

MKE Plays Update 3/4/2024

Fundraising - Private

Secured: \$4,523,759

Leveraged: \$190,000

Total: \$4,713,759

Fundraising - Public

Secured: \$6,690,073

Leveraged: \$500,000

Total: \$7,190,073

Projects:	Address:	District:	Status:
Arlington Heights Park	3429 W. Pierce	8	Completed 2015
Johnnie Mae Phillips Park	1800 N. 17th	15	Completed 2016
Marcus DeBack Park	2461 N. 55th	10	Completed 2016
Bev & Bill Gardner Park	6632 W. Hustis	9	Completed 2016
Enderis Park - Playground Only	2938 N. 72nd	10	Completed 2016
21st & Keefe	2105 W. Keefe	6	Completed 2017
Snail's Crossing Park	3050 N. Bremen	3	Completed 2017
William Ira Gore Park	1970 W. Olive	1	Completed 2017
Buffum & Center	2624 N. Buffum	6	Completed 2017
Foundation Park	3701 N. 37th	15	Completed 2018
5th & Randolph	3460 N. 5th	6	Completed 2018
Trowbridge Square	1530 S. 38th	8	Completed 2019
16th & Edgerton	5057 S. 16th	13	Completed 2019
31st & Galena	1624 N. 31st	15	Completed 2019*
Witkowiak Park	1656 N. 4th	12	Completed 2021**
Butterfly Park	3717 W. Meinecke	15	Completed 2021**
29th & Clybourn	2827 W. Clybourn	4	Completed 2022
29th & Melvina	3840 N. 29th	7	Under Construction
30th & Cawker	2929 N. 30th	7	Under Construction
Zillman Park	2168 S. Kinnickinnic	14	Under Construction
26th & Medford	2478 N. 26th	15	Planned 2024
18th & Washington	1825 W. Washington	12	Planned 2024
40th & Douglas	3929 W. Douglas	1	Planned 2024
Johnson-Odom	2470 N. 1st	6	Planned 2024
Marsupial Bridge	1737 N. Water	3	Planned 2025
Skate Park	507 W. Rogers	12	Planned 2025

* Playground completed in 2019. Additional improvements planned in 2024

** Playground completed in 2021. Additional improvements under constructio

Program Information

The Department of Public Works (DPW) operates and maintains 52 playgrounds for the City of Milwaukee. In 2015, 10th District Alderman Michael Murphy created the MKE Plays initiative to re-establish parks as a priority for local government and transform the city's most underutilized parks into enriching play environments. It also helped stabilize park operations by restoring necessary public investment and creating a new organizational structure within DPW. This entity, re-branded externally as MKE Parks, is responsible for the sustainable management of city recreational assets. To date, MKE Parks has raised more than \$4.5 million in private funding for reconstruction efforts at 26 parks throughout Milwaukee.

Everyone can benefit from the opportunities that parks provide. Parks allow for play that supports health, skill development, and creative expression. They allow for social exchange that supports intellectual growth, cultural awareness, and interpersonal connection. They allow for interaction with nature that reduces stress, anxiety, and depression. At its core, this project is about creating high-quality public spaces that are an authentic reflection of the needs, interests, and identities of the communities they serve.

MKE Parks seeks to accomplish its vision of high-quality playgrounds for all Milwaukee youth by:

- Matching private funds with public dollars.
- Involving community residents in the design and construction process.
- Encouraging the use of innovative park and play features.

Additional Talking Points:

- Our 2023 budget included expansion of parks staff within DPW, which will IMPROVE service quality and efficiency, while REDUCING operational costs.
- New staffing/positions will include Parks Manager, Parks Coordinator, and two Park Maintenance Technicians.
- We are purchasing all new 100% electric mowers, trimmers, blowers, and saws for our crew. We hope to purchase an electric vehicle as well.
- In 2024, we added the Bay View Dog Exercise Area to our portfolio, assuming new responsibilities from Milwaukee County Parks, but maintaining a partnership with them.
- In 2025, the City of Milwaukee will get its first public skate park. This is funded with \$1M from the Michels TIF.
- Planning for the revitalization of Swing Park is underway!

Honorable Members of the City of Milwaukee Common Council,

I'm writing today to communicate a change in the way we manage contributions to MKE Plays. In 2015, the council passed resolution #141658, which established the MKE Plays initiative, and provided DPW with the authority to accept and spend up to \$1M in contributions on these projects. Subsequent resolutions have expanded that authority to \$4M.

As our funding for park projects becomes more diverse, we now think it appropriate to make a distinction between personal donations, philanthropic contributions, private grants, public grants, etc. This will allow for better tracking of these funding sources more broadly while increasing transparency.

Moving forward, any public-source grants for MKE Plays projects will go through the traditional council authorization process. As we transition, I did want to make you all aware of grants awarded to the current Melvina Park expansion and reconstruction project. These include \$295,000 of EPA funding through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, and \$834,000 of MMSD funding awarded through the Fresh Coast Green Communities program.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to me with any questions you may have.