLEDO	METROPARKS TOLDEO	4.30	3.554244
CUYAHOGA	CLEVELAND	CLEVELAND METROPARKS	2.75	2.740396
HAMILTON	CINCINNATI	GREAT PARKS OF HAMILTON COUNTY	1.98	1.823210
SUMMIT	AKRON	SUMMIT METROPARKS	2.00	1.749059
MONTGOMERY	DAYTON	FIVE RIVERS METROPARKS	2.00	1.748044
MAHONING	YOUNGSTOWN	MILL CREEK METROPARKS	2.00	1.654561
FRANKLIN	COLUMBUS	METRO PARKS	0.95	0.787346
STARK	CANTON	STARK PARKS	1.00	0.694082

- MetroParks Toledo
- Cleveland Metroparks
- Great Parks of Hamilton County
- Summit MetroParks
- Five Rivers Metro Parks
- Mill Creek Metro Parks
- Columbus & Franklin County Metro Parks
- Stark Parks

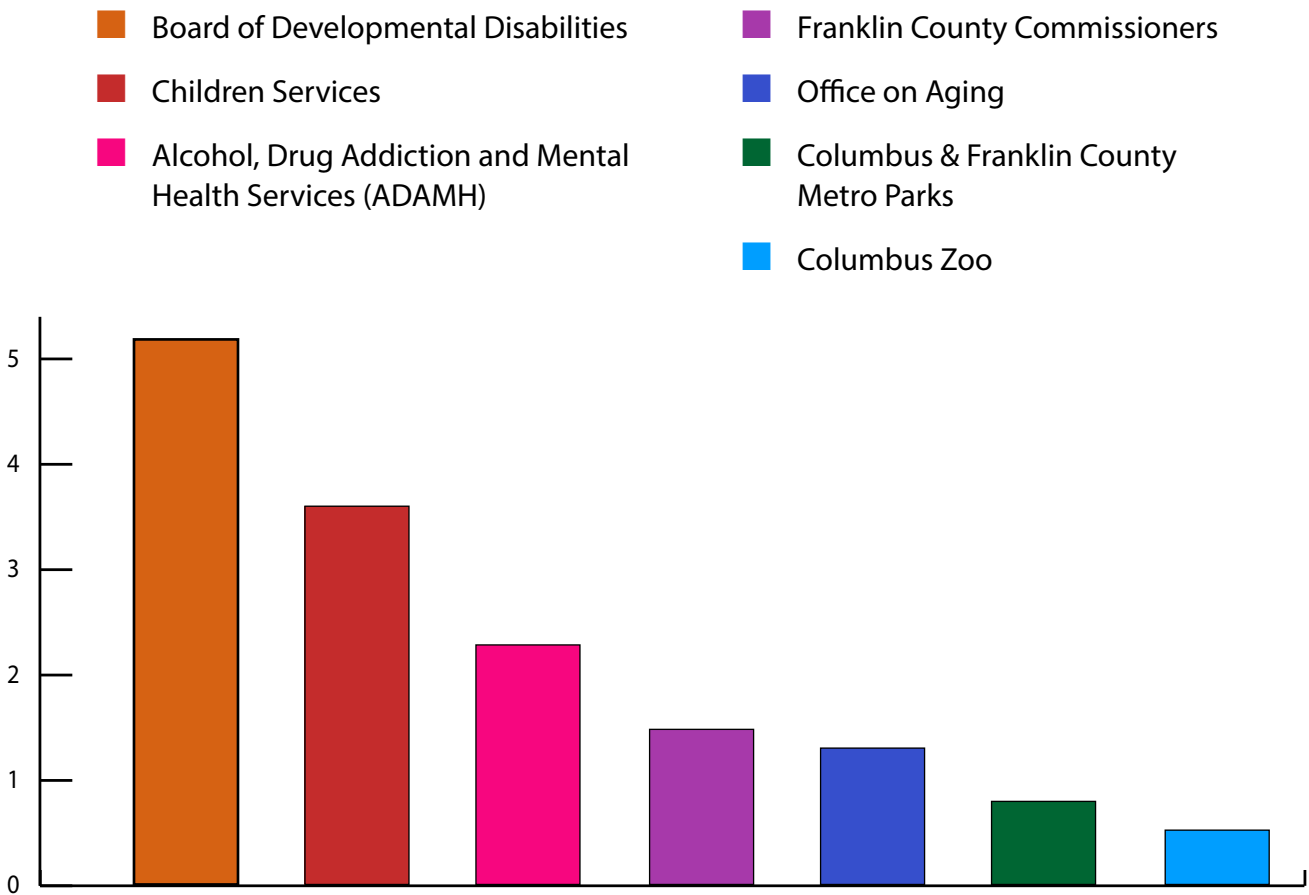


# Levy Rates comparison

Columbus & Franklin County Metropolitan Park District  
ranking among Franklin County agencies

AGENCY	TAX RATE (2022 Residential Tax Rate in Millage)
BOARD OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES	5.165636
CHILDREN SERVICES	3.584931
ALCOHOL, DRUG ADDICTION & MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES (ADAMH)	2.270221
FRANKLIN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS	1.470000
OFFICE ON AGING	1.292321
<b>COLUMBUS &amp; FRANKLIN COUNTY METROPOLITAN PARK DISTRICT *</b>	<b>0.787346</b>
COLUMBUS ZOO	0.514765

\* Metro Parks costs about \$27.50 annually for every \$100,000 of home market value





# Metro Parks Volunteers



Bryan Knowles

Volunteers have long been a valuable resource for Metro Parks. Almost 800 volunteers give their time, skills and energy to preserve and enhance the parks for all to enjoy.

