

SUMMIT METRO PARKS

2023  Annual Report to the Community

Enhancing Your Park Experience

SMP is committed to providing park amenities that enhance visitors' enjoyment of nature. With master planning underway for Silver Creek and Munroe Falls Metro Parks, staff converted each park's roadways to include new walking trails. At Silver Creek's Big Oak Area, new paving, restrooms and a trailhead were installed and lake docks were replaced. Several trails district-wide were sustainably resurfaced and reinforced and a new cricket field was added to Goodyear Heights Metro Park.

Collaborative Programming for All

In addition to programs promoting the Wild Back Yards initiative, SMP engaged with the Akron Black Artist Guild, Goodyear Hunting and Fishing Club, South Street Ministries and the Autism Society of Greater Akron to host dozens of unique events reflective of our diverse community of park visitors.

Protecting Natural and Cultural Resources

SMP began an urban coyote research project with the Akron Zoo. Together, we studied how coyotes are interacting with zoo assets and the public. Archaeological work continued at several sites to understand past use of our land, and hundreds of rare and endangered fish were propagated and released into natural habitats throughout Summit County.



Seeing More "Green"

Your park district is committed to leading by example for a sustainable future. With support from the Summit Metro Parks Foundation, SMP continued to make its events and operations more environmentally sustainable. The employee-led "Green Team" introduced composting to reduce landfill impact and greenhouse gas emissions from food waste, installed six e-waste recycling containers and supported trials of battery-powered tools and remote-use power generators to reduce emissions. ●

Connecting People to Nature

TO PRESERVE THE FUTURE



In 2023, Summit Metro Parks fulfilled its conservation-based mission through several exciting projects and programs for visitors. *The "Wild Back Yards" recognition program*, which encouraged residents to improve biodiversity

and address habitat loss through the use of native plants, allowed residents to earn rewards for making their outdoor space welcoming for local wildlife. The park district shared this program at its *annual Native Plant Festival* and through dozens of programs and events.

As part of a collaborative project of national significance, great progress was made on the effort to "*Free the Falls*" through removal of the Gorge Dam (*Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio*). Site work began in two Metro Parks (Cascade Valley and Gorge) to set the stage for the eventual removal of the dam structure and prepare the area for additional ecological restoration. And thanks to generous grant funding, residents will now enjoy a restored Sand Run Metro Park — with the multi-year project concluding in 2023. 🌿



AWARDS & RECOGNITION

- OPRA 1st Place – **Summit Lake Community Garden: Fresh Food, Learning and Empowerment**
- OPRA 2nd Place – **Restoring & Protecting Sand Run**
- OPRA 3rd Place – **Cycling Without Age**
- Akron-Summit Convention & Visitors Bureau Zenith Awards – **Best Photo Op (Cascade Valley Metro Park Overlook Deck)**

Summit Metro Parks™

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

Rev. Dr. Curtis T. Walker Sr. *Chair*
 Joel D. Bailey
 S. Theresa Carter
 Herb Newman
 Mark A. Spisak
 Lisa M. King *Executive Director*

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

975 Treaty Line Rd., Akron, OH 44313
 330-867-5511

By the Numbers –

Approx. 5.1 million total visits

87,017 nature center visitors

59,822 visitors assisted by customer service and rangers

17,977 participants in **1,272** programs

18,793 service hours contributed by **499** volunteers

\$1,500 raised by park rangers to serve nine children through the annual “Shop with a Cop” program



summitmetroparks.org

Ohio’s Second Oldest Metropolitan Park District

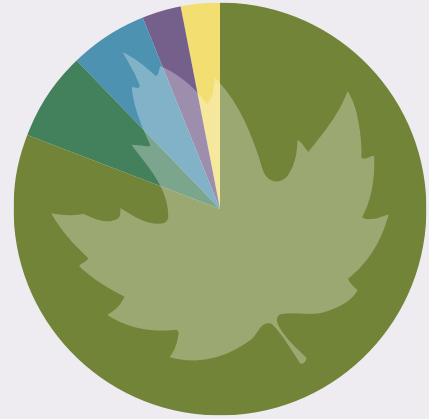
Established in 1921, Summit Metro Parks celebrated its centennial anniversary in 2021. The park district manages more than 15,000 acres throughout 16 parks, three nature centers and over 150 miles of trails, including 22 miles of the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail. Find us online at summitmetroparks.org.

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

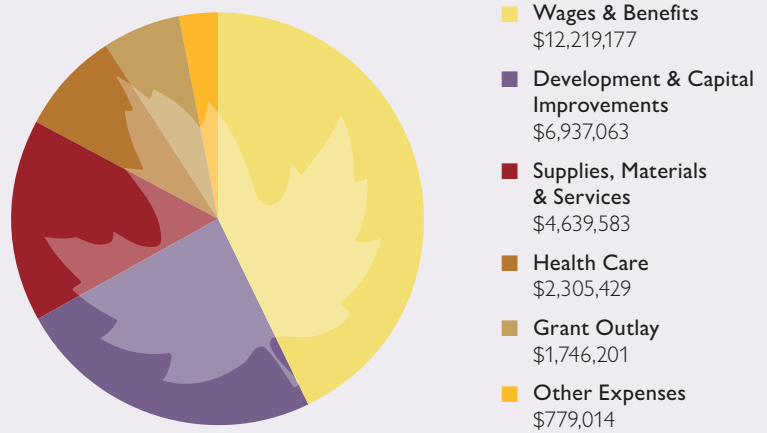
Financial Summary

2023 RESOURCES \$29,563,744

- Property Taxes \$23,913,475
- Intergovernmental Revenue \$2,118,006
- Grants* \$1,846,226
- Charges for Services & Merchandise \$883,845
- Other Revenue \$802,192



TOTAL EXPENDITURES \$28,626,467



Grant outlay may exceed grants received in any given year as reimbursement periods vary.

* Summit Metro Parks | Grant Support

- Clean Ohio – Sand Run Stream Restoration • Clean Ohio – Sand Run East End Restoration Project • National Park Service – ODNR – LWCF – Valley View Riverfront • Ohio Attorney General – Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission (OPOTA) Continue Professional Training (CPT) training funds • Ohio Dept. of Public Safety – Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) – Sand Run Restoration • Summit County Community – Sand Run East End Project

Summit Metro Parks Foundation | Grant Support

- Akron Community Foundation, William C. & Betty J. Zekan Fund, John A. McAlonan Fund • Akron Garden Club • Albrecht Family Foundation & Acme Fresh Market • The Allstate Foundation • The Andrea Rose Teodosio Memorial Foundation • Howard Atwood Family Fund • Bridgestone Americas Trust Fund • Buckingham, Doolittle & Burroughs Fund of Akron Community Foundation, Cleveland Fund, and Charitable Fund of Stark Community Foundation • Lisle M. Buckingham Endowment Fund • Lehner Family Foundation • Logsdon Family Foundation • Robert A. and Jean C. Meyers Family Fund • Synthomer Foundation

Summit Metro Parks & Summit Metro Parks Foundation | Sponsorships

- Albrecht Family Foundation & Acme Fresh Market • Akron Children’s Hospital • Buckingham • Cleveland Clinic Akron General • Country Maid Creamery & Orchard • Davey Tree Expert Company • Goodyear Hunting & Fishing Club • HiHO Brewing Co. • House of Plants, Inc. • Roetzel & Andress • Vertical Runner • Wayside Furniture