

Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation Department

# ANNUAL REPORT 2022







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## Our Mission

The Parks and Recreation Department maintains over 2,800 acres of park land in 87 individual parks and currently manages 22 pavilions, 20 shelters, five recreation centers, four day camp facilities, three aquatic centers, 10 splash pads, three golf courses, two driving ranges, four disc golf courses, two dog parks, a botanical conservatory, an outdoor theater, a zoo and a greenhouse. Additional recreational sites include 58 playgrounds, 45 basketball courts, 50 tennis courts, 42 pickleball courts, 38 ball diamonds, 20 soccer fields, two futsal courts, eight multipurpose athletic fields, eight boat launch sites, 48 miles of trails which include Rivergreenway, park paths and mountain bike trails, 14 ponds and lakes, a campground, a nature preserve, a BMX track, historic facilities and monuments and a 1930s era working farm. Along with hundreds of activities and program opportunities, the Parks and Recreation Department provides free or low cost special events for citizens of our community.

**Our mission is to enhance the quality of life in Fort Wayne by providing positive opportunities for leisure time and by being stewards of our parklands, facilities, public trees and other resources entrusted to our care.**

## 2022 Board of Park Commissioners

**William Zielke**, President

**Justin P. Shurley**, Vice President

**Cory Miller**, Commissioner

**Richard Briley**, Commissioner

## Administrative Staff

**Steve McDaniel**, Director

**Alec Johnson**, Deputy Director of Planning and Development

**Sandra Odisho**, Manager of Finance

**Kathy Pargmann**, Manager Lead of Marketing

**Chuck Reddinger**, Deputy Director of Recreation

**Steve Schuhmacher**, Deputy Director of Park Maintenance

**Rick Schuitemann**, Director of Children's Zoo





## Board of Park Commissioners

# President's Message

To the Honorable Mayor Thomas Henry:

It is my privilege to present the Board of Park Commissioners' 2022 Annual Report. There were many successes and moments to remember as the Department worked to respond safely to the desire of citizens to gather and participate in cherished recreational events and activities. The level of activity started out slowly in 2022 but with longer days and warmer temperatures, it became clearer that the general public were ready to be more active following the Covid-19 restrictions.

Some of the biggest successes included opportunities to expand services at our parks:

- Foellinger Theatre became a licensed alcohol-serving facility with the state of Indiana as a civic center and saw solid profits.
- Salomon Farm Park garnered off-season revenue in December by opening the Old Barn as a venue for a "Christmas Carol" with partner Summit City Music Theatre. Due to high interest, two shows were added to the schedule and all shows sold out.
- Fort Wayne Parks held public input meetings in April, May and November and contracted the firm Hills-Forrest-Smith to prepare conceptual plans to upgrade and improve the golf course at Foster Park. Plans are not yet final as additional public input is needed.
- Sweet Breeze added specialty tours and expanded operation into mid-October.
- Foellinger Theatre presented a comedy show with comedian John Mulaney and Live Nation Comedy. Over 2,280 fans applauded that choice.
- Golfers enjoyed the first full year of alcohol sales at all three courses.
- Mother's Day Plant Sale returned to in-person sales and charted record revenues of over \$95,000.
- The Conservatory Shop developed new strategies for procuring and displaying merchandise with over \$225,000 in revenue.
- Extended travel returned.
- Development offered more ways to support our Parks online and through social media.

We also saw increased attendance at popular events and facilities.

- River, Set, Go featuring the Fort Wayne Dragon Boat Races saw an estimated 4,000 attendees, up 100% from 2021.
- Salomon Farmers' Market saw a 44% increase in total attendance.
- Senior Games increased participation by 30%.
- Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory overall attendance rose to 84,821 visitors, a 25% increase.
- Golf saw a continued uptick in play, with a 9% increase in total rounds played in 2022.
- Muddy River Concert Series averaged 200 in attendance for seven of eight shows in June, July and August (one concert was cancelled due to extreme weather conditions).
- Fall Harvest Festival saw largest numbers to date on two days.
- Christmas on the Farm saw large numbers, and partnered again with a regional tree farmer to sell Christmas Trees.
- Winter Solstice Walk/Ride and Bonfire increased participation.

On behalf of the commissioners, we are grateful for the opportunity to serve the citizens of Fort Wayne. The board will continue its commitment to the growth of our parks system. Personally, I would like to express my gratitude to serve as a commissioner since 2007 and as president for 2022. It has been an honor to be part of the tremendous work this department has done.

Respectfully submitted,

William Zielke

President of the Board of Park Commissioners



# Director's Report

On behalf of the Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation Department I want to thank you for continuing to support our parks system throughout 2022! We saw positive improvements and growth and enjoyed greater participation by community members in many events and recreational opportunities.

One of the big projects was restoring the Foster Park Pavilion #3 which dates back to the 1930s. For decades, this stone pavilion and picnic grove provided a pleasant, shaded picnic and social gathering area. However, it fell out of use for a number of reasons and became more isolated. As often happens, deterioration began. With the assistance of the Friends of the Parks of Allen County and the South West Area Partnership, we replaced the roof, repaired and replaced some of the timbers, reworked the masonry, removed graffiti and refined the surrounding Oak Grove recreational site that surrounds the pavilion and gives it a unique woodland setting.

We look forward to a grand re-opening for the restored pavilion in the spring and to seeing public rentals begin starting in May, 2023.

Another high point in 2022 was celebrating the 75th anniversary of the Franke Park Day Camp. It has become the longest-running children's camp and a proven family tradition. Former campers send their children and grandchildren to experience the fun and adventure of the program. We hosted a public open house featuring a guided hike, Singing Tree, a special ceremony packed with fun facts, anniversary t-shirts, and special giveaways. It was heart-warming to see the response.

Even though we saw strong demand for our programming, we still struggled to find enough seasonal employees to be able to fully staff the pools, the day camps and youth centers. As a result, we adjusted public hours and enrollment accordingly.

Over 75 Capital Improvement Projects were completed in 2022. A portion of those projects focused on maintaining parks and park facilities while others provided improvements and still others added new ways for citizens of all abilities to connect to recreation in the Parks. The Parks' teams continued to develop amenities to improve the quality of life for Fort Wayne citizens through park stewardship and opportunities.

I want to acknowledge the private donors who contributed to the success of our 2022 park programming and services. We are also grateful specifically to the Park Foundation for their consistent support and encouragement in our efforts to fulfill our mission.

We could not maintain public spaces where people can achieve health and wellness goals, provide vital youth services as well as programming for all generations at this level without the combination of public and private funds we've been given. I especially wish to recognize and thank Mayor Tom Henry, City Council, the Board of Park Commissioners, the Park Foundation, our donors and Park volunteers. I also wish to acknowledge the creative and efficient work of the Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation staff. They rise to meet the challenges in each given year with service and grace.

Steve McDaniel  
Director



## Board of Park Commissioners

# Highlights of 2022

### 30 New Pickleball Courts

This \$180,881.00 project resurfaced and converted courts at Foster, Lakeside, Hamilton and Kettler Parks and restriped courts at Tillman Park. The additional courts accommodate the increasing local interest in a growing sport with fans of all ages.

### Parks Celebrates 75 Years of Franke Park Day Camp

Franke Park Day Camp celebrated its 75th anniversary with a special public open house. The festivities featured opportunities for guests to take a guided hike to Bullet Hill, experience Singing Tree, appear in a commemorative photo taken with a drone, enjoy special giveaways, buy a 75th Anniversary t-shirt and revel in a ceremony packed with fun facts about the longest running children's program within the Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation Department.

### Basketball Court Enhancements and Colorful Mural Revealed:

A public-private partnership with Fort Financial Credit Union and the Fort Wayne Mad Ants allowed the resurfacing and enhancement of two basketball courts in Ivan Lebamoff Reservoir Park. The court surfaces now feature a vibrant thematic mural installed by local artist Andre Portee. The \$30,000 project also includes new backboards, painted rims and new benches.

### Riverfront Fort Wayne Partnership with KultureCity

KultureCity has partnered with Riverfront Fort Wayne to make Promenade Park and all of the programs and events that the venue hosts to be sensory inclusive. This new initiative will promote an accommodating and positive experience for all guests and fans with a sensory issue who visit Riverfront Fort Wayne.

### Restoration of Historic Pavilion #3 in Foster Park

Completed a multi-year effort to historically restore the 1930's era rustic stone and timber open-air picnic shelter and the surrounding Oak Grove recreational site. This public-private partnership with Friends of the Park of Allen County and South West Area Partnership brings new life and opportunity for reengagement with a little-known section of Foster Park.

### Historic 19th Century Wells Street Bridge Project Completed

Revealed the replacement of all decorative knee portal components in the truss of the historic 19th century Wells Street Bridge at Promenade Park. The completion of the \$131,405 bridge project is significant as it is one of only a few examples of a truss bridge of the 1880s era that still survives. This project was funded in part by a grant from the U.S. Department of the Interior and the National Park Service's Historic Preservation Fund Program and is being administered by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology.

### Tree City USA Award

The National Arbor Day Foundation awarded the Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation Department with its 32nd consecutive Tree City USA designation. The Parks Department announced that the city received the Growth Award for the 17th consecutive year, which highlights innovative programs and projects and demonstrates an increased commitment of resources for urban forestry.

## New Projects and Renovations:

- Conservatory Roof Replacement
- Community Center parking lot paving
- Foellinger Theatre entrance sidewalk and drainage improvements
- Jennings Center playground structure replacement & landscape upgrades
- Kreager Park Taylor's Dream playground safety surface replacement
- McMillen Park Golf Course cart paths paving
- Anthony Wayne and General Foster Monument cleaning and waxing
- Freimann Square installation of four chess tables
- Salomon Farm Park Old Barn siding improvements and painting





# Financial Report



## Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation Condensed Financial Report for the year ending December 31, 2022

### REVENUES

Property Taxes	\$ 17,064,580
Other Taxes	2,371,573
Charges for Services	6,505,260
Grants and Donations	1,106,028
Other Revenues	94,512
Other Financing Sources	<u>10,924,732</u>
Total Revenues	<u>\$ 38,066,325</u>

### EXPENDITURES

Parks and Recreation General	\$ 22,926,282
Capital Outlays	3,888,760
Debt Service	872,893
Other Financing Uses	<u>35,928</u>
Total Expenditures	<u>\$ 27,723,863</u>



## Board of Park Commissioners

# Recreation Services

## 2022 Accomplishments

2022 was another exciting year for Recreation Services. As the threat of COVID 19 began to wane, the recreational areas planned for a full year of programs, events, activities and fun within our parks and facilities. One of the major challenges and initiatives for 2022 was to bring back our seasonal workforce that was critical to deliver on our planned activities. Members of the Parks and Recreation Administrative team met with the City's Human Resources Department and Risk Management Departments to explore how to improve the hiring process. The Parks and Recreation Department tries to hire about 350 seasonal staff each year. Chuck Reddinger, Deputy Director and Kathy Pargmann, Lead Marketing Manager coordinated an effort with Parks and Recreation staff to recruit seasonal staff for the season. Seasonal wages were increased approximately 20% from the previous year. Staffing challenges were a nationwide problem, and in spite of all of the Department's efforts many areas had to reduce, or eliminate programs or hours of operations. These areas included day camps, playground program, aquatics and youth centers. Golf Operations were able to cover nearly all of their staffing needs.

### McMillen Park Community Center

The McMillen Park Community Center continued to serve the needs of the community by providing a wide range of programs and services. However, they continued to have daily capacity limits due to staffing shortages. In spite of these challenges, McMillen Park Community Center provided a wide range of programs, activities and partnerships for their customers which are highlighted below. Percinta Hunter was promoted to Supervisor.

Fifteen students of Readers of the Pack book club completed reading a book written by local author Tina Gasnarez, called "Martina Gets a New Home". On Monday, January 10, 2022, students listened to the last chapter of the book read aloud by the author and afterward receive their own signed copy of the book!