Horticultural volunteers at Inniswood Metro Gardens have a proud history of exemplary care for these pristine gardens, performing flowerbed maintenance and grounds upkeep.

Trail volunteers help keep our extensive network of trails safe for guests and often lend a hand with some of our bigger seasonal events, such as Winter Hikes, helping with parking and trail guiding.

Volunteers also help our Resource Management team through plantings, land management tasks and monitoring wildlife. Monitoring precious species from bluebirds and butterflies to bats and bald eagles, the information collected by volunteers helps Metro Parks effectively manage wildlife.

In the many ways they lend a helping hand, volunteers are a critical part of the Metro Parks team.



Olivia Piper



Ann Culek

**DID  
YOU  
KNOW?**

*774 volunteers served 28,756 combined hours in 2022, equaling a single person working full-time for more than 12 years!*

*To learn more about volunteering at Metro Parks, visit [metroparks.net](https://metroparks.net)*

# FINANCIALS & BUDGET REQUEST



# Financial Summary 2024

## Combined General, Capital & Golf Course Funds

<b>ESTIMATED ENDING CASH BALANCE – 12/31/2023</b>		<b>\$24,987,268</b>
<b>Add New Revenues</b>		<b>\$39,414,916</b>
	<b>Total Available Cash Resources</b>	<b>\$64,402,184</b>
<b>Less: Budgeted Expenditures</b>		
Salaries and Benefits (excluding Blacklick Woods Golf Course)	\$21,372,800	
Operating and Administrative	\$7,190,333	
Blacklick Woods Golf Course Fund		
Salaries and Benefits	\$975,553	
Operating Expenditures	\$546,450	
<b>Total Operating Expenditures</b>	<b>\$30,085,136</b>	
<b>Capital Improvements and Land Acquisition</b>		
Capital Improvement Projects	\$10,330,000	
Capital Improvement Projects (Blacklick Woods Golf Course)	\$600,000	
Land Acquisition	\$4,000,000	
<b>Total Capital Improvement Projects and Land Acquisition</b>	<b>\$14,930,000</b>	
	<b>Total Budgeted Expenditures</b>	<b>\$45,015,136</b>
<b>ESTIMATED 12/31/2024 CASH BALANCE *</b>		<b>\$19,387,048</b>

\* (if all Appropriations are fully expended)



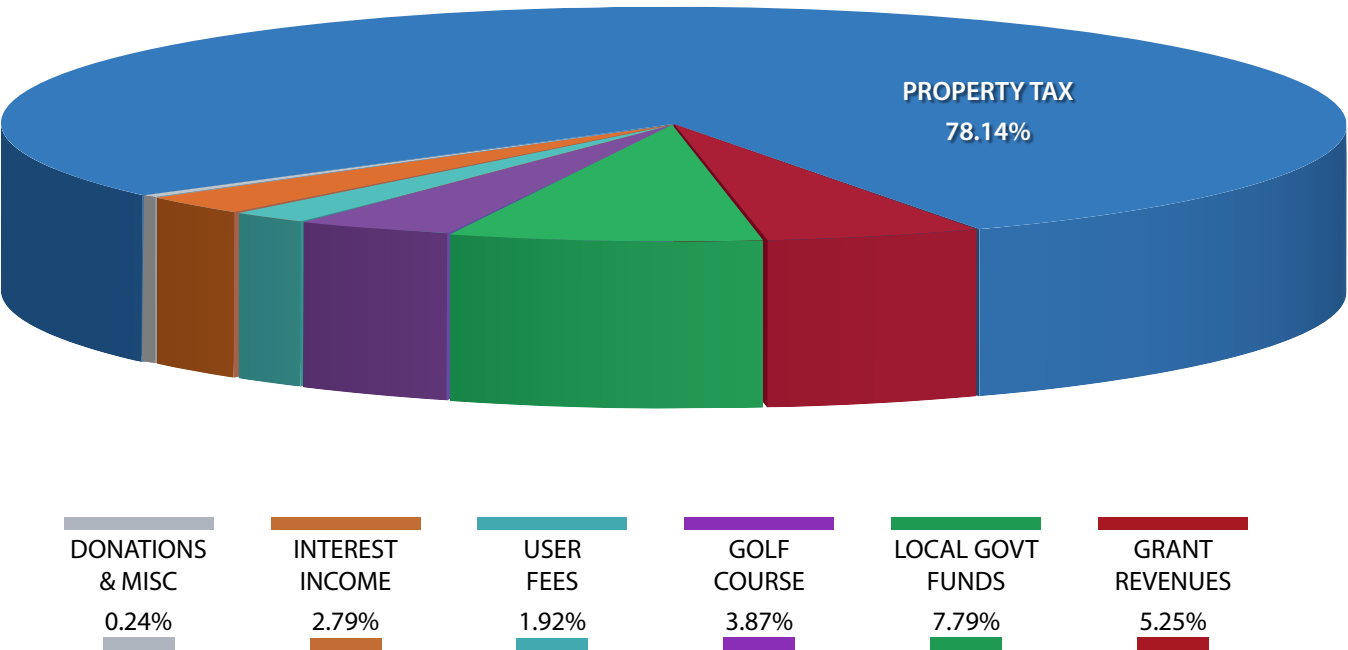
# Projected changes in 2024 Fund Balances (page 1 of 2)

