OUR MISSION: “HELPING DES MOINES LIVE WELL, PLAY HARD AND PROTECT THE EARTH.”

OUR DEPARTMENT:

PARKS
The Parks Division is responsible for maintaining all the facilities and grounds within the Des Moines Parks and Recreation Department. This includes all park buildings, playgrounds, sport courts, pools and aquatic centers, wading pools, spraygrounds, mowed turf, prairie areas, woodlands, litter and trash removal and snow removal. Also included are trails, both paved and nature, municipal cemeteries, landscaped areas, flowerbeds, trees and the city greenhouse.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
The Planning and Development Division designs, plans and implements parks, recreation, natural resources, trails and open space projects that facilitate safe, inviting and memorable use of these facilities for enjoyment by residents of and visitors to the City of Des Moines. The primary function of the Planning and Development Division is to manage the Park Improvement section of the City’s Capital Improvement Program by supervising and implementing planning and construction projects. To accomplish this, our staff possesses broad expertise and understanding of fields such as landscape architecture, planning, architecture and engineering.

RECREATION
The Recreation Division strives to create experiences that appeal to the widest variety of residents. The Recreation team looks to offer activities that enhance what exists but is always seeking to showcase sports, aquatics and the natural environment in ways they have not been seen before. We aspire to serve not only our regular participants but we look to create excitement for first time users as well. We offer a wide range of programs to match people’s diverse interests, using our top-rated facilities conveniently located throughout the city for all who participate. The Recreation Division is focused on excellence in leisure activities as part of a larger commitment to health, wellness, and the overall betterment of people’s lives.

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

PARKS AND RECREATION ADMINISTRATION OFFICE
1551 E. Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway
Des Moines, IA 50317

(515) 237-1386
dmparks.org
parks@dmgov.org

Facebook.com/desmoinesparks
Instagram.com/desmoinesparks
Twitter.com/desmoinesparks
Youtube.com/desmoinesparksandrecreation

Text Message Notifications
Text any of the following keywords to 84483 to sign up for updates on:
DSMEvents, DSMPools, DSMSports, DSMTrails, DSMPopUp
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The Report to the Community is one of my favorite projects of the year as it is the one time and place where we take a moment to reflect on all projects – big and small, the faces of our participants we have impacted as well as facts and figures of our operation. Assembled within the pages of this report is a vivid illustration of how each part of our organization contributes to the quality of life here in Des Moines.

Our team of 53 full-time professionals, supported by over 200 seasonal employees worked tirelessly throughout the year offering programming 325 days a year as well as managing 75 parks, over 4,000 acres of parkland, 81 miles of trails, seven cemeteries and multiple recreational facilities.

The level of success we have reached would be unattainable without the unwavering support we have received from Mayor Frank Cownie, City Manager Scott Sanders, City Council and the appointed Park and Recreation Board. In addition, we have built and grown numerous public-private partnerships that have allowed us to expand our offerings and amenities in ways that were never thought possible.

Much like many residents, we faced adversity in July of 2018 in dealing with the devastating flood event that hit our area. Many facilities including trails, parks and pools experienced varying degrees of damage. I cannot thank our employees enough for their hard work and dedication to restoring normal services, including a complete restart at Northwest Aquatic Center in just five days.

Our volunteer program continues to reach new heights as it celebrated ten years of growth. Over this time, 30,165 individuals have donated 223,110 hours of service to our department valued at over $5.23 million. We truly appreciate the selflessness of everyone who has shared his or her time and talents with us. I encourage anyone and any size of group to volunteer, if not with our department, with any organization or cause as it truly makes a difference both for you and for them.

As we closed out 2018, our team not only looks back at a year full of accomplishments, but towards a future full of opportunity as we embrace the unanimous adoption of LiveDSM, our new comprehensive plan. Our priority for 2018 may have been building LiveDSM, whereas 2019 will see the start of its implementation. Please come along with us as our journey to implement LiveDSM begins. The next 20 years begins now.

Sincerely,

Benjamin R. Page
Director of Parks and Recreation
City of Des Moines
2018 MAYOR AND COUNCIL

T. M. FRANKLIN COWNIE
Mayor

CONNIE BOESEN
At Large

CHRISTOPHER COLEMAN
At Large

BILL GRAY
Ward I

LINDA WESTERGAARD
Ward II

JOSH MANDELBAUM
Ward III

JOE GATTO
Ward IV
GEORGE DAVIS
Chair

Heather Anderson
Jessica Avant
James Bollard
Kimberley Boggus
Victoria Facto
Cynde Fanter
Sarah Lohmeier

Bill Nassif
Loyd W. Ogle
Sammy F. Pugh
Joel Potter
William Thompson
R. Stephen Vilmain
Andrea Woodard
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<tr>
<th>Cemetery Advisory Committee</th>
<th>Citizen Golf Committee</th>
<th>Rose Garden Committee</th>
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<td>Tim Lane</td>
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<td>Andrea Woodard</td>
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The Friends of Des Moines Parks has had an exciting stretch and continues to build a strong foundation of support for their mission: to preserve, protect, improve and promote the use of Des Moines’ parks, greenways and recreational programs for the benefit of all neighborhoods, residents and visitors.

It has been a busy year for the Friends of Des Moines Parks. Jessica Faue joined their team to offer clerical support. In March, they began work on a strategic plan and identified three key areas where they would like to grow the organization: Relationship Building, Community Impact and Organizational Vitality.

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

FORE! OUR PARKS EVENT
The Friends hosted the 5th Annual FORE! Our Parks event. They welcomed approximately 130 golfers and 80 bikers on June 15th, as the event reached a 5-year fundraising total of $150,000.

125TH ANNIVERSARY – PARK PHOTO PROJECT
In anticipation of the 125th Anniversary of the first parks: Union, Waveland, Greenwood and Grandview, the Friends, with great leadership from board member Carl Voss, will honor the occasion with a Park Photo Project. For more information, or if interested in submitting photographs, please visit friendsofdmparks.org. A celebratory event will likely follow the completion of the project.

BRAND AWARENESS/OUTREACH
Brand awareness and outreach continues to be a priority for the Friends. They expanded their visibility this year by participating in the Mayor’s Annual Ride and Run, they ran a booth at the Des Moines Arts Festival and sponsored the Tour DM Parks.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

GRANTS
The Friends were able to support swim lesson scholarships, Earth Day Trash Bash and youth recreation programs thanks in part to grants from Variety the Children’s Charity, Polk County and Principal Financial Group.

First time grantor, Union Pacific Railroad will allow for improvements at Chesterfield Park, specifically a new basketball court.

They have also been fortunate to broaden their network of support to include local business partnerships.

ORGANIZATIONAL VITALITY

MEMORIAL BENCH
The Friends are finalizing details on adopting a formal memorial bench program and look to expand the memorial program in coming years.