Her Girls' social club had 14 young ladies participate in the program. Life skills are still a part of the curriculum including laundry, cooking and serving Kids' Café and knitting their own infinity scarves. Preparing dinner for the elderly and making waist beads were some of their favorite activities!

Cardio Fit was back after a period of time off with more than 40 participants attending class.

Over Spring Break, McMillen Park Community Center hosted their first Spring

Break Carnival. The Carnival was created to provide youth without the financial means to travel or other opportunities, a fun and activity-filled day. Candy, prizes, games and other treats were provided. Through the collaboration with Salomon Farm, the youth interacted with goats and chickens and enjoyed a tractor ride through the park. There were bounce houses and obstacles courses as well. Staff appreciated all the assistance from other Parks and Recreation employees to ensure the youth had a fun and safe carnival experience.

The McMillen Park Community Center Annual Harvest Fest yielded a successful turnout. This event returned this year after being cancelled the last two years due to COVID-19. The family-oriented event allowed community members a safe and fun environment. The event consisted of games, costume contest with prizes, raffles for prizes, community vendors, bounce houses and a haunted room. Staff counted 960 community members in attendance. Prizes that were given out were (2) 55" televisions, restaurant and manicure gift cards, six bicycles and two power wheel vehicles. Harlean Falls and Director Steve McDaniel volunteered as judges for the youth costume contest. We were extremely pleased to have them and appreciate their volunteerism. Councilman Glynn Hines was gracious enough to emcee the event and he did a wonderful job. The youth and parents expressed on Facebook that they had a

wonderful time at the event and were extremely grateful that it was offered for their families.

### Community Youth Centers (Cooper, Jennings and Weisser)

Jennings and Weisser Centers staff continue to provide a wonderful service to the community. Facility renovations were completed at Cooper Center; however, it was not able to operate except in the summer, due to low staffing levels. Unfortunately the summer playground program was also cancelled due to low staffing. In spite of these challenges, the Community Youth Centers staff provided brilliant programs in 2022.

- Parkview Healthy Seeds is a partnership with Parkview hospital which provides health and nutrition education to youth through fun activities.
- On April 6, the Community Youth Centers hosted training offered by Playworks® (out of Indianapolis) titled The Power of Play, at Weisser Park Youth Center. The training focused on topics such as how to keep youth engaged, the benefits of play, building rapport, various learning styles and much more.
- Both Jennings and Weisser youth participated in the City-wide Great American Clean Up on Friday April 29.
- On September 30, Community Youth Centers partnered with Fort4Fitness for the second year in a row. The youth

and staff participated in the Kid's Club Final Mile, to walk/run the last mile of a marathon at Parkview Field. Each site had been practicing with a specific exercise and short running program to get ready for this event. The youth really enjoy being out in the community with all the other youth and participants. At the end of the mile, once they cross the finish line, they receive a medal for completion. It is awesome to see their faces as they complete their task of the last mile.

## Sweet Breeze

This was the second season that the Sweet Breeze canal boat was operated by the Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation Department and it was an opportunity to grow and enhance the operation from all of the lessons learned from the previous year. The Sweet Breeze Canal Boat is a partnership between Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation and the Friends of the Rivers. Sweet Breeze offered 155 ticketed tours and sold 4,861 tickets from May 28 to October 9. In addition, it operated seven specialty themed tours, 21 field trips and 19 private tours. Sweet Breeze was pulled from the river on Wednesday, October 26, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. to be prepped for winter storage. Amanda Black was hired as the Assistant Boat Administrator.

## Community Center

The Community Center in downtown Fort Wayne continued to provide a wide range of activities for youth aged six months and older to older adults 99+. It truly has something for everyone with a special emphasis on programs for those age 50 and older. The program year for 2022 was very successful, but was not without some challenges. A code of conduct was added to the participant form due to some behavior concerns in 2021.

Staff welcomed a new face: Caleb Schannep was hired as a full-time program coordinator. Congratulations to new leadership: Mary Wagner-Stockman was promoted to Community Center Manager to replace Patti Davis who was promoted

to Recreation Superintendent.

## Activity Highlights:

With the expansion of community pickleball courts within Fort Wayne Parks, the Community Center (in partnership with Fort Wayne Pickleball) offered introductory classes in this growing sport.

In addition to the wide variety of programs offered on a regular basis (exercise, yoga, painting, pottery, writing, sewing, computers, education topics, etc.) the Community Center also hosted many of its traditional programs:

- The Holiday Dinner and Light Tour included 100 participants.
- The Volunteer Luncheon "Nacho Average Volunteer" featured a Mexican fiesta theme. Eighty-two people attended.
- The Senior Games had 475 participants this year, which is up from 364 in 2021. New events this year included Skee Ball, Pickleball Doubles, CPR Basic Training and Learn to Play Pickleball.

The Community Center gratefully recognized 148 active volunteers in 2022 who provided a combined total of 4,222.5 hours. The savings to the Community Center was a total of \$126,463.88 based on the volunteer national rate of \$29.95/hr. as determined by the Independent Sector. Eighteen volunteers donated 50+ hours and two donated 200+ hours.

## Salomon Farm Park

Salomon Farm Park continued to provide a unique farm experience as one of the City's most popular parks. Farmin' Fun Day Camp Supervisor Vickie Marquart and Assistant Supervisor Bailey Dzierla returned to Salomon Farm for their tenth and seventh years respectively. Sunflowers were planted on May 23, 2022 after a couple weeks of rain. Staff saw blooms in late July. The large farm animals returned to the park the week of May 9, 2022. This included: mini horse, donkeys, sheep and goats. New chicks were purchased for Farm Camp and to replace some of our older chickens that had passed.





## Board of Park Commissioners



### Event Highlights:

The Fiber Arts Celebration at Salomon Farm Park was held on Friday and Saturday, May 13 and 14. Eleven vendors set up shop in the Learning Center and six demonstrators displayed their items in the Old Barn. Estimated attendance was 250 on Friday and 355 on Saturday.

The annual Concert on the Farm was held Sunday, August 21 in the Old Barn. Three new bands were featured for the concert. Cassie Beer from Rosalind and the Way opened the concert followed

by Rogues & Bandits, with the Debutants featured as the headliners. Patrons were encouraged to bring their own chairs due to limited seating in the Old Barn. Gates opened around 3:30 p.m. and admission was \$5 per person. Food was available for purchase by Shigs In Pit and alcohol beverages were available by Mad Anthony's. Paid attendance was 310 people, up from 175 in 2021.

The last Salomon Farmers' Market was held on Wednesday, September 7, 2022. In 2022 total attendance was estimated at 5,062 which was an increase from 2021 attendance of 3,508. In 2022, an average of 389 people attended each market.

### Franke Park Day Camp

Demand for the Franke Park Day Camp was high, but staffing was a challenge. A deficit of eleven counselors resulted in the need to reduce capacity in order to maintain a safe child to staff ratio. The six-week summer program was filled to capacity in almost every session and age group.

Franke Park Day Camp celebrated 75 years in 2022. Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation Department marked the anniversary on Tuesday, July 26 with a special public open house. Department staff including Director Steve McDaniel, Deputy Director of Recreation Chuck Reddinger, Manager of Salomon Farm Park, Outdoor Recreation and Boating Eden

Lamb, Spokesperson of the Franke Park Day Camp Committee Mitch McKinney and Supervisor of Franke Park Day Camp Chris Freehill gave remarks. The day was officially proclaimed as "Franke Park Day Camp Day" by Mayor Henry. Attendees enjoyed an open house which included: guided hikes to Bullet Hill, 75<sup>th</sup> t-shirt sales, giveaways, camp songs led by the counselors, a drawing for a child to win a free week of Franke Park Day Camp in 2023 and pictures from the past.

### Riverfront

The downtown riverfront, and especially Promenade Park remained a popular downtown attraction. Many large events such as the SCAN Duck Race, Pedal-Paddle-Play, Open Streets, Taste of the Arts, and World Rivers Day held events in Promenade Park. In May, Visit Fort Wayne hosted the Midwest Travel Journalists Association (50 writers) at the Park Pavilion for a dinner reception.

### Event Highlights:

The Riverfront staff produced a number of successful programs and events throughout the year.

- The 2022 Dog Sweater Day, part of the Winterval event, was held on January 29. Approximately 250 people attended with 45 dogs registered for the "Favorite Dog Sweater" competition. Many of the dog owners that participated in 2021, also attended this







year's event. Photos were posted on the Riverfront Fort Wayne's Facebook page for public voting.

- The Muddy River Concert series returned and featured music performances every other Wednesday throughout the summer.
- River-Set-Go, Featuring the Dragon Boat Races returned to Promenade Park on August 6, with a variety of river focused activities.
- Fall events included Community Chess, Yoga, and Create & Play Tuesdays.
- The Raven Scavenger Hunt was held in October as part of Fright Night, and the Confluence Kitchen/"Dia de los Muertos" was held in November, highlighting Mexican culture.
- The winter season focused on sensory events including the Sensory Expo and a Sensory-Friendly Night of Lights.

New catering contracts were also bid and teds Snack+Bar was selected as the new café vendor in December.

## Aquatics

As was the common theme in most areas, lack of staffing caused Northside



and McMillen Aquatic facilities to reduce hours and programs. McMillen Pool was closed on Sundays and Northside Pool was closed on Mondays. Night swims were eliminated at Northside Pool, and the Lifetime Sports Academy did not have as many swimming opportunities.

## Golf

In 2022, golf saw a continued uptick in play. The season started out slow due to weather-related conditions but once the weather turned nice, play picked up. By the end of June, rounds played had surpassed the previous year at Foster, McMillen and Shoaff Park golf courses and continued on this pace throughout the season.

Staff replaced approximately 200 batteries (33 carts) that were starting to wear out quicker than expected. The battery issue caused temporary cart shortages. By replacing the batteries, it greatly improved cart reliability as well as customer satisfaction.

2022 was the first full year for alcohol sales at all three golf courses. This change was well received by the patrons.

The Board of Park Commissioners approved the purchase of fifteen (15) new Club Car golf carts. This was an additional step in updating and standardizing the entire golf cart fleet at all three courses.





**1,492**

EVALUATIONS ANALYZED

**94%**

OVERALL CUSTOMER SERVICE  
RATING

**1,384,376**

WEBSITE VISITS

**11**

PROMOTIONAL VIDEOS  
PRODUCED IN-HOUSE

**483**

PROMOTIONAL PIECES &  
PROGRAM PROPS DESIGNED  
IN-HOUSE

**110,000**

SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS

**47**

E-NEWSLETTERS PRODUCED  
AND DISTRIBUTED

**7**

NEWS CONFERENCES HELD

**\$1,106,028**

RECEIVED IN MONETARY  
GIFTS & DONATIONS

**12**

MEDIA SPONSORS  
SUPPORTED 2022  
PROGRAMS AND EVENTS  
WITH EVENT PROMOTION  
AND COVERAGE

## Marketing & Development

### 2022 Accomplishments

#### Customer Service

Recreational staff members are provided Customer Service training that stresses positive interactions with customers. Program evaluations and user surveys were distributed to access all of the programs offered by the Department. A total of 1,492 evaluations received in 2022 were analyzed and reported back to staff. Our 2022 overall Department Customer Service Rating was 94% (our goal is 90%). Complaint processing continues to be a priority. In 2022, 88% of complaints were processed within one business day.

#### Web Sites

New Customer Service features were added continuously to the five main Department web sites, including the development of over 32 new web links created to enhance visitor experience. Digital content also required: redesigning existing links as needed, adding additional photos throughout to market our department, continuing to add content to all three calendars, adding special events to the iMap application, making major updates four times a year coinciding with the release of the quarterly Fun Times as well as making continual updates to keep content fresh.