	FUND 27 GENERAL FUND	FUND 29 CAPITAL FUND	FUND 30 GOLF COURSE FUND	ALL FUNDS
<b>PROJECTED NEW REVENUE</b>				
<b>Public Sources:</b>				
Tax Levy	30,796,227	-	-	30,796,227
LGF (Local Govt Funds)	3,070,499	-	-	3,070,499
Grants	10,000	2,060,000	-	2,070,000
<b>TOTAL Public Sources</b>	<b>33,876,726</b>	<b>2,060,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>35,936,726</b>
<b>Income from Operational Sources</b>				
Blacklick Woods Golf Course	-	-	1,525,000	1,525,000
Reservations Fees, Special Events & Concessions	470,000	-	-	470,000
Interpretive Programs	160,000	-	-	160,000
House & Land Rental	127,990	-	-	127,990
<b>TOTAL Income from Operational Sources</b>	<b>757,990</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,525,000</b>	<b>2,282,990</b>
<b>Income from Investment</b>	<b>800,000</b>	<b>300,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,100,000</b>
<b>Land Acquisition Municipal Contributions</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Donations &amp; Bequests</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,000</b>
<b>Miscellaneous Receipts (settlements, refunds, salvage sale)</b>	<b>87,200</b>	<b>5,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>92,200</b>
<b>TOTAL 2024 PROJECTED REVENUES</b>	<b>35,524,916</b>	<b>2,365,000</b>	<b>1,525,000</b>	<b>39,414,916</b>

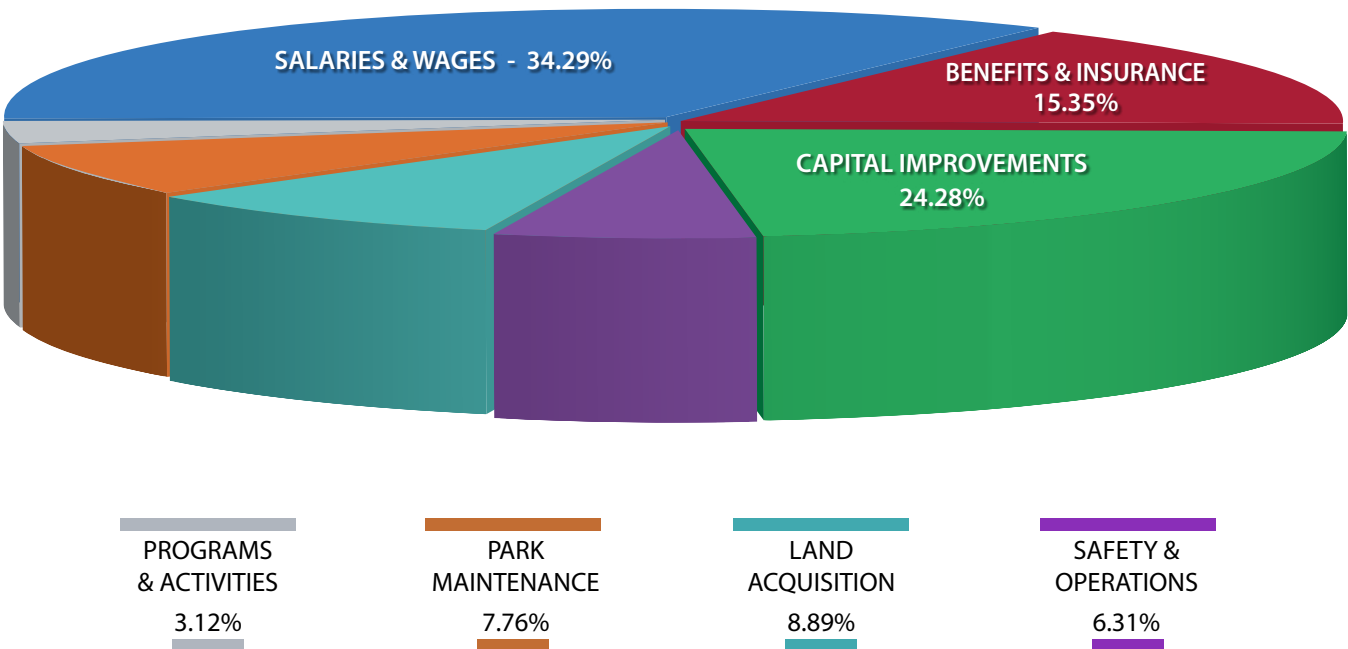
# Projected changes in 2024 Fund Balances (page 2 of 2)