$1 MILLION MARK
Perhaps one of the most exciting notables from 2018 was surpassing the $1M mark in their bank account! The monies are designated for a number of park and recreation projects including: MacRae Park Overlook, swim lesson scholarships, playground equipment, the Lauridsen Skate Park and Youth Sports Programming.
A HOME IN DES MOINES WITH $117,000 ASSESSED VALUE PAYS $121 IN PROPERTY TAXES TOWARDS PARKS AND RECREATION. FOR $121 A YEAR, RESIDENTS HAVE ACCESS TO THESE PARKS AND RECREATION & MUNICIPAL FACILITIES:

**WHAT YOU GET FOR $121 A YEAR**

- **4 Disc Golf Courses**
- **3 Golf Courses**
- **7 Cemeteries**
- **2 Community Recreation Centers**
- **5 Streetscapes**
- **9 Enclosed Shelters**
- **47 Open Air Shelters**
- **21 Full Basketball Courts**
- **9 Half Courts**
- **76 Programs & Events**
DES MOINES PARKS & RECREATION

- **TENNIS COURTS**: 53
- **BASEBALL FIELDS**: 8
- **SOFTBALL FIELDS**: 8
- **SPLASH POOLS**: 4
- **PLAYGROUNDS**: 58
- **DOG PARKS**: 3
- **PARKS**: 75
- **SOCCER FIELDS**: 12
- **PICKLEBALL COURTS**: 4
- **INDOOR PLAYGROUNDS**: 4
- **OUTDOOR PLAYGROUNDS**: 54
- **SPRAYGROUNDS**: 9
- **WADING POOLS**: 8
- **AQUATIC CENTERS & POOLS**: 5
- **SPLASH POOLS**: 4
- **PLANT & TREE SPECIES**: +650
- **BASEBALL FIELDS**: 8
- **SOFTBALL FIELDS**: 8
- **MILES OF PAVED TRAIL**: 63
- **MILES OF SOFT TRAIL**: 18
WHERE DOES YOUR PROPERTY TAX DOLLAR GO?

Des Moines Public Schools $0.39
City of Des Moines $0.36
Polk County $0.15
Broadlawns County Hospital $0.06
DMACC $0.01
DART $0.02
Polk County Extension < $0.00
Polk County Assessor < $0.01
FY2019 ADOPTED GENERAL FUND BY DEPARTMENT

$ 738,333,464
CITY OF DES MOINES TOTAL BUDGET BY FUND

FY2019 ADOPTED GENERAL FUND BY DEPARTMENT

$172,883,316

- Police - $66,321,521
- Fire - $41,613,695
- Parks and Recreation - $12,704,875
- Finance - $11,301,878
- Library - $7,939,371
- Community Development - $6,896,359
- City Manager - $6,866,621
- Information Technology - $6,204,246
- Engineering - $4,690,029
- Legal - $3,441,356
- Human Resources - $1,964,622
- City Clerk - $933,024
- Public Works - $869,572
- Civil & Human Rights - $673,849
- Mayor & Council - $462,298
- Fire - $41,613,695
- Parks and Recreation - $12,704,875
- Finance - $11,301,878
- Library - $7,939,371
- Community Development - $6,896,359
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- Legal - $3,441,356
- Human Resources - $1,964,622
- City Clerk - $933,024
- Public Works - $869,572
- Civil & Human Rights - $673,849
- Mayor & Council - $462,298
DES MOINES PARK AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT SERVICE LINES

REVENUES
$3,825,520

- Aquatics: $498,630
- Civic Attractions: $500,513
- Community Recreation Centers: $90,085
- City Landscape Support: $132,945
- Parks: $337,409
- Recreation: $908,133
- Trails: $32,101
- Cemeteries: $1,325,704

EXPENDITURES
$13,155,064

- Aquatics: $1,602,875
- Civic Attractions: $621,410
- Community Recreation Centers: $624,412
- City Landscape Support: $1,209,590
- Parks: $3,889,494
- Recreation: $2,605,778
- Trails: $731,471
- Cemeteries: $1,870,034

AQUATICS
There are five pools and aquatic centers open from May until September. Season swim passes are available for individuals and families. During the month of April, purchase a swim pass and save $5 to $20. Private party rentals are an option at all of our aquatic facilities, making them a unique option for your next birthday party or special event. Family Swim Nights are held monthly and Doggie Dives are held the last day of the pool season as a great opportunity for dogs and their owners.

There are eight traditional wading pools, four splash pools and nine spraygrounds in Des Moines parks free of charge. Our wading pool season extends from the first full week in June through mid-August. The days and hours of operation vary by facility. These water facilities are specifically aimed at children ages 10 and under.

The wading pools are dispersed throughout the city and offer supervised water play. It is a great opportunity for children to meet other children, have fun and build water confidence. Parental supervision is strongly encouraged.

A splash pool is a splash pad with standing water and spray feature offering water play. Splash pools are staffed; however, parental supervision is strongly encouraged.

A sprayground is a splash pad with spray features without standing water. Spraygrounds offer unsupervised water play. Staff is not provided at spraygrounds or fountains, parental supervision is required.

CEMETORIES
The seven municipal cemeteries are large, historic and embrace the cultural diversity of our community. Comprising nearly 10 percent of the City’s parkland, the cemeteries’ 353 acres contain more than 174,697 interments in below and above ground spaces and niches. Through volunteer support, private contributions, increased focus on revenue and efficiencies, the municipal cemeteries are evolving to exceed consumer’s demands.

First plotted in 1848, Woodland was a cemetery before Des Moines became the state capital. Laurel Hill Cemetery opened its gates in 1907 in the rolling hills of Des Moines’ east side, just south of the Iowa State Fairgrounds. Glendale has served Des Moines since 1904. Originally, part of the massive Waveland Park, the year 1900 saw this parkland divided into the beautiful Waveland Golf Course, with the remaining gently rolling hills and dales becoming Glendale Cemetery. Elm Grove, Oak Grove, Sims and St. Ambrose were acquired when their previous owners were financially unable to maintain the cemeteries.

The business model has shifted focus on consumer demand for non-traditional burial services, such as the Wildflower Scattering Garden and Columbarium at Glendale Cemetery. Increased beautification efforts such as tree plantings, statues and garden beds have been supported largely by private contributions.

These amenities when combined with the care of the grounds and existing assets, truly have an impact on where residents choose as a final resting space.
COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTERS

Des Moines Parks and Recreation manages two Community Recreation Centers, located on opposite sides of the city to serve residents. These centers provide a place to learn, play, socialize, collaborate and belong. Both community recreation centers provide congregate meal sites for seniors aged 60 and over, and host a number of camps and neighborhood meetings throughout the year. As rental facilities, numerous weddings, receptions, birthday parties, funerals, showers and meetings are held as well. These facilities also host youth and adult sports leagues year-round.