The total web hits for 2022 was 1,384,376. This is the highest yearly total number of web hits in the past 10 years! The top five web links were: Foellinger Theatre, Headwaters Park, Salomon Farm Park, Trails, and Community Concerts.

#### Additional Marketing Efforts

Photography and videography are vital components to the marketing mix. Due to the addition of drones to our inventory, the Marketing Team was able to use some of the drone footage on social media and the web to market our parks and programs. We also completed the 360- video project- capturing footage at our pavilions. Enclosed pavilions are now featured with video content for a better potential rental experience.

A seasonal staff video was produced by an outside consultant. We now have a 2 ½ minute video of key staff as well as the raw footage from 23 interviews that we will be able to use for short video clips in the future. This video will be rolled out in 2023 in conjunction with our hiring season.

Additional short videos produced in-house include: Sweet Breeze operation (3 videos), Lakeside Garden in Bloom, River, Set, Go! (2 videos), Franke Park Day Camp 75 years in photos, Salomon Farm fields (4 videos), and Senior Games. The videos are pushed out on social media and used on the web site to promote operations and events. This is a very successful model for us.

The Marketing Team assisted with a variety of tasks related to the goal of securing seasonal workers. The Department held a job fair on April 14 as well as a number of pop-up events at various locations and reached out to high schools and colleges with job flyers and information. Despite all of these efforts, we experience staff shortages and have restructured the job committees in 2023.

#### Graphic Design

The marketing division uses graphic design extensively to promote programs, communicate ideas and convey messages both electronically and in print. Many program areas also require design work for props or supplies.

Graphic design projects for marketing in 2022 included: 50 temporary and permanent signs; 4 Fun Times catalogs; 31 postcards; 6 kiosk displays; 113 flyers; 37 posters; 39 electronic sign slides; 29 tickets/passes/punch cards; 32 brochures; 15 newspaper ads; 4 e-newsletters; 20 electronic billboards; 11 banners; 37 social media posts; 5 invitations; 5 programs; 8 swag/t-shirt imprints; and 10 certificates. Another 27 miscellaneous design projects included a park bench ad, placemats, tree labels, business cards, a pop-up tent and table covering imprints, a gift card, treat bags, lanyards, a calendar and two coloring/activity books, greeting cards and others.

## Social Media/Media Relations

The Department maintains 13 individual Facebook pages, three Instagram and two Twitter accounts with over 110,000 total followers.

Monthly e-newsletters are distributed for Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation customers along with other timely mass emails for specific areas of the department including Conservatory, Golf Courses, Foellinger Theatre and Riverfront programming. In 2022, 47 individual e-newsletters (42.25% open rate) were distributed.

The following news conferences were held in 2022:

- Arbor Day
- Wells Street Bridge Project
- Senior Games
- Unveiling of Court Murals and Enhancements at Ivan Lebamoff Reservoir Park
- Lifetime Sports Academy Awards
- Franke Park Day Camp 75<sup>th</sup> Anniv. Celebration and Open House
- Pickleball Court Additions



## 2022 Sponsorships, Donations and Grants Summary

In 2022, Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation was fortunate enough to be the recipient of various donations and gifts from community-oriented individuals, foundations and corporations. As always, the support of our community is what allows us to continue to serve our fellow citizens. The programs and facilities that received gifts include the Community Center, the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory, Lifetime Sports Academy and Promenade Park. Numerous memorial trees and benches were also donated for placement in various parks.

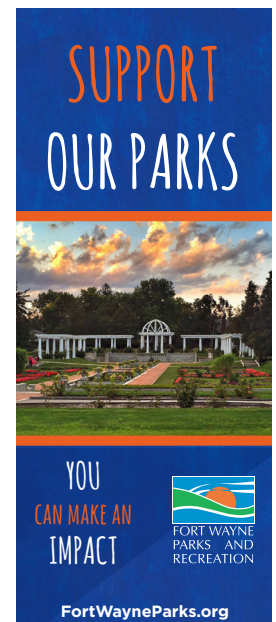
Our major partner supporting the parks and programs continues to be the Fort Wayne Park Foundation. Through their trust donations and tireless fundraising efforts, the Foundation's support helps our department maintain facilities, offer new and enriching programs and continue to improve the quality of life for the citizens of Fort Wayne.

This year, we introduced some enhanced ways for individuals to support our parks through donations. Gifts can be sent through our online donation site at [fortwayneparks.org/donate](http://fortwayneparks.org/donate) and program participants can also choose to donate during the online registration process. We thank everyone who chose to donate at any level. Your support means we are fulfilling our mission and it helps us continue to do the work we love.

We continued to see significant support from several area foundations and organizations, including the Magee O'Connor Foundation, English Bonter Mitchell Foundation, Mimi & Ian Roland Foundation, NIPSCO, Northeast Area Partnership, Southwest Area Partnership, and the Journal Gazette Foundation. In addition, dozens of area businesses supported 2022 Parks and Recreation events, and numerous individuals donated for memorials in honor of their friends and family. Donations for the entire year of 2022 totaled \$1,106,028.

Many thanks also to our Fort Wayne media friends who helped us spread the word about our events through media sponsorships. Our 2022 television sponsors were FOX Fort Wayne, PBS Fort Wayne, WANE 15, and WPTA, and our radio sponsors were 103.9 WAYNE FM, 97.3 WMEW, US 93.3, 101.7 WLDE, MAJIC 95.1, 89.1 WBOI, ALT 102.3 and XKE 98.9.

Again this year we are so very grateful to the citizens and organizations that continue to help make our park system the best in the region. The Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation staff, volunteers and participants would like to thank all of the generous donors and sponsors for adding to the momentum of Fort Wayne through our parks and programs.





# Board of Park Commissioners

## Sponsorships, Grants & Gifts: Top Donors

NAME	AMOUNT	PROJECT
Fort Wayne Park Foundation, Inc	\$447,382.00	Various Park and Facility Projects
Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayne, Inc.	\$105,603.06	Riverfront, Conservatory, Memorial Park
Nancy W. William Estate	\$103,220.34	Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory
Community and Economic Development	\$60,266.00	Various Park / Neighborhood Improvements
English, Bonter, Mitchell Foundation	\$50,000.00	Riverfront
Fort Wayne Park Foundation, Inc.	\$35,000.00	Comprehensive Strategic Plan
Fort Financial Credit Union	\$29,400.00	Reservoir Park Basketball Court Mural
Michael and Grace Mastrangelo Foundation	\$27,500.00	Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory
Indiana DNR	\$27,467.36	Wells Street Bridge, Buckner Park Trail
PNC Foundation, Inc.	\$25,000.00	Riverfront Development
Northeast Area Partnership	\$20,000.00	Northside Park Disc Golf Course
Journal Gazette Foundation	\$14,000.00	Lifetime Sports Academy
Schnieder Foundation	\$10,000.00	Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory
Thomas and Margaret Jehl Family Fund	\$10,000.00	Lifetime Sports Academy
Ian and Mimi Rolland Foundation, Inc.	\$7,500.00	Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory
Rolland Foundation	\$7,500.00	Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory
Friends of the Parks of Allen County	\$7,333.00	Great Tree Canopy Comeback Contribution
Indiana Afterschool Network Inc.	\$6,000.00	Neighborhood Afterschool Programs
Health and Hospital Corporation	\$5,020.00	Community Center Programs
Barbara Bradley Baekgaard Family Foundation	\$5,000.00	Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory
M.E. Raker Foundation	\$5,000.00	Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory
Magee-O'Connor Foundation	\$5,000.00	Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory
Edward M Wilson Foundation	\$4,500.00	Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory
Marvin and Marva Komisarow Foundation	\$4,261.00	Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory
Don and Virginia Wolf Charitable Foundation, Inc.	\$4,000.00	Salomon Farm Park Maintenance
Northern Indiana Public Service Company LLC (NIPSCO)	\$4,000.00	Youth Scholarship
FitLot, Inc.	\$3,510.00	Community Center - Outdoor Fitness Park
Beth Sandmaier	\$3,200.00	Memorial Dedication - Bob Sandmaier
Parkview Sports Medicine Sponsor	\$3,000.00	Junior Golf
D. O. McComb & Sons	\$2,700.00	Community Center Programs
Integrity-Emmons LLC/Stephanie Kelly	\$2,500.00	Memorial Dedication - Shannon Heitkamp
Michael Cardelli	\$2,500.00	Memorial Dedication - Brian J. Cardelli
Tina Walters	\$2,500.00	Memorial Dedication - Bench for Dan (Dad)
Fort Wayne-Allen County Community Center Foundation Inc	\$2,400.00	2023 Winterval Miniature Golf Ice Carving
41 North LLC	\$2,200.00	Community Center Programs
Steel Dynamics, Inc.	\$1,800.00	Community Center Programs
Miller's Merry Manor	\$1,725.00	Community Center Programs
Indiana Donor Network	\$1,675.00	Community Center Programs
James Sack II	\$1,500.00	Tree Replacement Rudisill & South Harrison
Parkview Health	\$1,500.00	Community Center - Senior Games
T-E Incorporated	\$1,500.00	Parks Unrestricted
United Healthcare Svs Inc.	\$1,500.00	Community Center - Senior Games
Fort Wayne Metals	\$1,500.00	Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory

For a complete list of 2022 donations visit [www.fortwayneparks.org](http://www.fortwayneparks.org).

# Park Maintenance

## 2022 Accomplishments

Two employees retired from the department: Jeff Morshes and Ken Lozo. New hires include: Scott Winling as Supervisor of Grounds Maintenance, Jason Carlson in grounds maintenance, Scott Oliver in maintenance and Rob Bravo moved from seasonal to full time Park C. One promotion includes: Travis Roth moved to Manager of the garage and storeroom operations.

The following reports are the accomplishments for Facilities/Trades and Grounds, Heavy Equipment and the Garage Operations for 2022.

### Facilities/Trades and Grounds

The goal of the Facilities/Trades and Grounds Staff is to provide “outstanding services” to each park and facility as required. The Facilities/Trades section consists of one Superintendent, one Supervisor, one Working Leader, nine Park Person C’s, two Relief Persons, eight Maintenance Technicians, one full time security person, and two Utility Seasonal employees. These employees handle a multitude of tasks.

The Facilities staff deals with things such as cleaning and arranging setups for rental pavilions, cleaning public restroom facilities, picking up and disposing of litter from all park sites. Facilities also assist the Grounds Management Division in winter with snow removal at our rental pavilions, and many of our other facilities throughout the department.

The Facility Staff was busy in 2022 with 2,889 pavilion rentals. This is up 714 rentals from 2021 and is similar to numbers in years prior to the COVID pandemic. Rental guidelines still require renters to sign a waiver which places responsibility on them to adhere to safety precautions regarding COVID.

Facility staff also conducts annual clean-

ings in all recreation centers which are; McMillen, Weisser, Jennings, Cooper, and the downtown Community Center. These cleanings are designed to thoroughly clean areas of the buildings that do not get cleaned on a daily or weekly basis. Areas such as ceiling joists, light lenses and HVAC vents will get a deep clean. Both Weisser and Jennings also get a fresh coat of wax on specific floors.

The Trades staff deals with repairs throughout the Parks Department. The maintenance techs are in charge of ensuring park fixtures, playgrounds, buildings, and utilities are in safe, operational order. Each spring, the exterior restrooms and drinking fountains have the water turned back on with care and attention paid to ensure that they are in working condition. This year, Memorial pool did not open so prep work only needed to be completed on Northside and McMillen pools. Preparation included repainting the Northside Park pools and the spray structures at both pools. Both pools had all electrical and plumbing components checked and made ready for the season. Each fall these processes are reversed so that facilities and services can be winterized for the season.

