



2013 ANNUAL REPORT PARKS AND RECREATION SAINT PAUL



FROM THE DIRECTOR

This past year, Saint Paul Parks and Recreation continued to knock projects out of the ballpark in an effort to make Saint Paul the most livable city in America. Thousands of hours of planning and research paid off in 2013 as we cleared space for our largest project to date, the Lowertown Ballpark. The exciting venture, a partnership with the Saint Paul Saints, will help reinvigorate the resurging Lowertown area in downtown Saint Paul.

We truly are fortunate to have partnerships with so many passionate, local groups, in addition to the Saints, that result in such vibrant places. An unprecedented collaboration with the Saint Paul Public Library has been instrumental to planning and developing the Arlington Hills Community Center, a shared facility that began construction early in the summer. Private donations collected through Como Friends were key to the addition of two major exhibits at Como Park Zoo & Conservatory: Gorilla Forest and The Ordway Gardens. And with the continued assistance from the Saint Paul Parks Conservancy, a major restoration of Lilydale Regional Park, an initiative years in the making, was completed. Sadly, in the spring, our city lost two bright, young students during a visit to the park. The ongoing work at Lilydale will not only connect more visitors to the Mississippi River but will also honor the students and their loved ones.

It is my hope that the achievements highlighted within these pages demonstrate a clear commitment to working hand-in-hand with the community to make our city more natural, more urban, and more connected.

Sincerely,



Michael Hahm, CPRP



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2013 in Numbers **17 – 25**

The **Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission** ensures that each decision made by the City of Saint Paul is in the best interest of parks, natural areas, and recreational activities. The Commission passed a number of items in 2013, including resolutions to endorse Saint Paul Parks and Recreation's 2013–2017 Strategic Plan, to support the Use Agreement for the leasing of Lowertown Ballpark to the Saint Paul Saints, and to recommend the proposed Development Agreement for the planned Frogtown Park and Farm.

Below, from left to right, the membership of the Commission in 2013 included Andy Trcka (Chair), Erick Goodlow, Dave Haley, Emily Shively, Betsy Mowry, Susan Bishop (Vice-Chair), Dan Marckel, Salina Vang, and John Mountain.



OUR MISSION

To help make Saint Paul the most livable city in America, Saint Paul Parks and Recreation will facilitate the creation of **active lifestyles, vibrant places, and a vital environment.**

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**DIRECTOR****Mike Hahm**

Department of Parks and Recreation
569.7 Total FTE

DEPUTY DIRECTOR**Kathy Korum**

Citywide Youth Initiatives
Education Liaison
HR Liaison
Safety & Security
Sprockets
Training
Youth Job Corps
56.3 FTE

ADMINISTRATION**Tom Russell**

Accounting
Budget Development
Intern Management
Internal Compliance & Auditing
Marketing & Public Relations
Special Projects
Technology & Data Systems
11.5 FTE

COMO CAMPUS**Michelle Furrer**

Como Park Zoo & Conservatory
Educational Programming
Maintenance & Facilities
Marketing & Public Relations
Reservations, Programs, Rentals, & Permits
Visitor Services
Volunteer Management
92.2 FTE

DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION**Jody Martinez**

Capital Improvement
Community Design Process Management
Construction Management
Design & Contract Document Production
Met Council & CIB Committee Liaison
Parkland Use Management
Urban Design & Planning
15.5 FTE

OPERATIONS**Gary Korum**

Asset Management
Citywide Special Events
Contract Services
Equipment Services
Forestry
Harriet Island
Natural Resources
Park & Programming Services
Park Maintenance
Recreation Maintenance
Support Maintenance
169.5 FTE

RECREATION SERVICES**Gwen Peterson**

Adaptive Recreation
Adult Recreation
Citywide Recreation Services
Community Centers
Health & Fitness
Mobile Recreation
Municipal Athletics
160.4 FTE

SPECIAL SERVICES**Susie Odegard**

Aquatics
Contract Management
Golf Operations
Midway Stadium Management
Service Partnership Administration
Ski Operations
64.3 FTE

Gorilla Forest, the \$11 million renovation and expansion at Como Zoo, officially opened on June 6 to rave reviews from many media outlets. The new exhibit, the largest of its kind, provides over 13,000 square feet of open space for its seven residents as well as improved drainage, lighting, ventilation, and natural scenery.