	FUND 27 GENERAL FUND	FUND 29 CAPITAL FUND	FUND 30 GOLF COURSE FUND	ALL FUNDS
<b>Projected New Revenues</b> (from previous page)	<b>35,524,916</b>	<b>2,365,000</b>	<b>1,525,000</b>	<b>39,414,916</b>
<b>PROJECTED EXPENDITURES</b>				
<b>Salaries &amp; Benefits</b>				
Salaries	14,719,396	-	718,109	15,437,505
Fringe Benefits	4,253,442	-	147,841	4,401,283
PERS	2,189,429	-	99,317	2,288,746
Medicare	210,533	-	10,286	220,819
<b>TOTAL Salaries &amp; Benefits</b>	<b>21,372,800</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>975,553</b>	<b>22,348,353</b>
<b>Operating Expenditures</b>				
Admin	1,871,790	-	4,500	1,876,290
Education/Interpretive	354,370	-	-	354,370
Park Maintenance	2,948,186	-	54,700	3,002,886
Promotion	347,200	-	-	347,200
Rental Properties	151,190	-	-	151,190
Natural Resource Management	298,225	-	-	298,225
Revenue Programs	80,905	-	487,250	568,155
Safety & Law Enforcement	465,562	-	-	465,562
Special Facilities	182,805	-	-	182,805
Renovations	490,100	-	-	490,100
<b>TOTAL Operating Expenditures</b>	<b>7,190,333</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>546,450</b>	<b>7,736,783</b>
<b>Capital Improvement Projects</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>10,930,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>10,930,000</b>
<b>Land Acquisition</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4,000,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4,000,000</b>
<b>TOTAL 2024 PROJECTED EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>28,563,133</b>	<b>14,930,000</b>	<b>1,522,003</b>	<b>45,015,136</b>
<b>CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES</b>	<b>6,961,783</b>	<b>(12,565,000)</b>	<b>2,997</b>	<b>(5,600,220)</b>
Projected Balance 12/31/2023	20,562,142	3,897,544	527,582	24,987,268
Loan Proceeds	-	-	-	-
Loan Payments	-	-	-	-
Transfer to / (from) Fund	(9,000,000)	9,000,000	-	-
<b>ESTIMATED BALANCE 12/31/2024</b>	<b>18,523,926</b>	<b>332,554</b>	<b>530,579</b>	<b>19,387,048</b>

# 2024 Revenues



# 2024 Expenditures





# Summary of Revenues

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 Blacklick Woods Golf Course revenues and fees for programs; and other sources such as donations and interest income. Total new revenue estimated for 2024 for Funds 27, 29 and 30 is \$39,414,916. This amount does not include any carryover cash at year-end 2023. An explanation of the primary sources of revenue is below.

## PUBLIC SOURCES

### Property Tax Levy

The 0.95 millage (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 \$30,796,227 for 2024, per official estimates provided by the Franklin County Auditor's Office.

### 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 2024 is \$3,070,499, per official estimates from the State of Ohio.

### Governmental Grants

Metro Parks projects to receive \$2,060,000 in grants for 2024, 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 2024, the budget can be amended accordingly.

## OPERATIONAL FEES

Golf Course receipts generated from the operation of the Blacklick Woods Golf Course include: greens fees, cart rentals, food and beverage sales and the operation of the Eagleview and the Banquet Room reservable venues. Total revenues for the Golf Course are projected at \$1,525,000 for 2024.

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

- Reservable venue fees to cover the cost of maintaining 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 2024 are projected at \$757,990.

**Summary of Revenues** (continued)

## OTHER SOURCES

### Investment Income

Investment income is projected at \$1,100,000 for 2024. 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.

### Special Revenue Funds

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 (ie, principal and earnings are expendable), while the other two funds are classified as non-expendable (only interest earned on the principal may be spent).

### Inniswood Fund of Metro Parks

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.



Bryan Knowles

# Revenues and Combined Fund Balances (page 1 of 2)

	2022 Actual	2023 Projected	2023 Budget	2024 Budget	2023 Budget v 2024 Budget	% Change
<b>NEW REVENUES: GOVT (27, 29) &amp; ENTERPRISE (30) FUNDS</b>						
<b>Public Sources:</b>						
Property Tax Levy – 0.95 millage (mill)	30,154,059	30,645,610	30,353,925	30,796,227	442,303	1.46 %
LGF (Local Govt Funds)	3,082,267	3,169,416	3,219,416	3,070,499	(148,917)	(4.63) %
Grants	2,920,132	3,433,657	4,057,810	2,070,000	(1,987,810)	(48.99) %
<b>TOTAL Public Sources</b>	<b>36,156,457</b>	<b>37,248,683</b>	<b>37,631,151</b>	<b>35,936,726</b>	<b>(1,694,425)</b>	<b>(4.50) %</b>
<b>Operational Sources</b>						
Revenues from Blacklick Woods Golf Course Operations	1,280,380	1,509,412	1,209,000	1,525,000	316,000	26.14 %
Revenues from Park Operations						
Reservations Fees, Special Events & Concessions	494,787	480,140	465,000	470,000	5,000	1.08 %
Interpretive Programs	169,453	179,403	175,000	160,000	(15,000)	(8.57) %
House & Land Rental	144,946	141,946	125,000	127,990	2,990	2.39 %
<b>TOTAL Income from Operational Sources</b>	<b>2,089,566</b>	<b>2,310,901</b>	<b>1,974,000</b>	<b>2,282,990</b>	<b>(7,010)</b>	<b>15.65 %</b>
<b>Governmental Partnership Contributions</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Income from Investment</b>	<b>443,793</b>	<b>1,399,069</b>	<b>717,600</b>	<b>1,100,000</b>	<b>382,400</b>	<b>53.29 %</b>
<b>Wetlands/Groundwater Credits</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Donations &amp; Bequests</b>	<b>3,859</b>	<b>598</b>	<b>55,115</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>(52,115)</b>	<b>(94.56) %</b>
<b>Miscellaneous Receipts (settlements, refunds, salvage sale)</b>	<b>609,005</b>	<b>138,561</b>	<b>134,200</b>	<b>92,200</b>	<b>(42,000)</b>	<b>(31.30) %</b>
<b>TOTAL NEW REVENUES</b>	<b>39,302,680</b>	<b>41,097,812</b>	<b>40,512,066</b>	<b>39,414,916</b>	<b>(1,097,150)</b>	<b>(2.71) %</b>