2022 proved to be the year of the pump/motor as there were several that failed. This included sump pumps at both McMillen and Northside pools as well as chemical feeder pumps at both locations. The zero-depth pump motor needed to be replaced at Northside pool as well. The grinder pump for the lift station at Shoaff Park needed to be replaced. A new de-chlorinator pump was installed at Buckner Park for the splash pad and a new pump was installed at the Japanese gardens fountain.

In 2022 the Maintenance Technicians received 2,753 work orders/requests. These were broken down into the fol-

lowing categories:

- 114 alarm repairs
- 34 appliance repairs
- 160 building repairs
- 201 carpentry projects
- 406 light repairs
- 374 electrical repairs
- 132 HVAC calls
- 199 lock/key repairs
- 100 painting repairs
- 393 play equipment repairs
- 341 plumbing repairs
- 105 sign repairs
- 194 vandalism repairs

The Grounds section consists of one Supervisor, three Heavy Equipment Operators, three Working Leaders, 12 Grounds Team Members and six Relief Persons. The Grounds employees also handle a multitude of tasks.

Heavy Equipment operations used over 130 tons of bulk salt and Grounds operations applied over 6 tons of bagged salt. All of which were applied on drives, lots and internal walks and entrances at various park locations, pavilions and centers. These include Franke Park, Northside Park and Psi Ote Pavilion, Sears Pavilion, Foster West and Pawster Park, Salomon Farm Learning Center, Shoaff Riverlodge Pavilion, Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory, Community Center, Freimann Square, Courthouse Green, Swinney Homestead, Lawton Complex, Jennings Center, Weisser Center, Cooper Center and McMillen Center. They performed 1315 hours of related snow removal tasks at various parks and facility locations and River Greenway paths.

Heavy Equipment operations performed 380 hours of excavation tasks and projects relating to various types of tile and drain work, irrigation, water line and sewer line repairs, minor excavating,



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grading and concrete projects. They performed 765 hours of tasks and projects related to hauling and spreading stone, filling holes, grading lots, drives and boat launches at Salomon Farm, Lawton Park, Franke Park, Hurshtown Reservoir, Foellinger Theater, Johnny Appleseed Park, Shoaff Park and Guldlin Park. Heavy Equipment and Grounds operations performed a combined 2,599 hours of hauling and debris removal tasks, which includes hauling various products such as wood chips, engineered wood mulch for playgrounds, ball diamond material, stone, sand, topsoil, compost, debris piles and zoo refuse.

Grounds crews performed 13,294.53 hours of mowing, spin trimming and blowing off hard surfaces. They maintain nearly 1,000 acres of park grounds on a six to eight day mowing cycle. They performed 569 hours of litter pick-up in parks; 685 hours of limb cleanup, 5,508 hours of trash removal services, 3,324 hours of combined tasks related to the maintenance of general turf areas, athletics fields and ball diamond maintenance. This includes spraying, fertilizing, hydro mulching, seeding, watering, mowing,

aerating, working and lining ball diamonds and athletic fields. This also includes lay-out and set up of athletic fields per event scheduling. The team applied nearly 29,000 pounds of fertilizer to small parks, larger general park areas and athletic fields. Grounds crews performed 1,826 hours related to tasks involving trimming overgrowth and clearing undergrowth along the River Greenway, splitting wood at Franke Park Maintenance Dump area and stump removal at various parks. Exactly 460.5 hours were spent doing flood cleanup in the parks and along the River Greenway.

Crews performed 530 hours of transportation duties. This includes transporting/hauling equipment to and from all golf courses each winter and spring, as well as on an as-needed basis for maintenance and repair services. We also transported/hailed equipment to and from the Johnny Appleseed Campground, Hurshtown Reservoir, Lindenwood Nature Center and Salomon Farm Park.

## Projects completed by the Manager of Facilities and Trades in 2022:

- The Facilities and Trades manager is also in charge of overseeing annual maintenance contracts for buildings including HVAC, boilers and management of contract services for: alarm systems, filter replacement, electrical, plumbing, roof and fence repairs, as well as helping to cover the 478 after-hours calls.
- Koehlinger Knox boxes were installed at all of the Parks facility locations.
- Two new windows were installed in the front of the Northside office.
- New fire alarm systems were installed at Northside and McMillen Park pools, and Lakeside Park Pavilions 1 and 2.
- New security systems were installed at Kreager Park and Foellinger Theater.
- The majority of alarm monitoring has been switched from a private company to the city's communications department.
- The water rill at Promenade Park was recoated with a non-slip surface.
- Packard Park ball diamond lighting was repaired.

- A grease trap was installed in the concessions stand at Foellinger Theatre.
- A new security person was hired for Promenade Park.
- Yearly permits for the elevators were renewed.
- A new security system is being installed at the Rea property.

## Main Trac Support

The Main Trac system logged 79,099 entries in 2022 and 2,454 for 311 calls. The summer storms in June and July resulted in concentrated 311 calls. Along with all these entries and calls, the Main Trac coordinator prepared regular expense reports for the recreation staff to track spending for each area. The coordinator is evaluating more efficient utilization of the Main-Trac system and working to eliminate overdue reports. One of the efficiencies is to identify what is and isn't needed and communicate that with staff. Doing so will help reduce input time. The coordinator supported additional projects such as the citizen-match tree program, use of I-mapping and Tree Keeper programs as well as the greenhouse School Children's Flower & Vegetable Association program. Six hundred, sixty-two volunteer hours were reported for the year, with more in various other departments.

## Garage Operations Support

The Garage and Operations Support Section provides logistical and safety support for the divisions of the Parks and Recreation Department. Major functions include storeroom operations and inventory control, automotive and equipment repair, property accounting and control and logistical support of department programs and functions. A storekeeper and courier/storeroom assistant keep the storeroom and courier functions running. Automotive and equipment repairs are performed by a garage working leader and three fleet mechanics.

The storeroom ordered and delivered materials and supplies in support of numerous programs and projects throughout the department, including the Johnny Appleseed Festival, Salomon Farm Fall



Harvest Festival, the downtown Christmas lighting ceremonies, Botanical Brew, Fright Night, and the Botanical Conservatory showcase changes. Our stock inventory items included approximately 1,983 lines of high usage and critical repair parts and supplies. The end of year stock value was \$180,791.

Once again, 2022 was a difficult year maintenance-wise due to the limited availability of replacement parts, shipping delays and general supply chain issues. It was not uncommon to have parts on back order from the manufacture for months at a time. This along with an increase in the cost of parts and materials meant that funding didn't go as far to purchase needed items.

Staffing in the garage and storeroom was sufficient this year after some staff changes during the last few years. One seasonal employee worked in the garage during the summer months. Another employee started in November and worked half days to help with pressure washing, parts pickups, storeroom tasks and other garage duties. Staff completed over 1,450 automotive and 128 preventive maintenance work orders on equipment/vehicles.

Significant new vehicle/equipment purchases received for the year were:

- one Toro 6000 zero turn mower
- one Toro 4000 zero turn mower
- one Karcher pressure washer
- two Lely tow-behind fertilizer spreaders
- one John Deere bunker rake
- one Ford F-350 flatbed dump truck
- one John Deere Gator with a snow plow

Several vehicles and pieces of equipment are ordered but not received at the end of 2022 due to backlogs within the different industries.

Thirteen vehicle damage incidents were recorded of which 10 were at-fault accidents totaling \$14,938.89 in repairs. This number of chargeable repairs resulted from three vehicles: Bobcat #255, tree truck #167, and Ford flatbed #193. The three not at fault accidents resulted in

repairs of \$12,866 to shop truck #59 and pickup truck #148. The engines on two of the forestry trucks were rebuilt this year and the John Deere backhoe #212 had an extensive repair performed to the control valve in the lift arm.

## Parks Safety Training

In 2022 the Parks and Recreation Department created a new position; the Parks Safety Training Manager. As the Parks Department has grown over the last several years, employee safety training has become increasingly important and difficult to manage. The creation of this position will allow in-house training for all full-time and seasonal employees. The safety training manager will be responsible for training of General Safety, First Aid, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and Automatic External Defibrillation, Stormwater Pollution Prevention, Bloodborne Pathogens, chainsaw safety and various equipment operation classes.

The Safety & Training section provides training to all divisions within FWPRD in compliance with federal (OSHA), state (IOSHA) and local (City of Fort Wayne and FWPRD policy) guidelines. Training such as CPR/First Aid, Stormwater Pollution Control, Bloodborne Pathogens, Personal Protective Equipment, Chainsaw Safety, Hazcom, Fire safety and General Safety are essential to making employees more safety-conscious and thus prevent injuries and control medical services expenses.

Safety & Training is also tasked with tracking and recording mandatory regulatory issues such as Commercial Driving Licenses and Worker Protection Standards. Safety & Training participates in the annual inspection of all FWPRD facilities, including pavilions and playgrounds, to ensure that they pose no risk to employees or the general public.

With the retirement of Safety & Operations manager Ken Lozo in 2022, the transition from joint Safety & Operations to a more focused approach began by promoting Grounds Supervisor Travis Roth to the Operations Manager position and the hiring of Risk Management Investi-

gator Tony DeVido as the Safety Manager.

In 2022, 28 employees reported injuries ranging from minor lacerations and bee stings to surgery for the repair of broken bones. These injuries resulted in 112 lost time days and 465 restricted work days. Total worker's compensation costs for the year to date are \$59,619.42. Seventeen motor vehicle crashes were reported in 2022. Ten were ruled preventable.

## Project Administration

### 2022 Completed and In-Progress CIP Projects

- Botanical Conservatory Entrance Landscape Improvements
- Botanical Conservatory Gift Shop Wall Enclosure and Painting
- Botanical Conservatory Main Hallway Repairs and Painting
- Botanical Conservatory Window/Roof Glass Replacement
- Bowser Park Pavilion Renovation
- Buckner Park Trail Design/Construction
- Community Center Carpet Replacement
- Community Center Entry Door System Replacement
- Community Center Roof Improvements Phase 2: Design /Construction
- Community Center Shuffleboard Courts Resurfacing
- Foellinger Theater Basement Waterproofing
- Foellinger Theater Entrance Sidewalk Drainage Improvements
- Foellinger Theater Parking Lot Repair and Striping
- Foster Park Golf Course Master Plan Design
- Foster Park Pavilion #3 Design Services/Construction/Electrical Work
- Foster Park Playground Replacement
- Foster Park Tennis Court Concrete Repairs
- Franke Park Playground Replacement
- Franke Park Drainage Improvements
- Franke Park Nature Lodge and Long House Roof Replacements
- Franke Park Playground Drainage
- Freimann Square Chess Tables