PIONEER COLUMBUS COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Minutes from downtown and adjacent to Stone Park, Pioneer Columbus features two gymnasiums, weight room, cardio room, game tables, computer lab, multi-purpose room, conference rooms, outdoor basketball court, playground, wading pool and a paved walking loop.

ROBERT L. SCOTT FOURMILE COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Just off the Gay Lea Wilson trail, Fourmile is home to the city’s only skate park. Additional amenities include a gymnasium, weight room, cardio equipment, game tables, computer lab, multi-purpose room, conference room and playground.

COMMUNITY GARDENS

Des Moines Parks and Recreation has 2.99 acres of land dedicated to three different community gardens. There are 241 total plots divided between these gardens, with Franklin Community Garden being the largest. For those interested in becoming a gardener, email communitygarden@dmgov.org or 5 1 5-237-1386 to discuss space availability and program guidelines. To view openings online, visit dmparks.org

DAELEENE DENNIS, 11 YEARS OLD

“I come to Pioneer Columbus Community Recreation Center because it’s fun. There are fun things to do, like crafting, basketball, and hanging out. It is a good place to go when I am bored at home.”
Disc golf provides a different way for the whole family to get out, get some exercise and enjoy nature all at the same time. There are four courses in the park system, each with its own unique characteristics to offer a different experience. Facilities are located at Ewing, Grandview, Pete Crivaro and Prospect Park.

DOG PARKS

Nearly 2,200 permits were sold for use at Des Moines off-leash dog park facilities in 2018. Annual permits are required and are available for purchase for just $20 at the City Clerk’s office in City Hall. The permit is good for all locations. Volunteer Dog Park Ambassadors greet visitors, check for permits, educate patrons on park rules and inspect the dog park to report maintenance issues. They keep the dog park clean, safe and fun for owners and pets. Dog Park Ambassadors who volunteer 40 hours in a year earn a FREE permit. To apply, please email parksVolunteer@dmgov.org or call 515-237-1386.

GOLF COURSES

All three City of Des Moines public golf courses, A.H. Blank, Bright Grandview and Waveland, have affordable rates and vary in course design, ranging from tree placement and sand traps to green size, which offers golfers a different experience each round.

A.H. BLANK GOLF COURSE

Located at SW 9th and County Line Road, Blank first opened in 1971 as a nine hole course, it then expanded to 18 in 1985. This course can be challenging as water and sand come into play on many of the holes, especially the front nine. Throughout the 6,700 yard course there are 31 sand traps and 10 water holes. Blank’s clubhouse features a full service deli, full bar, pro shop and banquet room. The course also has a driving range. Blank has a miniature golf course available for groups, parties or just individual fun.

BRIGHT GRANDVIEW GOLF COURSE

Located at 2401 East 29th Street, Bright Grandview was built in 1902, making it one of the oldest courses in the country. Bright Grandview has a total yardage of 5,422 yards. The clubhouse, new in 2012, has a full bar and grill, pro shop and banquet room.

WAVELAND GOLF COURSE

Located at 4908 University Avenue, Waveland is the oldest municipal golf course west of the Mississippi River, built in 1901. The entire course, which measures just over 6,500 yards, is on wooded hillsides surrounded by mature trees. Waveland also has a putting green available for practice. Golfers say this is the most difficult of the City’s three public golf courses. Waveland’s clubhouse is a vintage 1940’s red brick building, complete with a pro shop, banquet hall, full bar, concession counter and excellent food. The Waveland clubhouse was built in 1936 as a WPA project.

Commonalities of all the courses include Fat Joe’s Pizza, GPS systems in carts at Waveland and Blank and free sledding during the winter months. Besides being utilized for corporate outings, tournaments and every day rounds of golf, all three clubhouses can be rented for your wedding, birthday party or holiday get together. For more information about any Des Moines public golf courses, please visit dmparks.org.
SHELTERS
Dispersed throughout the city, our department provides nine enclosed shelters and 47 open-air shelters. Shelters are available for reservation and others are “first come, first serve”. These facilities offer users the perfect location for birthdays, family reunions, baby showers, neighborhood meetings, meal sites and much more.

GREENHOUSE
Parks and Recreation owns and operates a 15,000 square foot greenhouse located at 2501 SE Maury Street. The vast majority of the labor needed for plant production is supplied by volunteers who donate thousands of hours to produce the annuals used to beautify the city. To volunteer, email parksvolunteer@dmgov.org.

PARKS
The Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for the management of 75 parks across Des Moines. Besides the special features found in some of the signature parks (Ewing, Union, Greenwood, Gray’s Lake and John and Mary Pappajohn Sculpture Park) patrons can enjoy a variety of amenities such as:

- Basketball Courts
- Boat and Bicycle Rentals
- Enclosed and Open-Air Shelters
- Fishing Ponds
- Natural Playscape
- Nature Trails
- Playgrounds
- Picnic Areas with Tables and Grills
- Pickleball Courts
- Sledding Hills
- Skate Park
- Soccer Fields
- Softball Fields
- Tennis Courts
- Volleyball Courts
- Concessions

DREW KELSO
“Des Moines Parks and Recreation has been an amazing partner in our community betterment efforts in Highland Park. In an early 2017 neighborhood meeting, one of our residents spoke up and wanted to see Belle Turner Park get a playground update. I took this request to Parks and Recreation and they listened! Not only did we get brand new park equipment, we got a full out upgrade of the whole park! They also added a walking loop, fruit trees, sculptures, and even updated our shelter! Throughout the process, the team made sure to check in with us for suggestions, updates, engagement opportunities, etc. They made sure our ideas where heard and turned them into reality.

Our neighborhood now has an amazing little park that families will love for many years to come. I cannot appreciate this team enough.”
SPORTS COMPLEXES

GREATER DES MOINES SOFTBALL COMPLEX

This complex is the premier facility in the area for adult softball play. Each year this site hosts the district and state Amateur Softball Association tournaments. In past years, national tournaments such as the North American Fastpitch Association, World Championships and the Senior Slow Pitch World Series have been held at the facility.

In addition, Des Moines Parks and Recreation’s adult softball leagues, consisting of nearly 300 teams, schedules nearly 1,800 league games yearly at this location. The complex has four irrigated turf fields, all of which are lighted. All fields have scoreboards and bleacher seating. Other complex amenities include a playground, concession stand, maintenance facility and parking lot to accommodate up to 200 vehicles.

JAMES W. COWNIE BASEBALL PARK

As one of the top baseball facilities in the region, this park hosts many local and national United States Specialty Sports Association tournaments. Each summer, this site hosts South Des Moines Little League with over 500 youth playing nearly 300 games. The complex consists of eight irrigated turf youth fields, two of which are lit. All fields have scoreboards, and covered bleacher seating. Other complex amenities include a playground, batting cages, concession stand, new maintenance building and parking lots to accommodate up to 250 vehicles.
JAMES W. COWNIE SOCCER PARK

Cownie Soccer Park is the home field for Grand View University, Drake University, and local high schools including Roosevelt, Lincoln, East, Carlisle and Des Moines Christian. This renowned facility hosts many of the state’s most prestigious soccer events including the boys and girls high school state soccer tournaments, Menace Midwest Invitational, “Just for Girls” Spring Tournament and more. In addition, the complex has hosted the US Youth Soccer national tournament including Region II Championships and The Presidents Cup Tournament.