# Revenues and Combined Fund Balances (page 2 of 2)

	2022 Actual	2023 Projected	2023 Budget	2024 Budget	2023 Budget v 2024 Budget	% Change
<b>TOTAL NEW REVENUES</b> (from previous page)	<b>39,302,680</b>	<b>41,097,812</b>	<b>40,512,066</b>	<b>39,414,916</b>	<b>(1,097,150)</b>	<b>(2.71) %</b>
Transfer from Columbus Foundation	-	-	-	300,000	-	- %
BEG Fund Balances	24,461,837	29,008,351	20,043,610	24,987,268	4,943,658	24.66 %
<b>FUND BALANCES PLUS NEW REVENUES</b> (exc. Interfund transfers)	<b>63,764,516</b>	<b>70,106,163</b>	<b>60,555,676</b>	<b>64,702,184</b>	<b>3,846,508</b>	<b>6.85 %</b>
<b>Other Funds Prior Balance</b>						
Expendable (Beck & Thomas)	515,568	559,071	559,435	627,821	68,386	12.22 %
Expendable (E.S. Thomas, Hambleton)	132,358	139,465	140,936	156,649	15,713	11.15 %
Non-Expendable (E.S. Thomas, Hambleton)	97,796	97,796	97,796	97,796	0	0 %
Columbus Foundation Inniswood Fund	339,246	362,508	339,246	39,246	(300,000)	(88.43)x %
Plus: Current Year Projected Income	9,796	39,495	10,860	37,000	26,140	240.79 %
Plus: Donations & Bequests	41,616	46,438	40,800	45,000	4,200	10.29 %
<b>GRAND TOTAL ALL FUNDS</b>	<b>64,900,896</b>	<b>71,350,936</b>	<b>61,744,749</b>	<b>65,705,696</b>	<b>3,960,947</b>	<b>6.42 %</b>

**DID  
YOU  
KNOW?**

*Metro Parks carries no long-term debt, allowing revenues to be spent for parks rather than the interest and fees associated with borrowing.*

# Summary of Expenditures

## Operating Expenses – Excluding Personnel and Capital Improvements

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

The total 2024 budget for these items is \$7,736,783, of which \$7,190,333 is allocated to the General Fund (Fund 27) and \$546,450 to the Blacklick Woods Golf Course Fund (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 the goals of Metro Parks.

## Materials and supplies

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 park district's locations and programs. From road salt and grass seed to light bulbs and paint, this category captures all operating supplies costs.

## Services

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

Equipment purchases for 2024 are budgeted at \$1,088,400 to meet the needs of the park 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 66 details the equipment requests for 2024.

## Renovations

Renovations for 2024 of \$490,100 are also incorporated into this portion of the budget to maintain, improve and expand the wide variety of facilities and structures across the park district.

Sample categories of renovation expenditures include:

- Improvements to buildings and venues such as roof repairs, painting and flooring
- Various replacement items such as outdoor recreation equipment and dog park improvements
- Trail, bridge and walkway repairs or improvements
- Landscaping and grounds improvements such as trees, parking lot repairs and signage

## Summary of Expenditures (continued)

### Information Technology

The expenditures of the Information Technology 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 park 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.

### Standards of Service

The 2024 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.