Also garnering national attention, Como Zoo's three reindeer provided glimpses into their daily habits via Animal Planet LIVE webcams. Debuting to the world on November 25, **Reindeer Cam** tallied over 700,000 views over the holiday season.



On April 19, over 14,000 visitors trekked through late-season snowstorms to attend the grand opening of **The Ordway Gardens**. The \$2.8 million addition to the Marjorie McNeely Conservatory, funded by private contributions made to Como Friends, houses an extensive collection of bonsai across 5,000 square feet of indoor and outdoor space.

The new addition also provides year-round views of the recently renovated **Charlotte Partridge Ordway Japanese Garden**. A new ranking produced by Sukiya Living Magazine placed the destination among the 12 most beautiful gardens of its kind within the U.S. and Canada.

Of the many historical achievements that Como Park Zoo & Conservatory celebrated in 2013, the most historical took place on August 1. Celebrating **Marriage Equality** in Minnesota, the facility offered free permits to nine couples for wedding ceremonies at the Sunken Garden and the Excedra.



Though heavy snowstorms postponed the initial construction date of the **Arlington Hills Community Center** to May 10, development on the facility progressed steadily throughout the year. The \$14 million, 40,000 square foot project is a collaboration with the Saint Paul Public Library and is set to include the Arlington Hills Library and the Arlington Hills Recreation Center.

Elsewhere, the **Conway Recreation Center Play Area and Splash Pad** was unveiled on June 20. Utilizing over \$560,000 of funding provided by the Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) Committee, the restored play area was updated with new equipment and landscaping.

The CIB and the Neighborhood Sales Tax Revitalization (STAR) Program also provided a combined \$413,000 of funding to help renovate the popular **Como Regional Park Play Area**. The renovated site officially revealed its new features on September 11, including several scalable green mounds and a large rope pyramid.



Baseball-related projects, as well as a football field dedication, also created a buzz throughout the city in 2013. Demolition began on a vacant factory in July to clear space for the upcoming **Lowertown Ballpark**. The \$63 million, future home of the Saint Paul Saints will feature art created by Futures North to further reinvigorate the Lowertown area.

Revamping a section of the Dunning Sports Complex, **Toni Stone Field** was updated with new turf, fences, benches, and more. The project, completed in August, was made possible by an annual renovation grant of \$10,000 from the Minnesota Twins as well as a matching grant from The Toro Company.

Lastly, two blocks from Toni Stone Field, the Oxford Community Center football field became officially known as **Stacy L. Robinson Field**. A celebration for the new name, dedicated to the late Saint Paul native and NFL star who contributed countless resources to improving the facility, was held on June 15.



Many projects undertaken in 2013 on parks, natural areas, and trails expanded on the goals found in the **Great River Passage Master Plan**, a document that was officially adopted by the City Council on April 10 and by the Metropolitan Council later in the year. The plan highlights the necessity of bridging *all* communities to the river to create a more natural, more urban, and more connected city.

To increase the number of public access points to the Mississippi River, plans were finalized for the development of a new public park in the heart of the West Seventh neighborhood. At 40.4 acres, **Victoria Park** will safely and directly connect recreationists to the river.

Opposite the banks of the river, new roadways and trails were developed and completed at **Lilydale Regional Park** by mid-October. The \$2.1 million project, a partnership with the Saint Paul Parks Conservancy, also included the addition of new utilities and the remediation of a former dumpsite.

The restored park will benefit from the new **Cherokee Regional Trail**, a spacious, 12 foot wide path spanning 1.3 miles from Lilydale Regional Park to Harriet Island Regional Park.

From Harriet Island Regional Park, the trail will connect to the planned **Harriet Island to South St. Paul Regional Trail**. In May, support was voiced by the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Committee for the trail's master plan.