Cownie amenities include 12 irrigated turf fields, four of which are lit and have scoreboards. Field nine at the complex is considered championship level and consists of 2,000 seat bleachers, a press box and a video platform. The facility also has a 1,200-vehicle parking lot, concession stand, playground and maintenance facility.

TRAILS

The trail system continues to be one of the popular amenities in the park system. With 63 miles of paved and 18 miles of soft trails, there is something and some way for everyone to get out and be active - from mountain bikers to runners and walkers of all ages. Trails are not just for exercise; numerous riders utilize trails for their daily commute, year round. The network in Des Moines serves as a nucleus for the state, with connectivity to over 550 miles in Central Iowa.

JENA CAMP

“The youth soccer program was fun and enjoyable for all the kids. Every representative I met was kind and courteous including the referees which went out of their way to ensure the kids knew the ‘what’s and why’s’ of the game on and off the field. I would love to volunteer coach again!”
2018 BY THE NUMBERS

- **1,806** Shelters and Facility Rentals
- **7,780** Native Plants
- **676** Permits issued for Parks, Trails, Athletic Fields and Open Spaces
- **13,976** Boat Rentals at Gray’s Lake Park
- **511** Instagram Posts
- **467** Cemetery Lots Sold
- **233,000** Annuals
- **45,900** Facebook Video Views
- **22,090** Number of Calls Taken Each Year
- **2,492** Instagram Followers
- **11,934** Cemetery Search Users
- **14,090** Website Page Views
- **2,492** Facebook Posts
- **3,479** Twitter Followers
- **743** Tweets
- **269,555** Website Visits
- **467** Interments at Our Seven Cemeteries
- **623,396** Facebook Likes
- **21,079** YouTube Views
- **11,811** Cemetery Search Users
- **11,811** Total Garden Plots
- **545** Interments at Our Seven Cemeteries
- **13,976** Boat Rentals at Gray’s Lake Park
2018 BY THE NUMBERS

- **77** New Gardeners
- **189** Total Gardeners
- **21** Refugee Gardeners
- **150** Pounds of Food Donated
- **34,430** Volunteer hours
- **4,592** Volunteers
- **850,095** Value of time donated
- **6,535** Attended a Special Event
- **7,127** Participated in Recreation Programs
- **3,112** Enjoyed Yoga in the Park
- **80,126** Participated in our Environmental Education Programs
- **86,250** Community Recreation Center Attendance
- **1,070** GRASP Cards Issued
- **2,177** Dog Park Permits Sold
- **2,434** Participated in our Environmental Education Programs
- **82,731** Used one of our free Splash or Wading Pools
- **91,331** Visited one of our Five Pools/Aquatic Centers
- **2,546** Learned to swim
- **1,431** Purchased a Swim Passes

If your household meets the established income guidelines, your income is verified, and you are a resident of the city of Des Moines, you qualify to receive discounts on swim lessons, tennis lessons, basketball and much more! Call IMPACT Community Action Partnership at 515-248-6216 to schedule an appointment or walk in 1618 6th Avenue Des Moines, IA 50317.
Volunteers

2018
4,592 People

People Volunteered
'08 to '18 Totals
30,138

Volunteer Hours
'08 to '18 Totals
222,945

Volunteer Value
'08 to '18 Totals
$5.23 Mil

One of the greatest gifts is your time

2008
584
2009
2,002
2010
1,377
2011
2,293
2012
2,509
2013
3,805
2014
2,661
2015
3,759
2016
5,369
2017
4,440

= 500
= 2000
= 50000
2018 REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY | 31

VOLUNTEERS


6,122 14,456 9,925 15,010 14,877 14,188 15,010 14,877 16,655 25,083

2018

34,430:48 HOURS

$850,095.74

2018

123,990 301,404 211,998 327,088 329,394 375,569 327,334 590,977 868,869 927,729

MILESTONES

Witmer Park
COMPLETED PROJECTS

**A** Belle Turner Park Phase 2 – Phase 2 included the construction of a 5-foot wide, approximately 1/5th mile concrete paved walking loop, native edible fruit and nut shrub plantings, a native prairie seeding and the installation of several carefully selected landscape seating boulders.

**B** Burke Park Fence – Restoration of the existing ornamental fencing surrounding the historic shelter and wading pool. Paving improvements rounded out the final product.

**C** City Hall Landscape and Signage – Installed a new foundation landscape that is memorable, meaningful and appropriate by respecting the historic Beaux Arts architecture and achieving sustainability via native and adapted plants. The project is a reflection of the city’s social responsibility to its citizens.

**D** Connie Soccer Park Paving – Over 150,000 players, spectators and fans visit this destination annually taking a toll on facilities. Much needed paving upgrades were completed in spring to ensure visitors’ great experiences continue.

**E** EK Davis Park and Playground Improvements – Installed new playground equipment and surfacing, planted trees, painted the shelter and hosted activities for the community with volunteers and funding from Knapp Properties.

**F** Frisbie Park Basketball Improvements – Two new precast concrete basketball goal posts replaced the old dilapidated metal posts at the basketball court in Frisbie Park.

**G** Gray’s Lake Bridge Joint Replacement – New and improved expansion joints were installed on the iconic Gray’s Lake Bridge to ensure ongoing safe use by pedestrians and bicyclists alike.

**H** Gray’s Lake Christine Hensley Terrace – The terrace at Gray’s Lake was named in honor of Christine Hensley for her decades of public service to the City of Des Moines. An iconic sign bearing her name now frames the large terrace.

**I** Harmon Park Retaining Wall – A 90 linear foot timber retaining wall was replaced with a heavy-duty, contemporary concrete block wall, which will continue to protect the park’s northwestern pedestrian entrance for years to come.

**J** Hartford Avenue Tree Planting Phase 1 – This first phase of installation provides the beginnings of what is to become a landmark, tree lined entrance corridor to the James W. Cownie Sports Parks.

**K** Laurel Hill Cemetery Scattering Garden – A 1.5-acre woodland savanna was established at Laurel Hill with crushed gravel pathways, prairie plantings and large stone monuments. This scattering garden will provide a naturally tranquil place to spread cremains of loved ones in a beautiful setting.

**L** Martin Luther King Jr. Park Basketball Court Mural – Thanks to funding from the Project Reinvest Grant, local artist Jordan Weber designed and installed a mural that reflects upon and symbolizes the diverse community while enhancing the park’s identity and adding vibrancy to the well-used basketball court.