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- Freimann Square Pump Building Structural Report
- Hamilton Park Tennis Courts Fence Replacement
- Headwaters Park Dock Strong Arm Posts
- Headwaters Park Parking Lot Striping
- Jennings Center Interior Painting and Signage Improvements
- Jennings Center Parking Lot Landscape
- Jennings Center Parking Lot Lighting
- Jennings Center Playground Equipment Replacement
- Johnny Appleseed Park Campground Electrical Design
- Johnny Appleseed Park Campground Fire Pit and Landscape
- Kettler Park Pavilion Exterior/Interior Renovation
- Kettler Park Tennis Concrete Surface Repair
- Kreager Park Barn Improvements Design/Construction
- Kreager Park Exercise Equipment Turf Repair
- Kreager Park Playground Equipment Installation/Temporary Fence
- Kreager Park Taylor's Dream Safety Surface Replacement
- Kreager Park Tennis Backboard and Fence
- Lakeside Park Arbors Landscape /Wood Replacement and Painting
- Lakeside Park Sidewalk Replacement
- Lakeside Park Sports Courts Lighting
- Lawton Park Gasoline Equipment
- McMillen & Meyers Park Structure Tuckpointing
- McMillen Park Golf Course Cart Paths Phase 2
- McMillen Park Golf Course New Chemical Building
- McMillen Park Golf Pavilion Roof Replacement
- Mechanic Street Bridge Engineering Services
- Memorial Park Olen J. Pond Monument Restoration
- Memorial Park Pavilion Gutter Improvements
- Memorial Park Roof Replacement
- Memorial Park Softball Area Survey
- Northside Park Playground Replacement
- Northside Park Admin Office Signage/Interior Signage
- Northside Park Parnell & State Sign Renovation and Landscaping
- Northside Park Disc Golf Course
- 5-Year Master Plan
- Promenade Park Holiday Lighting
- Rea Building Overhead Door Addition
- Rea Property Needs Assessment
- Reservoir Park Basketball Court Mural
- Cooper Center Kitchen Design and Construction
- Reservoir Park Cooper Center Roof Replacement
- Rivergreenway Spy Run Creek Underpass Wall
- Rockhill Park Pavilion Roof Replacement
- Salomon Farm Garden Fence
- Salomon Farm Learning Center Office
- Salomon Farm Pasture Gates Improvements
- Salomon Farm Rental Barn Exterior Improvements
- Salomon Farm Restroom Building Design Services
- Sheldon Drive Park New Playground Equipment
- Shoaff Park Rivergreenway Boardwalk Repair
- Shoaff Park Riverlodge Landscape
- Swinney Park Log House Cedar Shake Roof Replacement
- Various Parks 2022 Paving Projects
- Various Parks Basketball Courts Improvements
- Various Parks City/Park Street Tree Plantings
- Various Parks Ecosystem Maintenance
- Various Parks Landscape Maintenance
- Various Parks Monument Restoration
- Various Parks On-Call Engineering Services
- Various Parks Park Identification Signs
- Various Parks Sidewalk Improvements
- Various Parks Site Furnishings
- Various Parks Tennis/Pickleball Courts Resurfacing
- Weisser Park Interior Lobby Renovation
- Wells St. Bridge Knee Portal Construction

The Project Administration Department also provided many utility location services for construction, landscape and buildings and grounds projects.



# Park Planning

## 2022 Accomplishments

Park planning defines, quantifies, and visually represents our best intentions as stewards of the parks. There are many park users, advocates and stakeholders who propose improvements and projects, thus we must be prepared to respond and react based on established goals. The planning report below highlights much of the coordination necessary to best serve the interests of the public and our park system.

The Franke Renaissance Project advanced in 2022, led by project consultant, Design Collaborative. Design development was completed, and permitting, value engineering, and construction documents were in-progress at year's end. It is anticipated that the first phase of the previously completed master plan will be prepared for bidding in early 2023, with construction of the new Goshen Rd. entrance, the bridge over Spy Run Creek, new pavilion, new park drive alignment and parking lots to begin later in the year.

An additional component to Franke Renaissance likely to be constructed simultaneously, is the Spy Run Creek Streambank Stabilization: Phase II project. This project will continue with similar construction methods used in Phase I, and move upstream towards the Lowther-Neuhaus Ditch. Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation applied and was awarded a Great Lakes Sediment and Nutrient Reduction Program grant for this project in 2022. This \$200,000 grant, administered by the Great Lakes Commission, was one of eight awarded to projects throughout the Great Lakes states.

Construction on Riverfront Phase IIA began in May, following completion of construction documents by local consultant Jones Petrie Rafinski (JPR) and approval by permitting agencies. This site will serve as a public space connection between Promenade Park and Headwaters Park, located east of Harrison street on the right

bank of the St. Marys River. By the end of the year, a new retaining wall and stairs along the southern end of the site, much of the concrete flatwork, site grading, bioswale stone work and infrastructure improvements were constructed. Construction administration is by Community Development staff, while Parks will take ownership and maintenance duties following completion in mid-2023.

Planning and design continues for Riverfront Phase IIB, led by project consultant Land Collective. This phase includes the left bank of the St. Marys River between the historic Wells St. bridge and Ewing St. bridge, the public space at the northeast intersection of the Superior St. roundabout, and the public space between Harrison St. and Clinton St. immediately north of the river. Hagerman Construction was selected mid-year as the project Construction Manager as Constructor (CMC). Permit applications are anticipated to be submitted with drawing sets in early 2023, and completion of construction documents to follow. Construction may begin as early as late summer/early fall 2023. This project has had a number of challenges over the past few years, including a pause during the pandemic, changes in scope, and coordination with public utilities and adjacent private development. Community Development manages the Riverfront Development projects with design team support from Parks staff throughout planning, to offer input on design and maintenance, and aid with a variety of project details.

Parks Planning staff are in the process of completing a 5-year Master Plan as required by Indiana Dept. of Natural Resources. Completion of this plan benefits the department by taking a snapshot of community needs and desires, and allows the opportunity to apply for various state funds. Inventory and analysis of the department was completed and com-

munity input was gathered via in-person meetings and online surveys by project consultant, Designing Local. A draft plan is anticipated in January 2023, and the final plan is scheduled for submission to IDNR by mid-April.

A Request for Proposals was sent to a number of consultants this year in anticipation of the creation of a new 10-year Comprehensive Plan. A committee was formed to review and score the four proposals we received and Design Workshop's proposal came out on top. Approvals were secured by the Board of Park Commissioners and City Council late in the year, and the planning kick-off is scheduled for January. The plan should be completed in early to mid-2024.

Parks was able to reconvene the steering committee and complete gathering neighborhood input for the Moody Park Master Plan throughout the year. The draft plan was presented to and approved by the committee in the fall. The final plan is near completion and is anticipated to be presented to the Board of Commissioners in early 2023.

Planning and gathering of community input continues for both Hanna Homestead and Reservoir Parks. Steering committee engagement has varied for these two parks, resulting in a slightly different process than the previously completed plans at Brewer and Packard Parks. Park staff plans to continue gathering input and preparing draft plans in the coming year.

Four chess tables were purchased and installed at Freimann Square in the southeast corner of the sunken plaza. Partners in this project were the Take A Stan Chess Club, FortChess, Purdue Extension, and Three Rivers Chess Club. In October, the clubs held a successful grand opening event to celebrate.



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Following several years of headlessness, the Olen J. Pond Memorial in Memorial Park was cleaned and made complete by the sculpting and restoring of a new head. Restoration experts, Conservation of Sculpture and Objects Studio, Inc. began the project in 2019, with research of the original monument and work to determine its material makeup. In 2021, the sculpture was cleaned and partially restored along with the adjacent urns. In 2022, a new head was cast from the same stone makeup of the existing monument, and was set upon the figure. The previous landscape was also removed and replaced, finalizing another monument restoration project.

The front entry landscape renovation at the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory was completed this year. A redesign of the original 1990s landscape was completed in 2021 by planning staff in concert with the design and installation of the Megaflora sculpture. Demolition and hardscape were completed that year, followed by completion of irrigation, final grading, planting and electrical work in 2022. The landscape features plantings made up almost entirely of native species and cultivars, providing a downtown/urban habitat for native insect and bird species.

After an extended construction schedule, the Franke Drainage project was completed. Parks partnered with City Utilities in the planning of this project, which was designed by Earth Source, Inc. Consisting of three site interventions, the project slows storm water flows from adjacent neighborhoods to the north and east, and allows for the settlement of sediment and its reduction into downstream waters. The upstream area of the project slows and backs up flows from a stream into an adjacent wetland using an in-stream stone weir structure. The mid-stream area aims to stabilize streambanks and accommodate increased flows from the upstream wetland. The downstream area accepts large volumes of flow into a new detention basin where sediment can be dipped periodically; a new overflow structure moves storm water from the basin to the nearby Shoaff Lake.

In addition, a series of stone-filled gabion baskets serve as an overflow structure, further slowing and spreading flows before spilling onto the park drive.

In partnership and coordination with G2 Rowing, a boat storage facility was planned and constructed at Shoaff Park. The facility, located between the baseball diamond and boat ramp, consists of a 360 square foot fenced in area, covered by a roof structure. An agreement is in place for G2 to store their rowing sculls during the rowing season, while Parks may elect to overwinter the Shoaff Park floating dock in the facility.

A new landscape was designed and constructed surrounding the parking lot at Jennings Center. Overgrown evergreen shrubs were removed and replaced with columnar trees, while perennials and grasses were planted at the entrance and back of the lot. This project results in both aesthetic and maintenance improvements.

Planning staff coordinated with local artist Andre Portee on the painting of the basketball courts at Reservoir Park. Several mural designs were presented and reviewed by a local steering committee before selection for completion. Painting of the court surfaces and backboards was completed in July, followed by a grand opening and tournament.

Landscape improvements were designed and installed under the arbors adjacent to the sunken gardens at Lakeside Park. Poorly performing climbing roses and their mulched beds were removed from each column. New evergreen hedges were planted selectively, allowing for pedestrian passage at key locations through newly established turf areas. New climbing roses were also selectively planted on a number of the columns, providing a simplified and unified design for the space.

A long-overdue landscape redesign was completed for Riverlodge at Shoaff Park. Demolition of much of the existing landscape and installation of new is scheduled for Spring 2023.

In concert with many other incremental

improvements throughout Memorial Park over the past several years, a new hardscape layout was designed for the Sons of Glory Memorial. This new paver pad will provide closer accessibility to the memorial and allow everyone to approach and enjoy. A new asphalt path connecting the memorial to the adjacent trail, park drive and accessible parking is planned for 2023 along with the construction of the paver pad.

Engineering Resources, Inc. was selected as a project consultant to redesign the pedestrian trestle bridge located along the Rivergreenway immediately south of Fourth Street at Lawton Park. The existing bridge has fallen into disrepair, resulting in its closure at the end of 2022. A new bridge, currently in design and permitting stages, will cross Spy Run Creek in a single span, eliminating the current buildup of woody debris within the channel. Construction is anticipated winter 2023-24.

After a few years of discussion, conceptualization and subsequent environmental assessment, the East Central Marina project formally kicked off this year. Project consultant, Engineering Resources, Inc. was selected and began the design. This will continue into 2023 with permitting anticipated later in the year. Construction is currently planned for 2024.

Managerial responsibility for the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory was transferred to planning staff in 2022. Nate Cardelli was promoted to facility manager, and the remaining full-time roster was made complete. The team proceeded to assess and analyze the Conservatory's strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats and develop a plan to move the facility forward. A number of projects and initiatives were recognized and discussed relating to maintenance, safety, programming, horticulture, revenues and customer experience. While some initiatives will proceed in the future, a noteworthy project which is nearly complete at the end of 2022 is the upgrade of the HVAC control system. An upgrade of interior lighting throughout each of the houses is also in planning and design stages.

Staff continues to coordinate planning and construction efforts with City Utilities as a part of the Tunnel and Consolidation Sewer Projects throughout the city. Completed drop shaft locations include East Central Park, Headwaters West, and Guldlin Park, however, construction continues at Foster at the tunnel terminus. Parks will soon engage consultants in a request for proposals for the redesign of the Foster Park entrance. This will also require much coordination with Utilities as they prepare for construction of the consolidation sewers south along Hartman Road and west towards Indian Village which will largely impact the park.

Proposals were reviewed by Parks staff along with Public Works, City Utilities, Community Development and Planning staff for a River Activation Master Plan (RAMP). This plan aims to assess social, economic and environmental opportunities for activation along each of the three rivers throughout much of the county. A consultant was selected following reviews and interviews; however, the project was put on hold and remains so at the end of 2022. It is our hope to see the project move forward next year.

After considerable public input and planning efforts in the southeast quadrant, two new public spaces were designed and developed by the Community Development Department. Powell Park (complete) and McKinnie Commons (under development) are now under the Department's purview for maintenance and programming.