Several projects not directly connected to the river also played a key role in fulfilling the goals of the Great River Passage Master Plan. Development began on the **Trout Brook Nature Sanctuary** in August to create a 42 acre park in the middle of the city. The site is part of the much more expansive Trout Brook Greenway that will connect to nearby landmarks and green spaces around the city.

The new **Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary Outdoor Classroom** will be one such destination. The sanctuary hosted a dedication for its new outdoor classroom on October 19. Funds for the project were secured by the National Park Trust through the 3M Foundation.

On the East Side, the **Furness Parkway Path Extension** project brought applause from the local community. The finished trails will provide additional opportunities for residents to move about the city on bike and on foot.

Lastly, with assistance from The Trust for Public Land, 12.7 acres of private land in the Frogtown neighborhood became property of the City. Officially acquired on December 4, the planned **Frogtown Park and Farm** will contain an urban demonstration farm, a natural area, and a recreation field.



Saint Paul Parks and Recreation helped to organize several athletic events at every level in 2013. Over 125,000 spectators gathered at Cathedral Hill from January 24 to 26 to view the Ice Cross Downhill World Championships, more commonly known as **Red Bull Crashed Ice**.

At the national level, teams from as far as Santo Domingo to as near as Chicago competed from August 3 to 14 to crown new champions in three youth leagues for the **Reviving Baseball in Inner Cities (RBI) World Series**.

Many athletic facilities were also utilized late June during the Olympic-style **Star of the North Games**, a multi-day event that saw 3,191 athletes compete in sports such as volleyball and basketball.



Musical acts and art festivals continued to draw impressive crowds in 2013. Nearly 45,000 visitors ventured into the Lowertown area to experience the **Northern Spark Festival** on June 8. Taking place until sunrise, the event showcased 79 works of art from over 300 artists.

Weeks later, jazz acts drew over 10,000 visitors from June 27 to 29 at the **Twin Cities Jazz Festival**. Mears Park once again played host to the event.

Mears Park also hosted one of many free concerts held at various parks as part of the popular **Music in the Parks** program. A total of 18,555 spectators supported a variety of plays and bands throughout the summer, including, for the first time, teen bands featured in four concerts.



Changes and additions to several of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation's most popular programs provided even more opportunities for youth and adults to participate. **50+ Across Saint Paul**, serving those over the age of 50 for many years, opened its doors to adults of all ages and abilities in 2013.

In partnership with the Lewis Sports Foundation, several **Youth Lacrosse** camps were offered throughout the summer for elementary and middle school students. The sessions, drawing interest from many participants, will be fully implemented in 2014 as an official youth league.

Meanwhile, youth entering adulthood were given an opportunity to develop professional skills through the Youth Job Corps' newest program, **Right Track**. The pilot program placed 21 students from Saint Paul in a variety of internships at businesses such as Travelers, U.S. Bank, Ecolab, and Xcel Energy. Right Track also received \$64,000 from the F.R. Bigelow Foundation to expand in 2014 and inspired an ongoing rebranding of the Youth Job Corps.



A streak spanning nearly three decades came to an end in mid-April after late-season snowstorms forced the cancellation of the Citywide Cleanup. The announcement, spurring concerns throughout the community, led to the creation of **#CleanupStPaul**, a campaign that prompted volunteers to clean up various local parks and submit photos of their efforts online. The winning team, led by State Senator Fong Hawji, pose below at Phalen Regional Park. The use of social media also helped to generate an astounding \$16,805 of **Aquatic Membership Sales** by early June. Nearly 90% of purchases during the campaign originated from links found on Facebook.