**M** Miffy Fountain – In collaboration with the Greater Des Moines Public Art Foundation, children and adults alike can enjoy visiting Miffy the bunny, a famous children’s book character, at Western Gateway Park. Artist: Tom Sachs.


**O** Principal Park Batting Tunnel – To continue to keep pace with the evolving requirements of hosting the Triple-A affiliate of the Chicago Cubs, a new batting tunnel was added to the existing stadium, achieving the goal of serving both function and form by blending new with existing.

**P** Riverview Park Grading – The Riverview Park site received over 60,000 cubic yards of fill in order to slope the grade back towards the pond and to better protect the park against potential flooding.

**Q** Clare and Miles Mills Rose Garden Irrigation Replacement – Renovated in the spring of 2018, the water service line, time clock and drip irrigation hose was entirely replaced with a water and energy efficient system.

**R** Stone Park Basketball Improvements – Two new precast concrete basketball goal posts and new metal backboards replaced the old dilapidated metal posts and plastic backboards at the basketball court in Stone Park.

**S** Walnut Creek Trail Underpass Railing – Chain-link fencing was replaced with a two-bar galvanized steel railing to ensure the safety of trail users while also reducing the impacts of frequent flooding in the area.

**MULTI-LOCATION PROJECTS**

**Comprehensive Plan** – In late December the City Council adopted LiveDSM as the city’s new parks and recreation comprehensive plan to provide a roadmap for continued improvement of our system. The full plan and its five goals of Equity, Attraction, Heart, Nature and Innovation can be found at LiveDSM.org.

**Trail Gates Final Phase** – Multiple galvanized steel closure gates were installed on trail segments throughout the city which experience frequent flooding, thus allowing staff to close and reopen a trail segment quickly and efficiently.
2018 was a challenging year dealing with high water and flash flooding throughout the year. Much of northern Iowa experienced above normal precipitation, which kept the Des Moines River far above normal for much of the spring, summer and fall. These above normal levels kept sections of the Neal Smith and Trestle Trails closed for most of the year.

On June 30, the Des Moines area experienced an extreme flash flood event with portions of Des Moines and the metro area receiving nearly 10 inches of rain over a few hours’ time. This resulted in record flash flooding along Walnut and Fourmile Creeks and significant damage to park and trail facilities. Northwest Aquatic Center was overrun by flood water during the event and had to be drained and cleaned before reopening a week later.

**Facilities Damaged in This Event Included:**

- Gay Lea Wilson Trail
- Reno Dog Park
- Sargent Park natural playscape
- Woodland Cemetery roads
- Prospect Park playground and boat ramp
- Westchester Park playground
- Waveland Golf Course
- Harmon Park
- McHenry Park

As a result of the flash flooding along Fourmile Creek, the City and County initiated a 10 million dollar buyout of damaged properties to expand the lower Fourmile Creek Greenway, helping to implement the recently adopted Lower Fourmile Creek Greenway Plan. Also, in late 2019 Reno Dog Park will be moved to another location along the greenway that will offer better public access and mitigate damages from future floods.

The urban bow deer hunt continued into its 12th year with the 2017-2018 total of 111 and a cumulative total for the program reaching 1776. The goal of this program is to reduce the population, not to eliminate urban deer. This will reduce the negative attributes that an overpopulation of deer causes, such as accidents. This also ensures that citizens can enjoy the infrequent sighting of a deer while being able to enjoy flowers and gardens which a high population of deer would not allow. The urban bow hunt connects property owners who wish to reduce the deer numbers with hunters who are willing to harvest the deer in a safe effective manner. Hunters are required to adhere to a long list of rules, attend a safety course and an annual proficiency test. If you would like more information on the program, please call 515-237-1386.

AmeriCorps National Civilian Conservation Corps (AmeriCorps NCCC) is a full-time, residential, team-based program. AmeriCorps NCCC allows young adults, age 18 to 24, to develop leadership skills and strengthen communities by completing service projects and gaining life experiences. In June 2018, AmeriCorps NCCC Oak 5 Crew joined our staff for three weeks, in Greenwood Park, restoring habitat. Dr. Tom Rosburg identified this park as a high priority in our Natural Resources Inventory. The seven-member crew, working in extreme summer conditions, cleared almost 20 acres of invasive plant species. This opened up the woodland floor for our native species. Native plant species’ deep root systems hold soils in place and keep them from running into our creeks and streams. Landscape diversity cleanses the water of nutrients, helps control flooding, stores carbon and replenishes ground water as well. The crew also weeded over 6,000 square feet of beds at Gray’s Lake Park and planted more than 1,400 native plants. AmeriCorps NCCC donated around 914 hours of volunteer service valued at $22,566. Special thanks to Grand View University’s Views Forward for providing housing assistance for the crew.
RECREATION

NEW

- Implemented youth basketball, volleyball and soccer coaches’ clinics
- Partnered with North High coaches for the youth basketball coaches clinic
- Partnered with the Rails Football Club for the youth flag football coaches clinic
- Had enough participants to offer a 5th-7th grade soccer league for the first time
- Offered a free youth volleyball clinic for grades one through three held by Drake volleyball coach
- Implemented youth basketball selection show and gold/silver brackets for tournament
- Implemented adult volleyball with four teams in the initial league
- Completed the first adult summer basketball league
- Implemented 10 new special aquatics program days with reduced admissions

INCREASES

- Increased youth soccer participation from 87 to 166, a 91% increase
- Moved youth volleyball from Summer to Spring and increased youth volleyball participation from 70 to 133, a 90% increase
- Record number of adult flag football teams – 28 (old record 26)
- Record number of ultimate frisbee participants – 83 (old record 67)
- Record number of youth flag football participants – 221 (old record 213)
- Record number of peewee flag football participants – 49 (old record 34)
- Record number of youth basketball individual participants – 481 (old record 451)
- Increase in adult fall softball teams – 87 up from 84 in 2017
- Provided swim lessons to 2,546 people an increase from 2017
- Music Camp enrollment reached its highest totals since its introduction in 2015
MILESTONES

• Volunteers spent March – May basking in the warmth of the greenhouse during Transplanting in the Tropics. These individuals worked closely with greenhouse staff to grow plants from seed for future use in our parks, cemeteries, public spaces and neighborhoods as part of the Neighborhood Beautification Program. Volunteers transplanted 4,937 flats, 2,438 pots and 129 volunteers donated 1,011 hours and transplanted 203,695 annual plants.

• 49,393 scans have been completed as part of the Digitizing Historical Cemetery Records project, and 3232 records have been indexed (making the PDF files searchable). We estimate we are about 1/3 of the way through the Digitizing Historical Records project with the scanning portion. The block books are the highest priority and are 100% completed. Receipts and deed books are currently being scanned.