News of the transfer of maintenance and management for Headwaters Park in early 2023 was made official this year. Staff throughout the department began planning for this transition in anticipation of the increased responsibility. With this park now falling under our purview in addition to Riverfront Phase IIA, Powell Park and McKinnie Commons, staffing levels were assessed and efficiencies in maintenance initiated to keep the status quo and make improvements. These efficiencies include: open overtime, auger use in annual plant and bulb planting, cessation of the pre-emergent program, decreased Conservatory assistance, irrigation

upgrades, various equipment upgrades, and reduced annual display plantings. A number of additional changes are being considered for 2023 with the goal of not only improved efficiency, but that of team morale and employee satisfaction, as well.

Planning staff attended the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) annual meeting in San Francisco. The conference was very informative, providing valuable knowledge and the opportunity to visit great parks and public spaces in the city. In addition, staff attended the Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA) in the summer. A CISMA is currently coming together in Allen County, organized in part by planning staff. It will be of assistance in the Parks to continue removal of invasive species.

The Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation has a proud tradition of exceptional development and maintenance of landscape and horticultural displays throughout the system. From stunning annual beds at Freimann Square, the Courthouse Green, Foster Park, Swinney Park, Foellinger Theatre in Franke Park, and Lakeside Park—to pastoral park lands with open vistas and mature tree canopies. It is always our goal to maintain this tradition of care, with available funding allocated for that purpose.

## Landscape and Horticulture Report

A step forward was taken this year in an attempt to go greener by using all organic-based fertilizer products to maintain the turf at various parks.

Some of this year's landscape planting projects included improvements to the McMillen Park Clubhouse, Salomon Farm Park entry, and the Olen J. Pond Memorial in Memorial Park. The retaining wall in Taylors Dream was repaired and completed as well. Clearing of invasive Honeysuckle was completed in Ivan Lebamoff Reservoir Park and Foster Park West.

The work at Thomas Nature Sanctuary continued. Projects included clearing around the pond with the addition of two large stone outcroppings for better



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viewing. Wood duck boxes were installed in the wooded wetland.

The Great Tree Canopy Comeback (GTCC), supported through volunteer efforts and partnership with Friends of the Parks, was modified this year to focus on the maintenance of young trees, as well as the removal of invasive Honeysuckle in our parks. One hundred and thirty trees under 5" in diameter had a mulch ring installed around them at Memorial Park. GTCC volunteers also removed Honeysuckle in Foster Park along the St. Marys River.

Volunteer efforts were successful this year. With the help of a few different groups, approximately 400 yards of mulch was installed at McCulloch, Rockhill, Memorial, and Ivan Lebamoff Reservoir Parks.

In 2022, the Lawton Park Greenhouse staff and volunteers produced 29,257 plants of 302 different varieties for floral displays in the parks throughout Fort Wayne; 28,650 bulbs were planted in the parks. Botanical Conservatory Showcase plant production for the four floral changes included the following: Winter Show 1,406 pots and 32,160 pots of bulbs, Butterfly Show 1,314 pots of annual flowers and vines, Summer Show 5,306 which includes mums for the fall display and Holiday Show 2,853 pots. Approximately 1,900 plants were also produced for Conservatory events and programs.

The Conservatory Shop and Sales Garden saw sales of 2,108 plants which were produced in the greenhouse and 691 plants sold at the Fort Wayne Home & Garden Show. Approximately 16,741 containers of plants were sold at the Mother's Day Plant Sale. The few remaining plants were sold at the Conservatory Shop and Sales Garden.

The School Children's Flower & Vegetable Association program began the year with 3,798 seed packets sold to students. Landscape/Horticulture staff delivered 17,207 plants to 60 schools in April. Twenty-seven volunteers and eight employees judged the preliminary shows at 52 schools. The City-Wide Blue Ribbon Show, held at the McMillen Park Community Center on September 10, featured

271 entries from 184 students representing 48 schools.

## Riparian Management

The work completed by the Riparian Division improves the riverine environment and usability of the local rivers for our patrons through the implementation of the Riparian Management Plan. This includes addressing the rivers' waters during their changing levels as well as stewarding the adjacent land along the riverbanks, providing education opportunities and safe access to the river banks and channel.

The work barge removed over 52 tons of logs and navigational hazards from the downtown rivers. The cumulative effect is still apparent as the barge is now used for removing new log jams and navigational hazards caused from rain events. Bridges have been kept clear all year. More than 3,580 pounds of debris and litter was removed. River levels were dropped on November 14<sup>th</sup>, allowing the chance to scout the river bottom and plan for future navigational hazard removals. Some additional debris was removed after being exposed.

Docks were installed successfully for the recreational season. This was the first year that strong arms were used at Headwaters dock, similar to what is already in place at Guldlin dock. Headwaters' strong arms were a resounding success as they prevented the usual damage and problems associated with poles. Docks and ramps were continuously kept clear from all debris, silt and litter throughout the year. Light maintenance was performed on all dock systems as needed. All dock systems were removed for the season successfully and without incident.

Herbivory management involved maintaining previously wrapped trees and wrapping new cottonwood trees throughout downtown to prevent beaver damage. Geese egg addling was not possible this year due to delayed hiring and extreme river level fluctuation, but the trapping of geese via a contractor proved successful with the removal a total of 107 geese.

The vines planted in containers in the rip rap along St. Joseph Blvd. are thriving,

greatly improving the aesthetics of the rip rap along the levee. Weeding, watering and maintenance was kept up all year. Existing viewsheds and river access points were maintained. An Ecosystem Maintenance contract greatly aided in maintaining Bloomingdale, Old Fort/Headwaters, Promenade Park, and Franke Park.

The Riparian clean-up attendance numbers are slowly increasing. Most of the volunteers in 2022 came from companies and organizations. Each clean-up provided an opportunity to give a short presentation on water quality and education on what citizens can do to help improve the environment. A total of 240 volunteers donated 1,682 hours, equal to approximately \$50,376 worth of volunteer labor. The crew continued invasive removal along Spy Run Creek in the Brookview neighborhood. More than 2.73 tons of invasive species was removed throughout the year.

The biggest challenge this year was labor, but the riparian department managed to stay on track for the year's main goals, including keeping the waterways and bridges clear for safe recreational use.

## Forestry Report

Just like in previous years, 2022 presented the Forestry Division with new challenges. Our struggles to attract and retain qualified tree care professionals continued. By May, we had lost all of our hourly staff and had not received a single application from qualified applicants. This offered an opportunity to reflect, adjust, and improve. With the support of Parks and Recreation leadership, a tiered pay structure was implemented allowing for compensation based on experience, proficiency, responsibility, and leadership. We are proud to say, as of the first of the new year, the forestry team is back to full staff (five hourly employees) with noticeable improvement in morale and commitment to professional growth.

Fort Wayne's commitment to our urban tree canopy was recognized by naming us a Tree City for the 32nd year in a row. We also received the Growth Award for the 17th consecutive year. The Growth

Award highlights innovative programs/projects and an increased commitment of resources for urban forestry. This commitment was demonstrated by the creation of a new, boots-on-the-ground, Arborist position. The primary functions of this new position include oversight of day-to-day operations, training of appropriate arboricultural practices, and safety.

Spring started with our annual Arbor Day celebration on April 29. While most holidays celebrate something that has already happened and is worth remembering, Arbor Day represents hope for the future. The simple act of planting a tree represents a belief that a tree will grow to provide us with clean air and water, cooling shade, habitat for wildlife, healthier communities, and endless natural beauty—all for a better tomorrow. The day began with the Mayor's official proclamation and included a tree planting in partnership with the Southwest Area Partnership (SWAP). The SWAP has committed \$190,000 of Investing in Neighborhoods Now funds to tree planting on public property within their boundaries. The event concluded with a bare root seedling tree giveaway in partnership with Trees Indiana.

Much of the summer was consumed with tree-related storm response and recovery. Severe storms on June 13 resulted in significant straight-line wind damage that overwhelmed our limited workforce. With the help of contractors and the Department of Public Works, recovery efforts were underway in the areas suffering the greatest impact (Waynedale and Aboite) when Fort Wayne experienced another round of severe weather with wind gusts exceeding 45 mph on July 5. While calls continue to trickle in, forestry storm response and recovery were effectively complete by November 1.

Maintaining a pruning cycle is an important component of our urban forestry management plan. Routine maintenance results in a healthier tree canopy and an improved tree structure to better withstand stresses from wind, ice, and rain. While this continues to be a goal, various challenges have led to the suspension of our routine

maintenance schedule. Without a structured maintenance schedule, we expect continued increases in forestry-related urgent response service requests and, ultimately, increased maintenance costs. Despite a 99% increase in 311 Call Center requests for service this year, forestry received a 100% efficiency rating. This means that each of the service requests was inspected by a Tree Risk Assessment Qualified Arborist and a response was provided within 5 days. Not all reported customer concerns are determined to be urgent and warrant immediate mitigation but all work deemed necessary is prioritized based on the associated risk and scheduled accordingly.

It is not possible to maintain trees free of risk; some risks must be accepted to experience the benefits that trees provide. Ideally, trees presenting an elevated level of risk are identified and the associated risk is mitigated prior to a tree failure. Summer storms limited our ability to complete an annual level one tree inspection of street and park trees. In total, 985 trees were removed this year of which 504 were storm-related and 70 were privately owned trees that fell into the right-of-way.

This year's tree planting was limited by a reallocation of resources to address outstanding hazardous trees. In total 369 new trees were planted this fall. 177 of these were funded through the Southwest Area Partnership.

The Forestry Division views continuing education as an essential component in providing residents with consistently improved service. This year, Derek Veit and Tony McGuire attended the Indiana Arborist Association Annual Conference. This conference offers an opportunity to network with other Indiana tree care professionals and learn from some of the industry's top subject experts.

As a department, Parks is committed to personal and professional growth in order to better serve the Fort Wayne community. Lessons learned in 2022 will be applied to challenges ahead.





## Board of Park Commissioners

# Botanical Conservatory

## 2022 Accomplishments

### Key Performance Indicators

Both paid and total attendance at the Botanical Conservatory trended positively in the post-COVID-19 public attraction landscape. Increased attendance in 2022 is attributable to inspired showcase exhibit themes and strategic marketing of exhibits and events throughout the year. Conservatory Shop revenue shattered the previous annual record by more than 25% with compelling merchandise and thoughtful displays that surprised and delighted shoppers in 2022. Facility rental revenue charted a 10-year high and annual membership revenue grew to an all-time high. In 2022, annual total revenue at the Conservatory exceeded \$1 million for the first time thanks to generous donations and gifts, an exciting offering of fee-based programs including the new Camp ACTiVenture, as well as a nominal increase in admission and membership fees, which were the only increases to those fees in 14 years. Healthy growth at the Conservatory has helped foster a positive environment ready to greet visitors for many years to come.

Attendance	84,821
Admission Revenue	\$322,807.70
Membership Revenue	\$72,456.00
Gift Shop Revenue	\$246,128.94
Facility Rental Revenue	\$98,394.88
Other Revenue	\$451,049.27
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$1,190,836.79</b>



### Showcase Exhibits

**Under the Big Top**  
Attendance 18,602 or 22%  
January 8-April 10, 2022

For the winter exhibit, the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory invited visitors to the greatest Circus Garden in town! Visitors imagined participating in the circus spectacle and attempted great feats of derring-do including acrobatics and tightrope walking. Visitors also got to experience the side show when posing as a Strong Man or Bearded Lady. Accenting the exhibit were topiary animals and astonishing plant oddities.

**Emergence: Live Butterfly Exhibit**  
Attendance 24,611 or 29%  
April 23-June 26, 2022

Live butterflies returned to the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory bringing with them an array of natural beauty and wonder. The Emergence butterfly exhibit celebrated the wellness of the community as we reemerged from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Butterflies flying, climbing and vining, reminded us of our own inner-workings and what it takes to reach greater heights.