 @SaintPaulParks

 facebook.com/stpaulparks



OUR VISION

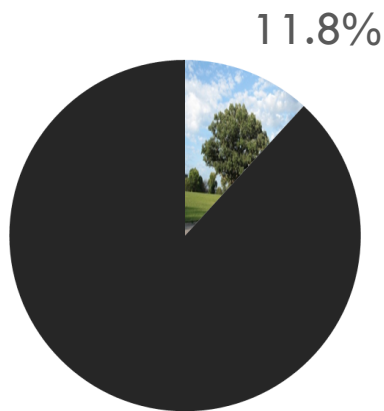
Saint Paul Parks and Recreation will make Saint Paul the most livable city in America by **responding creatively to change, innovating with every decision, and connecting the entire city.**

APPROVED 2013 BUDGETS

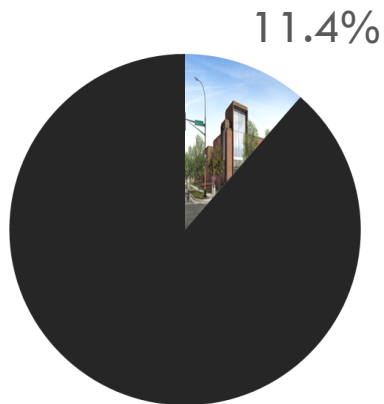
Capital Budget
\$3,662,000

General Fund
\$26,154,783

Special Fund
\$31,041,870



Portion of the City's Total General Fund



Portion of the City's Total Special Fund



25

RECREATION CENTERS

Recreation centers across the city tallied 2 million total visits and nearly 18,000 activity registrations from residents of all ages and abilities.

- Various youth camps brought in over 11,500 participants over the summer.
- Adaptive Recreation, serving those with specific needs, offered over 180 programs that resulted in over 40,000 hours of participation and 1,000 hours of volunteering from community members.
- Mobile Recreation services were utilized by over 10,000 residents at public housing sites, family shelters, and parks.
- An average of 250 youth in grades 1–6 participated in Rec Check, a free afterschool program held at 17 recreation centers. The program provided students with a safe space to do homework, make arts and crafts, and engage in physical activity.
- Co-sponsored by Saint Paul Public Schools Nutrition Services and supported through a \$25,000 grant awarded by Second Harvest Heartland and the Vikings Children’s Fund, the Free Summer Meals Program served over 50,000 snacks and 76,000 meals to youth over the summer.
- Over 150 activities were offered to all adults through 50+ Across Saint Paul, including the Summer Picnic at Harriet Island Regional Park, which drew over 900 guests, and the Hiking Club, which walked over 1,300 miles combined. “City Passport,” a support center for those over the age of 50, was also visited by over 15,000 individuals.



4

AQUATIC FACILITIES

Many residents played it cool during the hot summer months at the City's several aquatic centers. With no entry fee, Phalen Park Beach continued to draw a host of visitors with its free lockers and sand volleyball courts. Inexpensive admission prices to the City's other aquatic facilities also drew large crowds. The three facilities, Great River Water Park, Highland Park Aquatic Center, and the most popular, Como Regional Park Pool, combined for over 230,000 individual visits, 137,000 daily admissions sold, and 4,400 swim lessons taken.



4

GOLF COURSES

Highland National Golf Course, Highland 9-Hole Golf Course, Como Golf Course, and Phalen Golf Course combined for nearly 100,000 rounds of golf played by tee enthusiasts practicing their swings and participating in tournaments.

**1****ZOO AND CONSERVATORY**

Como Park Zoo & Conservatory, one of the largest free-of-cost facilities of its size in North America, drew over 1.8 million visitors in 2013, including over 165,000 students on field trips. A major attraction within the city, the campus received nearly \$1.5 million in small bills generously placed in donation bins and received help from 1,386 individuals who volunteered for a total of 54,572 hours.

- Over 120 varieties of plants were harvested for the Chipotle Edible Garden, an exhibit showcasing techniques used to grow vegetables, fruits, herbs, and flowers at home. Como Zoo animals received over 440 pounds of fresh vegetables from the harvest as feed while recreation centers received more than 1,340 pounds for use in nutrition education programs.
- The Marjorie McNeely Conservatory hosted 245 weddings as well as 126 receptions and corporate parties. The conservatory also served 575 dinners at the annual Valentine's Day Dinner.