• Successful fundraising efforts helped the cemetery operations team purchase two new equipment vehicles for ground maintenance. Adding these new units will help reduce maintenance costs while creating efficiencies for ground maintenance and burial services. Special thanks to Hamilton’s Funeral Homes, Carylann Mucha, Gerald LaBlanc and an anonymous donor for their generous donations.

• The multi-faceted Woodland Cemetery Monument Restoration Project continued with great success, thanks to a high-level of community support. Private contributions of $25,000 supplemented budgeted funds while volunteers worked throughout the year in a variety of ways:
  • Raise, reset, and level 311 monuments
  • Clean 750 monuments
  • Photo documentation of three blocks

• Music Camp enrollment reached its highest totals since its introduction in 2015. This collaboration with the Des Moines Music Coalition provides an immersive music production experience for kids 11-15 in Rock and Roll or Hip Hop. Camp staff led students through the creative process - writing, rehearsing, recording, and putting on a live performance at the end of the camp including an appearance at the 80/35 Music Festival.

JARIN HART
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
DES MOINES MUSIC COALITION

“Since 2015, Des Moines Music Coalition (DMMC) and Des Moines Parks and Recreation have partnered to host hip-hop and rock/pop music camps in the summer for kids ages 11-15 years. Participants learn the skills to play in a band, write lyrics, record music, and perform live on the Gen-Z stage at DMMC’s annual 80/35 Music Festival!

Des Moines Parks and Recreation staff is committed to supporting and cultivating a deep love of music and the arts amongst the youth in our community. They seek out partners like the DMMC to provide impactful programs that connect youth and teens with the tools, knowledge, and professionals needed to build a skilled and collaborative music network. Creating stronger, more vibrant communities requires teamwork, partnerships, and collaboration like those between Des Moines Parks and Recreation and Des Moines Music Coalition. I look forward to continuing the partnership in 2019, and I’m so excited for what’s next!”
VOLUNTEER AWARD WINNERS

Mary P. Smith - Lifetime Achievement Award
Archie Cook - Volunteer of the Year
Knapp Properties - Corporate Group of the Year
Bridges of Iowa - Volunteer Group of the Year
Mike Simonson - Friend of the Year
Des Moines Police Department - Friend of the Year
Ahman Douglass - Coach of the Year
Colt Stephens - Volunteer Supervisor of the Year
Kevin Atterberg - Special Volunteer Award

- Des Moines Parks and Recreation Department collaborated with Oakridge Neighborhood and their Youth Summer Employment Program (YSEP), which provides subsidized employment opportunities for low-income high school-age youth each year. Four staff members from the YSEP program joined the team for eight weeks of paid part-time work during the summer months. This experience at non-profit and public agencies complements job skills workshops, career exploration and development opportunities. The goal of the program is to support the positive development of youth by engaging them in meaningful employment, career exploration, leadership and community involvement opportunities. Students come away with an understanding of the direct link between academic achievement and future career aspirations, the basic skills needed to find and keep a job and the value of giving back to their community through service learning projects.

- Pioneer Columbus Community Recreation Center was the home of the first spring break “Staycation” program, offering a mix of structured activities and/or opportunities for families to get out and enjoy time together. Participants enjoyed Imagination Playschool, ASAP (After School Arts Program), Environmental Education Programs and various sports camps.

- Attendance nearly doubled for the 2nd Annual Mother and Son Fun Night, which moved to Pioneer Columbus, with 300 people in attendance. The event theme was “Adrenaline Rush” and featured live animals from the Blank Park Zoo, a “Ninja Warrior” style obstacle course, magician, face painting, members of the Des Moines Police and Fire Departments and a tour of the Des Moines Boxing Club workout room.

- The second annual Bike Back to School event was presented in partnership by the Des Moines Police Department, Des Moines Street Collective, Fareway Foods and Des Moines Parks and Recreation. Almost 70 children received a bike and a free helmet provided by Variety - The Children’s Charity, an increase from 2017.

JAMI HARVEY
STEP TEACHER AND WORK EXPERIENCE COORDINATOR

“Our partnership with Des Moines Park and Recreation has been an invaluable experience for our STEP students. STEP is a Des Moines Public Schools vocational program that serves students ages 18-21 with special needs. Our curriculum includes teaching students about being active participants in their communities as adults. The volunteer activities through Des Moines Park and Recreation allow us to teach students about the variety of ways they can get involved and serve their very own neighborhoods. Volunteering with our students also gives us the opportunity to help our students develop job skills that will help prepare them for future employment. Students get hands-on experiences performing various job tasks. They learn to develop employment soft skills such as following directions, dressing appropriately for a job, working as a team, and problem solving. Volunteering also gives students opportunities to practice communication and networking skills that we teach in the classroom in the real-life, community setting. These opportunities help our students build their resumes and reference lists which can be used to help them obtain competitive employment. Finally, we love to see the emotional influence volunteering has on our students. They always walk away from a job feeling confident, important, and good about the time they spent for the city.”
MILESTONES

PROGRAMS

• Pop-Up Programs rolled out in January, starting with snowshoeing when conditions allowed. When the forecast looked favorable, a notice was sent with all the details – date, time, location, cost (if applicable), etc. Pop-up offerings can expand any time throughout the year when unique Environmental Education events present themselves such as a flock of migrating pelicans resting at Gray’s Lake or hatching babies in one of our Bluebird trail boxes. To receive program news on your mobile phone, text DSMPOPUP to 84483 for notification. We will also post notices on our social media (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram).

• Over 400 people enjoyed a weekly educational Bald Eagle viewing program at Gray’s Lake, held Tuesdays, April – June when the eaglets fledged.

• Des Moines Audubon proposed working with Des Moines Parks and Recreation to help improve habitat for wild birds and bird watching in our city parks. There were several different projects and locations discussed before habitat improvements at the birdfeeders at Gray’s Lake was chosen for the first project for Des Moines Audubon to provide funding. Working with the planners, a design that incorporates native trees, shrubs and prairie plants was developed to be placed in an area at Gray’s Lake where the Native Resources crew has been clearing out invasive species. Late this fall, the first planting of trees and shrubs were put in place and more work will go in the ground this spring. Look for more projects to be completed with help from Des Moines Audubon in the next few years.

• The first ever “Fall Family Fun Fest” featured a full slate of free activities. The day started at Noon at Captain Roy’s with eating contests sponsored by Hy-Vee and Taco John’s. Youth Music Showcase, presented in partnership with the Des Moines Music Coalition, offered a unique opportunity for bands/performers 18 and under to show off their talent. Several participants were also involved in the summer Music Camp. The remainder of the activities, held at Union Park, included free rides on the Heritage Carousel, Des Moines Police Department’s K-9 and SWAT unit, Des Moines Fire Department’s Fire Prevention Unit and S’mores, nature-themed candy stations and inflatables.