**Paris: City of Light & Love**  
Attendance 22,948 or 27%  
July 2-November 13, 2022

This Summer/Fall, the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory celebrated Paris, France and its long-exuded romance through an iconic cityscape, art, architecture and its famous riverbanks. Visitors experienced a secluded atmosphere of cafes, lush landscapes, and a flower shop. Familiar scenes and playful hues adorned a public square in an exhibit bursting with light and love. Worth noting, during the planning and preparation for the exhibit, long-time volunteer, Doug Guerin, passed away. Doug's estate foundation was the centerpiece of the Paris: City of Light & Love exhibit, earning a feature

on Doug and the showcase exhibit by Terri Richardson in the Journal Gazette.

**Happy Smallidays**  
Attendance 14,288 or 17% as of 12/31  
November 19-January 8, 2023

Happy Smallidays told the tale of Little Mouse sneaking into the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory looking to cozy up for the holidays. He wanted nothing more than for everyone to slow down and find joy in the little things. Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory visitors followed Little Mouse in an endearing holiday story produced with local author/illustrator, Talitha Shipman, and were inspired by the heartfelt lesson he had to share. A hardcover book was published by the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory in concert with this exhibit, with over 250 copies sold in its Conservatory Shop. Allen County Public Library also took 20 copies into circulation, which offered free admission to the library patron when they presented their book at the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory admission desk. This heartfelt holiday experience earned the exhibit a feature on Positively fort Wayne.

### Revenue Development

The Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory observed record revenues in fiscal year 2022 thanks to nominal fee increases in admission, membership, and facility rental, as well as increased visitor enthusiasm and reinvolvement in the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory in the post-COVID-19 pandemic rebound. Revenue increases stabilized accounts at the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory and allowed for many facility and visitor improvements by strategically directing fee increases to sustain the overall operation of the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory. Generosity observed by the broader community, including the Chuck & Nancy Williams Estate, have also bol-

stered the ability of the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory to engage capital projects with confidence in the interest of preserving the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory as a community cultural treasure for many years to come.

## Conservatory Shop Growth

The Conservatory Shop has become a premier destination for gift shopping in Downtown Fort Wayne, something that is fleshed out in the data. The development of a new strategy for procuring and dis-

playing more compelling merchandise has fundamentally shifted the Conservatory Shop operation since 2019, with unimaginable success having been observed with the changes.

## Conjure Coffee

Conjure Coffee's partnership as the café provider has continued with much success in 2022. For the first time since their opening in 2019, a full twelve months of rent was collected in 2022 with Conjure Coffee having anecdotally observed major revenue growth. A renewal of terms for the lease agreement was approved by the Board of Park Commissioners in August, which extends the agreement through September 2028. Conjure Coffee is the first café provider at the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory to extend their lease.

## Programs & Displays

### Dollar Night Admission

In 2022 the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory began offering \$1 Admission from 5:00-8:00 p.m. every Thursday Night throughout the year. In previous years, \$1 Admission was offered from 5:00-8:00 p.m. on only the first Thursday of each month, being open for regular admission on the remainder of the Thursday evenings. Thursday evening attendance has increased nearly 100% to 2019 with immaterial revenue losses, meaning that the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory has become more accessible to the public without compromising its operational integrity.

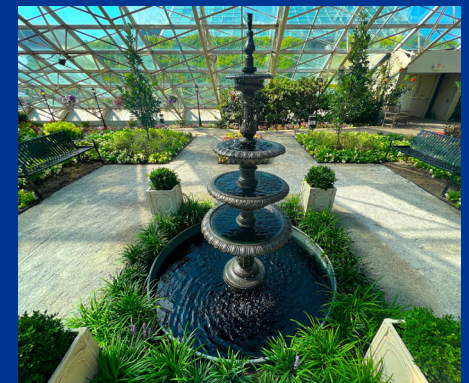
### Mother's Day Plant Sale

In 2022, the Mother's Day Plant Sale returned to the McMillen Park Community Center and continues to be the single largest annual fundraiser held by the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory. The 2022 Mother's Day Plant Sale charted record revenues, observing a 3.5% increase to 2019 (the previous record-holder) after two years of holding the sale online due to COVID-19. The 2022 Plant Sale revenue was \$95,079.01. The Mother's Day Plant Sale would not be possible without the production and ef-

## Grants & Donations

Park Foundation	\$214,952
Chuck & Nancy William Estate Gift	\$103,221*
Grace & Michael Mastrangelo Foundation	\$27,500
Ian and Mimi Rolland Foundation	\$15,000
PNC Charitable Trusts (Schneider Foundation)	\$10,000
Community Foundation Beverforden Endowment	\$7,594
Magee-O'Connor Foundation	\$5,000
M.E. Raker Foundation	\$5,000
Barbara Bradley Baekgaard Family Foundation	\$5,000
Wilson Foundation	\$4,500
Marvin & Marva Komisarow Foundation	\$4,261
Community Foundation Conservateers Endowment	\$3,799
Fort Wayne Metals	\$1,500
Howard P. Arnold Foundation	\$1,000
Waterfield Foundation	\$500
Individual Gifts (Trust Donations & Memorials)	\$4,935
Total:	\$423,762

\*amount received in 2022; total gift of \$492,635





# Board of Park Commissioners

fort of the Lawton Park Greenhouse, which produces all of the sale's inventory.

## Camp ACTiVenture

A new active, adventure camp offered for ages 9-13 was guided by the exploration of the four elements: earth, air, water, and fire. Campers hiked, biked, climbed rocks,



rode zip lines, kayaked, went to splash pads, "foraged" for berries, built a fire, cooked over a fire, orienteered for an accomplishment necklace, and swam in a lake. Seventy-three campers participated in Camp ACTiVenture in 2022, marking a successful first year for the camp and a highly repeatable program.

## Botanical Brew

In its first year, Botanical Brew succeeded as a brand-new event attracting 697 total attendees! It featured 11 local and regional beverage producers encompassing coffee, kombucha, soda, spirits, beer, wine, cider, and mead. Producers provided sample and sale of their product in addition to educating guests about brew production. Four local food vendors supported the event. Botanical Brew also incorporated four artisan booths, four roaming buskers, and a concert lineup featuring Secret Mezzanine and Los Galaxy. Attendees greatly enjoyed the event in an

outdoor setting amidst the seasonal Pumpkin Path Display. They were able to warm up while enjoying the indoor gardens and visiting the Conservatory Shop, too.

## Jazzworks!

A total of 476 attendees enjoyed this year's Jazzworks! concert lineup featuring Los Galaxy as the opening band, Lisa McDavid as the feature, and Fort Wayne famous Ty Causey performing as the headliner. Julia Meek and Rob Martinez with 89.1 WBOI and Greg Shoup with WANE 15 emceed and sponsored this event. Also a sponsor, Mad Anthony Brewing Company served food and beverage. The event wrapped up with a perfect view of the Three Rivers Festival Fireworks Finale! Jazzworks! was reinvigorated in 2022 by changing the timing and format of the concert, which allowed for more performers and higher food sales. Attendance for Jazzworks! doubled to 2021.

## Rocky Horror Picture Show

The 14th showing of Rocky Horror Picture Show entertained 665 guests in 2022. This is an increase over last year's audience of 605 and an impressive outdoor attendance given the colder temperatures. The Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory screened the film in collaboration with the Downtown Improvement District's Fright Night celebration. Valerie Wallis emceed the event with ALT 99.5 & 102.3 sponsorship. Mad Anthony Brewing Company also sponsored the event with food and beverage service.

## Pumpkin Path

The Exploration Garden was thoughtfully decorated in autumn shades of pumpkins, gourds, corn shocks, hay bales, tri-color dried corn, and a festive wagon too! Four main photo backgrounds dotted each quadrant of the garden while arches, lined paths, and a woodland-animal search guided Conservatory guests throughout. Accented by new solar lights, the beautiful arrangements of mums, ornamental cabbage, and grasses rounded out this annual display.

## Landscape & Horticulture

### Mediterranean Beds

The Mediterranean Beds on the north end of the Showcase House received refreshing in 2022, with structural pruning and major additions to the collection which is procured and executed by the Horticulture team. The result is a fresh and horticulturally relevant display for visitors to enjoy.

### Tropical House

Major Tropical House pruning and collection management in 2022 has resulted in a refreshed collection at the center of the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory. The Tropical House in many ways is a crown jewel within the facility and the changes made in 2022 have improved light transmission for the further development of an understory that will continue to thrive and delight visitors in the space.





## Exploration Garden

Over 1,000 perennials were planted on the property in 2022 and will take form in Spring 2023 to transform the Exploration Garden appearance and educate visitors on ideal zonal plantings. The tree canopy in the Exploration Garden was also trimmed in early 2022 to accommodate this major change. Invasive species have been targeted for ongoing removal by the Horticulture team.

## Front Landscape

The completion of the front landscape as an oasis for pollinators in 2022 followed the 2021 completion of Megafloia. The front landscape is a sustainable landscape that more intentionally complements the entryway to the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory and the aesthetics of a growing downtown.

## Facility Maintenance & Improvement

### Discovery Corner

The Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory's Discovery Corner gained a comprehensive vision with the installation of interactive wall surfaces. Visitors to the Discovery Corner now enjoy a more spacious, permanent, and interactive children's area that more intentionally serves visitors to the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory.

## HVAC Controls & Valves

Major progress has been made to address HVAC controls and valves at the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory as a first-step towards stabilizing temperature control abilities within a greenhouse setting in the interest of preserving the plant collection and improving visitor experience. The project is slated to be fully complete in January 2023.

## Conservatory Staff

Beyond observing record revenues, the team at the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory really hit its stride in 2022, with a fully-staffed crew for the majority of the year. Progress made at the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory in 2022 could not have been possible without a growing, positive team culture.

In addition to the seventeen full and part time staff members at the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory, over 165 active volunteers offered nearly 9,000 service hours to the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory and Lawton Park Greenhouse. The contributions made by the volunteers amount to the equivalent of four full-time staff persons and over \$270,000 in labor value each year. It would not be possible to operate the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory at its current level of efficiency without the valued contributions made by its volunteers each year.





## Board of Park Commissioners

# Foellinger Theatre

The 2022 season was a year of heading back to normal as much as possible while COVID 19 was still very much on the minds of touring bands. There were still several times when the local crew was required to be masked and even more where touring crew and bands needed to be catered to in separate facilities from local crew and opening bands. Even as the vestiges of the pandemic remained, we were very lucky at Foellinger Theatre to be mostly unharmed by it. In fact, the only concert to be cancelled in 2022 was the first Fort Wayne Area Community Band scheduled for the season. That June concert was cancelled because of the extreme heat, and not due to the pandemic.

Foellinger Theatre was able to open in the month of May for the first time in three years in 2022. Indiana University Fort Wayne chose Foellinger Theatre to celebrate their very first graduation since separating from Indiana Purdue Fort Wayne. On the second Friday in May, 669 guests assembled to watch the new graduates walk across the stage to receive their diplomas. Indiana University Fort Wayne officials were pleasantly surprised by the overwhelming turn out for the graduation ceremony.

Air Supply played the first commercial concert of the 2022 season to 1,347 fans. After their original 2020 concert date was cancelled due to the pandemic, the band was finally able to make a return visit to the Foellinger Stage. We quickly geared up for the two-day Middle Waves Music Festival followed immediately by Jackson Browne who rolled through the music of his 56-year song writing and performing career without ever running on empty. Return visits from favorites ZZ Top and The Guess Who rounded out our classic rock concerts.

Three new bands graced the Foellinger Theatre stage in 2022; Lake Street Dive and Five for Fighting each played in August, and Boston's lead singer Tommy DeCarlo reminisced about when he

played here with Boston in 2016, to finish the promoted season.