Macy Tallarico



# Expenditures - Summary Table

	2023 Amended Budget *	2023 Projected Actual	2023 Original Budget	2024 Original Budget	2023 to 2024 % Change
<b>FUNDS 27 &amp; 29</b>					
<b>Personnel (Fund 27)</b>					
Salaries (including merit increases)	13,313,729	12,852,858	13,313,729	14,719,396	10.56 %
Employee Benefits	3,808,892	3,683,603	3,808,892	4,253,442	11.67 %
PERS	1,971,001	1,898,368	1,971,001	2,189,429	11.08 %
Medicare	189,203	178,254	189,203	210,533	11.27 %
<b>Personnel Subtotal</b>	<b>19,282,824</b>	<b>18,613,083</b>	<b>19,282,824</b>	<b>21,372,800</b>	<b>10.84 %</b>
<b>Park Operations &amp; Admin (Fund 27)</b>					
Admin	1,896,745	1,599,945	1,811,908	1,871,790	3.30 %
Education/Interpretive Operations	357,033	289,675	343,575	354,370	3.14 %
Park Maintenance	2,936,580	3,271,763	2,811,856	2,948,186	4.85 %
Promotion	350,200	290,953	350,200	347,200	(0.86) %
Rental Properties	151,190	164,892	151,190	151,190	0 %
Natural Resource Management	399,371	326,896	341,775	298,225	(12.74) %
Revenue Programs	85,255	89,402	85,255	80,905	(5.10) %
Safety & Law Enforcement	534,724	426,971	511,712	465,562	(9.02) %
Special Facilities	288,230	195,494	287,665	182,805	(36.45) %
Renovations	519,270	500,491	475,000	490,100	3.18 %
<b>Park Operations &amp; Admin Subtotal</b>	<b>7,518,598</b>	<b>7,156,483</b>	<b>7,170,136</b>	<b>7,190,333</b>	<b>0.28 %</b>
<b>Capital Improvement Projects (Fund 29)</b>					
Miscellaneous	-	-	-	-	- %
Building Construction	4,070,592	5,031,162	385,000	140,000	(63.64) %
Facility Improvements	492,433	588,492	372,000	950,000	155.38 %
Natural Resource Improvements	2,328,233	1,358,971	1,140,000	1,200,000	(5.26) %
Planning	699,555	426,285	400,000	0	(100.00) %
Site Improvements	7,834,773	7,347,546	5,204,000	8,170,000	56.99 %
Utilities	276,608	332,893	250,000	470,000	88.00 %
Other - Prior Year	-	-	-	-	- %
<b>Capital Improvement Projects Subtotal</b>	<b>15,702,194</b>	<b>15,085,349</b>	<b>7,751,000</b>	<b>10,930,000</b>	<b>41.01 %</b>
<b>Land Acquisition (Fund 29)</b>	<b>5,995,000</b>	<b>2,586,144</b>	<b>5,500,000</b>	<b>4,000,000</b>	<b>(27.27) %</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES – FUNDS 27 &amp; 29</b>	<b>48,498,617</b>	<b>43,441,059</b>	<b>39,703,960</b>	<b>43,493,133</b>	<b>9.54 %</b>
<b>FUND 30 – BLACKCLICK WOODS GOLF COURSE</b>					
<b>Personnel (Fund 30)</b>					
Salaries (including merit increases)	659,667	625,443	659,667	718,109	8.86 %
Employee Benefits	279,278	148,340	279,278	147,841	(47.06) %
PERS	89,693	86,993	89,693	99,317	10.73 %
Medicare	9,290	8,864	9,290	10,286	10.72 %
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>1,037,929</b>	<b>869,640</b>	<b>1,037,929</b>	<b>975,553</b>	<b>(6.01) %</b>
<b>Other Operating Costs (Fund 30)</b>	<b>745,913</b>	<b>808,197</b>	<b>592,300</b>	<b>546,450</b>	<b>(7.74) %</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES – FUND 30</b>	<b>1,783,842</b>	<b>1,677,837</b>	<b>1,630,229</b>	<b>1,522,003</b>	<b>(6.64) %</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES – ALL FUNDS</b>	<b>50,282,459</b>	<b>45,118,896</b>	<b>41,334,189</b>	<b>45,015,136</b>	<b>8.91 %</b>

\* 2023 amended budget includes carryover encumbrances from 2022

# Metro Parks Team Members



Annette Boose



Virginia Gordon

A small team of four is responsible for administering all Human Resources functions for over 400 employees, which consists of approximately 200 full-time, 120 part-time, and 100 seasonal employees.

This includes all aspects of an employee's tenure from recruitment, benefits management, training and development, and performance evaluations. Other areas of HR administration include salary/pay plan development, worker's compensation, unemployment, disciplinary actions, employee recognition, collective bargaining and contract and leave management.

Human Resources staff also work closely with outside organizations to enhance opportunities within the community. Metro Parks partners with the Columbus City Schools to offer an eight-week internship program for Columbus City School students. In addition, HR and Columbus State Community College are working together to further employment prospects for those participating in related technical and educational programs.

HR continues to work with the Franklin County Benefits Office to offer a comprehensive wellness and medical insurance program for its employees. This consists of medical, dental, vision and prescription coverage as well as a full employee assistance program and an incentive-based wellness platform.

Recognition is an important aspect in employee retention and Human Resources provides service awards in 5-year increments. Employee-based events are conducted annually and include a family Breakfast with Santa, summer picnic meeting, and get-togethers such as group hikes.

The collective bargaining agreement for full-time Park Rangers expires on December 31, 2024; the HR team will be working with the Fraternal Order of Police and the Ohio Labor Council on a new agreement in fall 2024.



Virginia Gordon

# Personnel Analysis

BUDGET vs BUDGET

	2024 Budget	2023 Budget	Budget % Change	Budget \$ Change
TOTAL PERSONNEL COSTS (Excluding new positions)	21,170,003	19,560,753	8.23 %	1,609,250
TOTAL PERSONNEL COSTS (Including new positions)	22,348,353	20,320,753	9.98 %	2,027,600

Notes:  
The change incorporates several current budgeted vacancies

PROJECTED ACTUAL vs BUDGET

	2024 Proposed Budget	2023 Projected Actual	% Change #1	2023 Budget	% Change #2
PERSONNEL COSTS					
Staffing (FT & PT positions)					
Salaries	14,603,925	12,779,686	14.27 %	13,095,757	11.52 %
Health Care Benefits	4,254,221	3,709,078	14.70 %	3,844,963	10.64 %
PERS	2,288,746	1,985,361	15.28 %	2,060,694	11.07 %
Medicare	220,819	187,118	18.01 %	198,493	11.25 %
SALARIES & BENEFITS TOTAL	21,367,711	18,661,243	14.50 %	19,199,907	11.29 %
OTHER APPROPRIATIONS					
Merit	624,580	598,535	4.35 %	638,469	(2.18) %
Uniform Allowances	50,000	47,680	4.87 %	40,170	24.47 %
Claims-based Expenses					
Retirements *	159,000	52,400	203.43 %	199,000	(20.10) %
Unemployment	10,000	1,101	808.27 %	20,000	(50.00) %
Workers Comp	137,062	121,764	12.56 %	223,207	(38.59) %
OTHER APPROPRIATIONS TOTAL	980,642	821,480	19.37 %	1,120,846	(12.51) %
TOTAL PERSONNEL COSTS	22,348,353	19,482,723	14.71 %	20,320,753	9.98 %

Notes:  
\* Accrued vacation / sick leave payments for new retirees  
# 1 Percentage change is from the 2024 Proposed Budget to the 2023 Projected Actual  
# 2 Percentage change is from the 2024 Proposed Budget to the 2023 Budget



# Capital Improvement Program

The Capital Improvements budget for 2024 is \$14,930,000. Figures associated with each project are the amount of park district funds that will be initially allocated. As with all capital projects and land acquisition efforts, supporting funds through grants or other means will be sought.