“JESSICA WARD

“I love Parks and Recreation! This year my family attended two Monarch tagging programs! We love them. We appreciate all the information that we learned along with the hands on activities and just being able to grow and learn in the parks. Having two young girls we just love to be outside to get exercise. The sunshine is a necessity for us and if you can stimulate the mind to learn something while you are being active, that is a plus. We proudly, now have milkweed planted in our yard and hope to see and feed Monarch butterflies next year!

We also utilize many of the trails! I just love the beauty of everything from the bridges to the rivers and the creeks! I take a lot of pictures, so these beautiful sceneries are my backdrop! My home trail is the Neal Smith Trail and I love the Des Moines River. We use the trails to walk 4 to 6 miles on a daily basis.

I would just love to take this opportunity to thank all of you for the work that you do, and for being so personable and willing to teach our children!”

• Over 400 people enjoyed a weekly educational Bald Eagle viewing program at Gray’s Lake, held Tuesdays, April – June when the eaglets fledged.

• Fishing experiences and education for the Hispanic population are what Vamos A Pescar is providing. There were several events throughout the summer and into the fall where participants were able to receive instructions and guidance as well as equipment, so they could enjoy a day fishing. Some of the events also included fishing from canoes, learning how to clean and cook the catch and of course eating the catch. Along with Des Moines Parks and Recreation, the Iowa DNR, Fish Iowa, Iowa Latino Center, Vamos a Pescar and Des Moines Ikes have all worked together to make these events possible.
Earth Day Trash Bash grew to more than 1,900 registered volunteers at 75 project locations throughout the metro. Iowa’s largest Earth Day volunteer event was a partnership between Des Moines, West Des Moines, Clive, Pleasant Hill, Johnston, Urbandale, Polk County Conservation, Ingersoll Business Committee, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, Des Moines West Side Chamber of Commerce, Polk Soil and Water Conservation District, Greater Des Moines Botanical Gardens and Des Moines Water Works. Volunteers removed litter, beautified public lands and cleaned out invasive species, removing over 81,000 pounds of trash, recyclables, tires, metal and brush, along with almost 34 pounds of cigarette butts, planted 200 trees, and recycled 3,400 plastic grocery bags. For the first time ever, the kick-off Bash was a ZERO WASTE event! Which means 100% of the waste from the lunch was diverted from the landfill! Combined value of the day was over $215,000!

Drake Athletics 515 Service Day had 33 volunteers at 3 sites, Walnut Trace, Glendale Cemetery and Clare and Miles Mills Rose Garden. The volunteers donated 66 hours valued at more than $1629.

Adopt-A-Block volunteers continue to make a difference in the cemeteries, “adopting” 100% of the cemetery at Elm Grove, 40% at Glendale, 10% at Laurel Hill and 10% at Woodland. The 23 participants in the program contributed time to clean up cemetery blocks of litter, leaves, decorations and maintain plantings.

National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project took place in May 2018, thanks to the 76 volunteers who helped count and survey trail users in over 20 locations across the city. Volunteers came from 19 different zip codes in the metro.

Volunteer Archie Cook hosted four walking tours in Woodland Cemetery. His tours are consistently full with people waiting to get onto one. Cook leads 2 ½ hour walking tours from April to October, including coordinating reservations this year for 350 participants. The tours dive into the city’s past and highlight achievements of men and women that shaped the community. They promote civic pride through the stories of who our parks, streets and buildings are named after, including the remarkable military sacrifices that so many in our community were willing to make. The interactive tours are free but attendees have donated over $4,000, over the past several years, designated for the Woodland Restoration Project.

Fifteen years ago, I began working with Parks and Recreation when I became Des Moines Founder’s Garden Club Conservation Committee Chair. There has been incredible growth in our partnership over this time to include outreach, education, urban reforestation, native propagation and support of the Greenwood Pond Double Site. The parks commitment to natural resources and our environment has been a worthwhile and rewarding experience that has turned into a lifelong passion of mine.”

JUDI PRUCHNICKI
MILESTONES

- The Governor’s STEM Advisory Council established a Teacher Externship program in 2009, as a partnership between businesses and schools, connecting science, engineering, technology and math (STEM) real-world applications with the classroom. During the summer of 2018, we received our second full-time teacher extern, Kevin Atterberg. Atterberg donated 240 hours this summer evaluating existing monarch habitat and identifying potential habitat. During this time, Kevin identified:
  - 95 surveyed areas in more than 70 parks
  - Almost 380 acres
  - 120 potential new areas
  - Potential 250+ acres of open space that could be converted
  - Almost 17,000 stems of milkweed
  - 1,386 eggs
  - 3 caterpillars
  - 125 butterflies

KEVIN ATTERBERG,
2018 IOWA STEM TEACHER MONARCH EXTERN

“Being a part of an adventure around Des Moines was an amazing way to spend 30 days of my summer. Working through the Iowa STEM Teacher Externship Program, I was not only able to enjoy all 75 beautiful parks (my favorite was Nash Park), but also collect important milkweed and monarch butterfly data throughout the city. This experience allowed me to connect with the city and to take notice of all the benefits it has to offer.”

CHRIS COSTA
PRESIDENT & CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER
KNAPP PROPERTIES, L.C.

“Bill Knapp and Knapp Properties were extremely pleased with the opportunity to donate and install new playground equipment at the Evelyn K. Davis Park. Working with Ben Page and Des Moines Parks and Recreation, a design for the playground equipment was modeled and residents in the neighborhood of the park were allowed to help finalize equipment options and colors. Every step of the process included a refreshing level of collaboration. Knapp Properties employees were offered the opportunity to volunteer with the equipment installation. We had such a great outpouring of volunteers, we kept increasing the scope to include several other "mini" projects at the park! I am extremely proud of the level of volunteerism with over two-thirds of Knapp Properties employees participating in the project. In addition, Des Moines Police Chief Dana Wingert and dozens of volunteers from the police department spent the day working side-by-side with Knapp Properties employees. It was a thrill for our employees to interact with the police and parks and recreation departments, and it is just another example of great things that can be accomplished with public-private partnerships.

Ms. Davis dedicated much of her life to helping those in need, and Knapp Properties and its employees are honored to have been affiliated with a project dedicated to her memory.”
Thanks to the generosity of the William C. Knapp Charitable Foundation, Evelyn K. Davis Park received a new playground, valued at over $71,000. In addition to their financial contribution, Knapp Properties volunteers cleaned the site, painted the shelter and gates, planted trees, operated equipment, organized recreational family activities, built the playground and placed thousands of cubic yards of donated playground mulch. They contacted their business partners/vendors for donations and sponsorships of other projects and enhancements resulting in donations of trees, certified playground fiber mulch, paint for the shelter and concrete work. Volunteer support also came from nearly 30 members of the Des Moines Police Department.

Estes Express Lines generously donated 1,000 wreaths as a part of December’s “Wreaths Across America” program. They were placed by 20 volunteers on Veterans stones at Glendale, Woodland and Laurel Hill Cemeteries.