Foellinger Theatre also welcomed Melissa Etheridge and country music superstar Brett Eldredge to close the season. Along the way, we hosted the first ticketed Fort Wayne Philharmonic show in many years as "Jurassic Park with Fort Wayne Philharmonic" took the stage. The Philharmonic was pleased with the results, and hopes to bring a similar concert to Foellinger in September 2023. The year 2022 marked the first time Live Nation Comedy promoted a show at the theatre. They brought in comedian the 'John Mulaney: From Scratch tour". Mr. Mulaney typically performs in large arenas, but Fort Wayne showed great support when 2,288 fans came to laugh for an evening. The comedy tour's Fort Wayne stop sold the most tickets of any 2022 event.

Stayin' Alive a tribute to the Bee Gees, and Hotel California: A Salute to the Eagles returned as our promoted tribute series continues with the most popular events. Joining them was Brit Floyd, an accomplished Pink Floyd tribute promoted by Exceptional Artists.

The long-time free admission community concert series returned. The first concert date was canceled due to extreme heat

but the Fort Wayne Area Community Band came back for July and August events with some popular band music and even a special guest or two. We paired New Millennium Jazz Orchestra with renown jazz trumpeter Roger Ingram. Mr. Ingram recorded or toured with Ray Charles, Woody Herman, Maynard Ferguson, Tom Jones, Paul Anka, Quincy Jones and Frank Sinatra. His later career includes multiple albums with Harry Connick, Jr.'s big band, and many years performing with Wynton Marsalis and Jazz at Lincoln Center. Wisla Song and Dance, the dance troupe from our Polish Sister City of Plock, returned for a great evening of dance and culture. They invited the youth dancers of Fort Wayne Ballet this year to perform with them for a very entertaining evening. Fort Wayne Children's Choir returned for their annual "Choralfest" capstone. The eight ensembles that make up Fort Wayne Children's Choir easily entertained the 1,254 attendees. In all, the community concert series attracted 3,544 people to the theatre.

Foellinger Theatre became a licensed alcohol-serving facility classified as a Civic Center in the eyes of the State of Indiana Alcohol Tobacco Commission. We have always had Hall's Drive-Ins provide our alcohol service, but a phasing out of their catering division and our eagerness to increase our income has created an opportunity. We have returned to selling concessions after a seven-year hiatus, and we added alcohol sales. Profits were solid even considering that we needed to start nearly from scratch in purchasing concessions and refrigeration equipment.

The 2023 season is looking to be a great pairing of returning favorites and new events for our patrons to enjoy. We hope to continue to serve the citizens of Fort Wayne and the broader area with quality diverse entertainment as Foellinger theatre has for 73 years.



# Children's Zoo

## 2022 Accomplishments

The Fort Wayne Children's Zoo exists to connect kids and animals, strengthen families, and inspire people to care. We seek to touch as many people as possible with this mission and are proud to be the largest attraction in northern Indiana.

### Attendance & Special Events

In 2022, the Zoo hosted 601,427 guests. Special experience events were a hit with visitors of all ages including a new event called Dino Days that hosted 19,833 guests. Wild Zoo Wonderland, another new event saw 8,223 guests attend for this holiday-inspired family daytime event. Perennial favorite, the Wild Zoo Halloween, was the biggest of the events with 36,897 guests.

The zoo hosted a record number of private events; 50 birthday parties and 63 corporate picnics which increased guest attendance and revenue. Plans are underway to increase these numbers for 2023.

### Membership

Nearly 17,000 area households were Zoo Members in 2022, with membership sales coming in at 10% above our 7-year average. We also saw a 16% increase in renewals over previous years. "Members-Only" perks in 2022 included two Member Preview Days at the beginning of the season, special offers and discounts all September during Member Appreciation Month including free guest passes and rides, as well as free admission to Wild Zoo Halloween and our new winter event Wild Zoo Wonderland.

### Animal News

More than 1500 animals call the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo home. The residents are cared for daily by incredible animal care and health teams. As a part of the daily work of the Animal Care Specialists, these teams educate guests with more than 100 keeper chats weekly, access animal wellbeing, provide zoo animals with choice and control, train behaviors which allow the animals to assist in their medical care and provide

enrichment to elicit natural behaviors.

The 2022 Zoo season started with "Protecting our Flock" signs found throughout the Zoo. All bird species remained indoors behind the scenes due to a highly transmittable avian flu that was reported throughout Indiana, including Allen County. On the advice of state veterinarian and state health officials, the birds remained off exhibit until mid-summer.

The Zoo celebrated the birth of Raji, a clouded Leopard cub. His parents Raury and Sanji were paired by the Association of Zoos and Aquarium's Clouded Leopard Species Survival Plan (SSP) in hopes of this positive outcome. These SSPs are in place to create genetically diverse populations of animals to protect them from extinction. The Zoo participates in 63 cooperative species survival plans.

Tengku, the male orangutan at the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo, has a very special heart. In January, Zoo staff, along with an entire team of animal healthcare professionals, took a revolutionary step

in great ape cardiac advancements. In partnership with the Great Ape Heart Project, Tengku, was recommended to receive an Implantable Loop Recorder (ILR) device—a tool that tracks cardiac function when inserted through a small incision near his heart. Tengku was only the second orangutan to have a successful ILR device inserted. Now staff are able to scan the device and send information directly to his Keepers and to a Great Ape Heart Project Cardiologist for analysis.

The Zoo celebrated the long life of giraffe matriarch, Zuri, who died in late November days away from her 34<sup>th</sup> birthday. Zuri held the title as the oldest giraffe in North America for many years, which can be attributed to the excellent care she received at the Zoo. Zuri arrived in Fort Wayne in 1989 and quickly became a zoo favorite among both animal care staff and guests. Zuri greeted over 17 million guests and was an exceptional ambassador animal for this endangered species.





# Board of Park Commissioners

## Conservation & Research

The Zoo is a conservation leader, providing \$300,000 in direct conservation support with 30 conservation partners around the globe in 2022. The Kids for Nature Conservation kiosk continues to involve guests in conservation and allows them to vote among three projects with a penny which is provided by the zoo at the entrance. A portion of each ticket sale and membership goes to the Zoo's Conservation Programs along with Corks for Conservation event proceeds, employee giving, guest donations and the Wild Things Gift Shop "round up" program.

The Zoo participates in various research projects initiated by external and internal investigators that want to learn more about the animals that call the Zoo home. For instance, eggs laid by our zebra shark, "Valentine" have been submitted for a study that aims to learn more about their reproductive cycles and potential rates for parthenogenesis, or reproducing without a male present. As staff continue to learn and share knowledge, these amazing animals can thrive both under human care and in the wild.

Head Zoo Veterinarian, Kami Fox and Vet Tech, Sara Sloan represented the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo by participating in the Mariana Islands Avian Conservation (MAC) program in the South Pacific. This

important conservation translocation program for endangered native bird species helps to secure their long-term survival. The Fort Wayne Children's Zoo has been participating in the MAC program for more than 10 years.

## Construction & Improvements

In 2022, the Zoo was back in full swing with construction projects and maintenance. Red Panda Ridge construction led the way to reimagine one of the oldest untouched areas of the Zoo. This project is expected to finish up early 2023. A grand opening of Red Panda Ridge is scheduled for the summer of 2023.

Maintenance and capital improvement projects in 2022 included a new look at the front entrance with newly painted front entrance buildings and upgraded signs; Journey Office improvements and additions, Indonesian Rainforest Room upgrades and a new Saki Monkey and Agouti exhibit space, totaling \$1.3 million dollars.

## Donations & Fundraising Events

Last year was another strong year for Zoo fundraising efforts. Over 4,800 gifts were received totaling over \$5.3 million dollars. These dollars supported daily needs like animal care, maintenance work, conservation projects and exhibit renovations. We also launched a public fundraising campaign for Red Panda Ridge, which will

renovate our current red panda exhibit area, adding an additional red panda exhibit, new aviary, inclusive bamboo maze for children to enjoy and more. This area is set to open in the summer of 2023.

In addition to fundraising efforts through grant writing, direct mail efforts, monthly donation programs, legacy giving, Adopt-an-Animal and other programs, the Zoo once again hosted three major outdoor fundraising events for our 21 and older fans; Zoofari, Corks for Conservation, and Zoobilee – each of which sold out of tickets quickly.

Zoofari was held in June and featured sampling stations for food and beverages across the Zoo's exhibit areas. In addition to the 50 local and regional restaurants, craft breweries and artisan distilleries who donated all the food and beverages for the event, several bands donated services to help create a "wild" night for our 1,800+ guests. Attendees also engaged with our animal care specialists who hosted a series of Keeper Chats across all zoo areas and participated in a silent auction with one-of-a-kind zoo experiences and art made by our animals.

In July we held the Corks for Conservation event. This event features a progressive dinner with wine pairings and educational chats about conservation projects at each station. The featured program for this year's event was our partnership with the Turtle Survival Alliance. Funds raised at this event directly benefit our conservation programs.

Zoobilee closed out our fundraising event season in September. The theme for 2022 was "Adventure Awaits." Each time a child visits the Zoo they are on their own adventure and guests were asked to help create adventures for years to come. Guests enjoyed a cocktail hour, gourmet dinner, silent and live auctions and a special appeal.

Collectively, these three events, along with our Corporate Partnership Program, raised just over \$1 million toward keeping our Zoo the best it can be!



## Communications

Social media continues to grow at the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo. It is the number one communication vehicle for messaging guests and Zoo members. Facebook continues to be the Zoo's best platform to use to keep Zoo guests up to date and engaged with Zoo animals that call Fort Wayne home.

In the Fort Wayne Newspapers Reader's Choice Awards, the Zoo was again named the Best City Attraction, Best Local Attraction, Best Children's Entertainment and Best Family Friendly Event thanks to the community and their votes.

Conservation education continues to be a focus of the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo educators. In 2022 over 17,000 people participated in 739 Zoo education programs. Area school classroom visits totaled 549 and Kids for Nature Summer Camp hosted 1,266 campers who were connected to animals and the natural world around them by Zoo Conservation Educators.

Two-hundred sixty-two youth participated in the Teens for Nature Volunteer and Leadership program. They spent the summer at the Zoo participating in leadership activities, conservation projects, zoo keeping, interacting with Zoo guests and volunteering for 20,214 hours.



Volunteers help the Zoo fulfil our mission by actively engaging with guests during the season and helping behind the scenes during the off season. Four-hundred eighty-four active volunteers donated 38,902 hours with a value of more than \$1.2 million dollars (based on The Independent Sector's current value of volunteer hours).

## Community Relations

As part of the vision to be a "Zoo for All," Fort Wayne Children's Zoo worked on creating and carrying out a number of programs to move this vision forward.

- Formalized the Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, Inclusion and Belonging (DEAIB) Committee.
- Educated the team through another year of partnership with United Front Fort Wayne.
- Increased the Community Ticket Grants program; provided more than 15,000 tickets to over 100 local nonprofit partners serving children and families who face barriers to visitation.
- Provided a four-pack of tickets to hundreds of area schools and other charitable organizations to be used as auction items.
- Launched a capacity building project to better serve guests and employees

with disabilities. This initiative was supported by a grant from the AWS Foundation and a group from Leadership Fort Wayne and Greater Fort Wayne Inc.

- Provided scholarships for 22 campers to participate in our award-winning Kids for Nature summer camps and Teens for Nature volunteer program.
- This year we conducted an audit of spaces and areas we can make more accessible or use universal design to improve, created a new electric scooter rental program and partnered with Easter Seals on an employment program. We will continue to build on these efforts in the years ahead.
- Hosted Military Appreciation Day and provided free admission for members of our armed forces and their families. This event is traditionally held on Flag Day and in addition to free admission we encouraged our guests to create messages of thanks and support for those serving at home and abroad.

The Zoo provides superior animal care, exemplary guest service, and an outstanding experience for visitors while serving the community as it has since 1965. In 2022, it was again made clear: All employees are an important part of the mission and success of the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo.







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