## **Land Acquisition (\$4,000,000)**

To continue the growth of Metro Parks, these funds are allocated for strategic land acquisition as opportunities arise. At more than 28,600 acres, or nearly 45 square miles, Metro Parks is a major land holder and continuously strives to preserve more natural areas. As in years past, grant opportunities will be pursued to support land acquisition.

## **Paving, Parking, Road and Trail Improvements (\$2,680,000)**

These funds will be used to improve and repair existing roadways, parking lots, trails and golf cart paths at Blacklick Woods and the Blacklick Woods Golf Course, Chestnut Ridge, Glacier Ridge, Highbanks, Inniswood, Pickerington Ponds, Rocky Fork and Walnut Woods. This category also includes needed work along the Olentangy Greenway Trail. Funding through the Ohio Department of Transportation may be available for project reimbursements.

## **Bank Run Improvements (\$1,300,000)**

Extensive efforts will continue in 2024 to develop this newly acquired park for trail development and facility improvements. The site has multiple buildings, some of which will be extensively renovated and others demolished. A 5K trail specific to special events will be constructed. Also, an adjacent quarry which was recently acquired will provide future water access for recreation.

## **Park Road Trail (\$1,000,000)**

Along the northern boundary of Sharon Woods Metro Park, construction of this greenway trail will create a connection from the multipurpose trail to the west side of I-71 over the Park Road bridge and connect with Sharon Woods Metro Park.

## **Homestead Park Improvements (\$800,000)**

These funds will result in a major facelift to Homestead Metro Park. Specific projects include improved vehicle circulation and parking, upgraded trails, additional restrooms and shelters and a better connection to the Heritage Trail.

## **Nature Center Improvements (\$750,000)**

For remodeling and interior improvements at the Blacklick Woods and Blendon Woods nature centers, these funds will refurbish existing facilities to improve services to the public and extend the useful life of the buildings.

## **Quarry Trails Railroad Bridge Renovation (\$700,000):**

To rehabilitate a 300-foot span railroad bridge over the Scioto River for pedestrian use. Work entails the replacement of both timber and asphalt surfaces, new bridge railings, steel repairs, general renovation, cleaning of surfaces and removal of encroaching invasive species.

**Natural Resource and Land Improvements (\$700,000)**

These funds will support reforestation efforts, invasive species removal, wetlands development and erosion control projects.

**Great Southern Development (\$500,000)**

This recently acquired property along the Scioto River south of Scioto Audubon Metro Park will require extensive development for wetlands and trails in 2024 as it evolves into a fully operational park in an underserved area. Specific projects include grading for development of roads and paths, parking lot improvements, paved and gravel path construction, tree plantings and lighting and re-establishment of a wetland.

**Bridge Improvements (\$450,000)**

To replace the Arch Bridge at Highbanks Metro Park, bridge decking on the Blacklick Creek Trail at Three Creeks Metro Park and a pedestrian bridge crossing Grant Run at Scioto Grove Metro Park.

**Inniswood Rose Trellis (\$300,000)**

To completely replace the entire wooden trellis structure for the Rose Garden at Inniswood Metro Gardens. This custom-made feature is anticipated to require a substantial time commitment. The cost is to be offset by a transfer of funds from the Inniswood Fund at the Columbus Foundation.

**Waterline installation at Blendon Woods (\$300,000)**

To replace and reposition aging utilities infrastructure to restore effective service to the entire park.

**Recreational Improvements (\$290,000)**

This includes a northern playground at Quarry Trails Metro Park, kayak launches at Prairie Oaks Metro Park and resurfacing of a nature stone area at Scioto Audubon Metro Park.

**Security Cameras and Equipment, Phase 2 (\$250,000)**

To better protect our visitors and deter crime, security cameras and related support systems will be deployed district-wide, with an emphasis on parks and locations most susceptible to criminal activity. Phase 1 was completed in 2023.

**Blacklick Golf Course Breezeway Repair (\$200,000):**

To replace and enhance the pedestrian bridge connecting the golf course parking lot with the pro-shop and golf course beyond.

**Quarry Trails Pumps (\$200,000)**

To procure and install systems to pump water from Swan Lake to Turtle Cove at Quarry Trails Metro Park, which will create an active whitewater kayak channel between the two bodies of water.

**Fiber connectivity (\$170,000)**

In 2023, Metro Parks completed its fiber optic deployments at Scioto Grove and Scioto Audubon Metro Parks, improving the parks with a modern communications infrastructure through buried conduit so as to not disturb scenic park views. These funds are budgeted for similar projects at Battelle Darby Creek and Quarry Trails Metro Parks.

**North Park Roadway Culvert (\$150,000)**

To mitigate occasional roadway flooding at Quarry Trails Metro Park, this feature will redirect water during times of excessive stormwater.

**Restroom Additions and Improvements (\$140,000)**

To purchase and install pre-cast restroom facilities at Battelle Darby Creek and Slate Run Metro Parks.