We hosted our first ever United by Blue Yeader Creek Clean-up in July. Volunteers from United by Blue, Active Endeavors, Polk Soil and Water Conservation, Polk County Conservation and the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation removed, 1,429 pounds of trash and 14 tires. This was the second highest weight they’ve had across the US.

In conjunction with National Public Lands Day, a cleanup event was held at Ewing Park with Polk Soil and Water Conservation District, Polk County Conservation and the Izaak Walton League. Nearly 30 volunteers cleaned Yeader Creek, picked up litter and removed invasive species.

The 7th annual Cache-In Trash Out Creek Clean-up on Walnut Creek was a joint effort between Westwood Neighborhood Association, Iowa Geocacher’s Organization, Walnut Creek Watershed Coalition and Des Moines Parks and Recreation. Volunteer participation increased to 89 individuals, who donated 270 hours.

TOUR DM PARKS

Tour DM Parks program came back for its third year during July, as our celebration of National Parks and Recreation Month. Residents were invited to get out and take a tour of our parks, trails and facilities when, from July 1-31, they visited 31 designated spots in the park system and shared a photo on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram with the hashtag #tourdmparks2018. Those who visited all 31 locations were then eligible to compete to win the grand prize of $1,000 CASH courtesy of the Friends of Des Moines Parks.

COMMENTS FROM PARTICIPANTS

“We did it!!! 31 parks in 31 days!! We feel so accomplished!! We got to really get to know the city we live in and we LOVE it!! So many cute and cool places we discovered!! And we made lots of great memories making our tours into fun excursions like to the zoo, downtown, the arboretum, the science center and just getting in the car and being “tourists”!! Thanks so much, Des Moines Parks and Recreation for putting such a fun activity for us to do during those long summer days! We hope we win!! :)

“Thanks Des Moines Parks and Rec for exposing me to all sorts of new parks across the city! #tourdmparks2018”

“Thank you guys so much for putting on such a fun event. Even if I win nothing, biking around town to a bunch of parks I hadn’t been to and probably wouldn’t have known about was such a fun experience. This is my first year doing this, but this is definitely something I will be looking forward to every year.”

“This was a blast! Got us out of the house and found lots of parks we didn’t know existed! Thanks for putting it on.”

“I just wanted to let you know that family members from Dubuque who planned on visiting in August to attend the state fair have now decided they want to visit some of the parks that I have been to.”
LiveDSM, the Parks and Recreation Comprehensive plan was unanimously approved by the City Council on December 17, 2018 as a component of PlanDSM, which is Des Moines’ comprehensive plan.

LiveDSM will serve as a guide to making improvements to the parks and recreation system and programming over the next 20 years. In addition, the Parks and Recreation Department will utilize the plan to establish sound policy, guidelines, standards and evaluation methods that help to prioritize the parks and recreation needs of the community. It’s built around five goals:

- **Equity** – Deliver equitable services and facilities that meet the needs of all of the city’s residents.
- **Attraction** – Provide programs that attract people to parks and provides year-round programming and services for the system’s park users.
- **Heart** – Parks and trails are the heart of the community by ensuring that all residents are within a safe 10-minute walk from a high quality park or trail.
- **Nature** – Improve natural systems through a deep commitment to ecological stewardship translates to healthy ecosystems; high-quality land, water and wildlife; and tremendous resilience for natural areas and biodiversity in the park system—despite change over time.
- **Innovation** – Launch new approaches to parks and recreation in which Des Moines Parks and Recreation creates a highly professional foundation for its work—serving as a launch point for new ways of thinking about parks, partnerships and meeting public needs.

These goals will assist in prioritizing projects, planning new programs and providing services.

The residents of Des Moines desire a parks and recreation system that is equitable, effective, healthy, vital and responsive. This was what was heard in over 2,000 conversations with citizens about the future of parks and recreation in Des Moines. One of the most pivotal conversations was the first-in-the-nation Social Equity Event hosted with the Racial Equity Institute of North Carolina. Over 200 people attended the event, which received positive feedback from the community and serves as the pillar of the Equity goal.

With an approved plan, it is now time to put it into motion. Listed below are a few of the proposed deliverables:

- **Recreation Committee** – Staff will begin working with the Parks and Recreation Board to create a standing sub-committee dealing solely with recreation programming in early 2019. The goal is to hold the first meeting by fall of 2019.
- **Equity Policy** – Staff will work with the community to develop a policy that better defines how the department provides equitable services and facilities to the residents of Des Moines. Policy development will begin in early 2019 with the goal to have a policy adopted by the end of the year.
- **Asset Inventory** – Starting in early 2019, the department will be working to inventory all of the assets in the park and trail system and evaluating the condition of each asset. This will be the first step in creating an asset management system that will help the department better care for the park system’s resources.

While the plan development may be complete, working with residents and gathering input will remain a focal point of the job our team does every day. The Parks and Recreation department will continue to listen to the community to make the city’s parks and recreation system one that provides all residents of Des Moines a high quality of life.
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<tr>
<th>Project Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Blank Golf Course Forest Restoration</td>
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<td>Chesterfield Park Improvements</td>
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<td>Cohen Park Stormwater Improvements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cownie Baseball Park Batting Cage Upgrades, Field Expansion Drainage and Cement Work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Des Moines River Trail Phase 2 Construction</td>
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<td>Evelyn K Davis Park Basketball Lighting</td>
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<td>Fourmile Community Recreation Center Exterior Replacement Windows</td>
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<td>Gay Lea Wilson Flood Repairs</td>
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<td>Glendale Abbey Restoration Final Phase</td>
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<td>Glendale Cemetery Roads</td>
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<td>Gray’s Lake Raccoon Riverbank Stabilization</td>
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<td>Gray’s Lake Trail Renovation Phase 1</td>
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<td>Greater Des Moines Softball Complex Improvements</td>
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<td>Harmon, McHenry, Sargent Park and Gay Lea Wilson Flood Repairs</td>
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LOOKING AHEAD TO 2019

LONG LOOK GARDEN REBUILD
MACRAE PARK POND DREDGING
MCHEERY PARK SPRAYGROUND RESURFACING
PIONEER COLUMBUS COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER EXTERIOR PAINTING
PRINCIPAL RIVERWALK PAVER AND BALUSTRADE RENOVATIONS PHASE 1
RENO MEMORIAL DOG PARK RELOCATION
RIVerview PARK STAGE AND SITE CONSTRUCTION
SARGENT PARK CREEKBANK IMPROVEMENTS
SW 1ST STREET BRIDGE IMPROVEMENTS
TEACHOUT POOL PAINTING
WAVELAND TENNIS COURT RESURFACING
WHITMER PARK IMPROVEMENTS
WITMER PARK IMPROVEMENTS
WOODLAND CEMETERY MONUMENT RESTORATION