1

MUNICIPAL STADIUM

Over 243,000 spectators attended the 53 home games of Midway Stadium's main tenant, the Saint Paul Saints. In total, the facility hosted 83 events sponsored by the Saints and 87 events sponsored by the City of Saint Paul.

- Midway Stadium's largest event of the year, a concert featuring Bob Dylan, Wilco, and My Morning Jacket, drew over 14,000 fans on July 10.
- Nearly 5,500 visitors from around Minnesota supported youth athletes during the State AA High School Baseball Tournament.



42

MILES OF PARKWAYS



108

MILES OF TRAILS

Miles of beautiful parkways and trails provided the perfect scenery for many walking, running, and cycling events in 2013. An estimated 233,650 participants dashed toward the finish line in Women ROCK, Time to Fly, and Monster Dash events as well as many other races. In addition, pro cyclists sped to victory at the Nature Valley Grand Prix while owners of classic bicycles showed off their frames and wheels at the Saint Paul Classic Bike Tour.

**219**

ATHLETIC FIELDS

Athletic fields and facilities received plenty of usage in 2013 by a variety of youth and adult athletic programs. The two most popular sports, baseball and softball, continued to receive support from Friends of St. Paul Baseball, a local nonprofit organization that raised and donated \$30,000 in 2013. In addition, baseball and softball field rentals generated over \$40,000 in revenue, soccer field rentals generated nearly \$160,000 in revenue, and batting cages generated over \$62,000 in revenue.

- Adult Softball: 7,000+ adults across 504 teams.
- Basketball: 200+ adults across 17 teams and 1,800+ youth across 151 teams.
- Broomball: 1,650+ adults across 165 teams.
- Football: 80+ adults across 6 teams and 800+ youth across 32 teams.
- Futsal: 250+ youth across 26 teams.
- RBI Baseball/Softball: 2,100+ youth across 174 teams.
- Soccer: 1,150+ youth across 106 teams.
- Volleyball: 180+ adults across 18 teams and 600+ youth across 56 teams.

**77**

TENNIS COURTS

The City's many tennis courts allowed St. Paul Urban Tennis (SPUT) to continue to benefit youth, especially youth of color, through tennis. More importantly, the program provided out-of-school, structured time for roughly 3,000 students.

**1**

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

One of the City's fastest growing programs, the Youth Job Corps placed over 600 youth at a variety of worksites and helped youth earn over \$832,000 of income. With 90% of hires identifying as youth of color, the initiative serves as one of many successful tactics to combat the achievement gap observed within the city.



179

PARKS AND NATURAL AREAS



500,000

PARK/BOULEVARD TREES

With nearly 1,500 permits granted for park facility usage in 2013, continued emphasis on the vitality and presentation of green spaces remained a top priority.

- Many trees infected with the Emerald Ash Borer were removed and replaced with healthy trees as part of an ongoing effort to eliminate the invasive species. A total of 1,007 infected trees were removed from boulevards and parks and 328 infected trees were removed or ordered to be removed from public and private properties. In addition, nearly 300 trees were injected with pesticides.
- Environmental Services planted over 7,600 trees, 20,000 native grasses and flowers, and 68,000 floodplain tree seeds across the city.
- Maintenance crews removed over 2,100 tons of trash as well as over 1,000 yards of buckthorn and brush from various sites.
- Roughly 1,200 incidents of graffiti were removed from properties.
- Community members logged nearly 8,000 hours of environmental volunteerism.
- Over 6,000 individuals participated in the Environmental Education program.



AND MANY MORE
EVENTS AROUND THE CITY

BareBones Puppet Theatre

Bark and Rec Day

Concrete and Grass Lowertown Music Festival

Dragon Festival

EcoArts Fest

Flint Hills International Children's Festival

IBEW Holiday Lights in the Park

Irish Fair of Minnesota

Ordway's Summer Dance Series

Rice Park Tree Lighting Ceremony

WaterFest

Wells Fargo WinterSkate



The Most Livable
City in America

Saint Paul Parks and Recreation





MOST LIVABLE CITY IN AMERICA