**Fuel Tanks (\$50,000)**

New tanks are required at Battelle Darby Creek Metro Park.



Virginia Gordon

The Optimist Lodge is one of the buildings at Bank Run Metro Park that will be refurbished and made ready for reservations, using Capital Improvement Funds from the 2024 budget.

**DID  
YOU  
KNOW?**

*Metro Parks total land area is more than 28,600 acres, (almost 45 square miles), larger than Westerville, Pickerington, Upper Arlington, Obetz and Powell combined!*



# Equipment Budget Highlights

Below is the recommended 2024 equipment budget, with items equal to or exceeding \$30,000 in value listed with a brief item description. While not listed individually below, a total of \$459,400 is also allocated for equipment items at locations across the park district. Purchases over \$50,000 must be approved by a Board of Park Commissioners resolution.

Metro Park or Department	Item Description	Budgeted Cost
Roving Crew	Compact loader, with attachments	\$100,000
Blacklick Woods Golf Course	Replacement golf carts (15)	\$75,000
Slate Run/Chestnut Ridge	5400 Tractor	\$72,000
Three Creeks	Tractor, with attachments	\$72,000
Roving Crew	Carpenter truck	\$60,000
Walnut Woods	Maintenance truck	\$58,000
Blendon Woods	Ranger truck	\$56,000
Highbanks	Patrol vehicle	\$37,000
Operations	Radios	\$35,000
Scioto Audubon/Greenways	Ranger vehicle for trail patrol	\$34,000
Operations	Second Shift patrol vehicle SUV	\$30,000
Total for above items		\$629,000
Items below \$30,000	Includes: lawn mowers, utility vehicles, trailers,	\$459,400
Multiple Park locations	power tools, salt spreaders, ranger bikes, kayaks, information technology equipment, office equipment, recreational equipment, and other miscellaneous items.	

Total 2024 Equipment Budget	\$1,088,400
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# Blacklick Woods Golf Course

## 2024 Golf Course Budget & Projected Income

### Revenues

Projected at \$1,525,000 for 2024, Blacklick Woods Golf Course revenues consist of greens fees, range rentals, reservable venue rentals, merchandise sales, food and beverage items and operating transfers-in from the General Fund.

### Expenditures

Projected at \$1,522,003 for 2024, expenditures include all salaries and benefits costs, general operating and maintenance costs, utilities and equipment.

	2023 Budget	2023 Projected	2024 Budget
<b>REVENUES</b>			
Greens fees, cart rentals, facility rentals, merchandise sales, etc.	1,209,000	1,509,412	1,525,000
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>			
Personnel			
Salaries	659,667	625,443	718,109
Benefits, PERS, Medicare	378,261	244,197	257,444
Total Personnel Costs	1,037,929	869,640	975,553
Operating Costs (non-personnel)	592,300	808,197	546,450
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>1,630,229</b>	<b>1,677,837</b>	<b>1,522,003</b>
<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>(421,229)</b>	<b>(168,425)</b>	<b>2,997</b>
BEGINNING YEAR FUND BALANCE	304,961	546,006	527,581
TRANSFER IN FROM GENERAL FUND *	150,000	150,000	0
<b>YEAR-END FUND BALANCE</b>	<b>33,732</b>	<b>527,581</b>	<b>530,578</b>

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

# RESOLUTION No. 6126

## RELATIVE TO THE ADOPTION OF THE 2024 BUDGET AND APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS FOR 2024

WHEREAS, The Board of Park Commissioners of the Columbus and Franklin County Metropolitan Park District has reviewed the estimated receipts and projected expenditures of the Park District for the period January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024; and

WHEREAS, It is necessary that this Park Board adopt a budget and appropriate funds before funds can be disbursed in 2024; Now, Therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That this Board hereby adopts the following budget for 2024 for Funds 27, 29, and 30 and appropriates the amounts listed below to the various funds; and authorizes the Finance Director and Treasurer to initiate Inter Fund transfers as needed during 2024 within the appropriated amounts listed herein; and determines that the amounts shown are the maximum allowable expenditures during 2024 and may be expended only as cash receipts are available;

<b>FUND 27</b>	
Personnel	\$21,372,800
Non-Personnel	\$7,190,333
Inter Fund Transfer to Fund 29	\$9,000,000
<b>FUND 27 Appropriation</b>	
	<b>\$37,563,133</b>
<b>FUND 29</b>	
Capital Projects and Land Acquisition	\$14,930,000
<b>FUND 29 Appropriation</b>	
	<b>\$14,930,000</b>
<b>FUND 30</b>	
Blacklick Woods Golf Course Personnel	\$975,553
Non-Personnel	\$546,450
<b>FUND 30 Appropriation</b>	
	<b>\$1,522,003</b>
<b>FUNDS 27, 29 &amp; 30 – GRAND TOTAL</b>	
	<b>\$54,015,136</b>

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this Board acknowledges that the Metro Parks staff will determine the amount of 2023 encumbrances to be carried forward as of December 31, 2023 and are thus not included in this resolution.

Adopted this 4th day of December 2023

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
Columbus & Franklin County Metropolitan Park District

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair  
  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Executive Director





## COLUMBUS & FRANKLIN COUNTY METRO PARKS

1069 W MAIN STREET  
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[metroparks.net](http://metroparks.net)



Virginia Gordon



Dan Bissonette



Jennifer Cooper