

A person is rowing a dark-colored boat on a calm body of water during sunset. The sky is filled with soft, orange and yellow clouds, and the water reflects the light. The background shows a line of trees on the shore.

A Year To Celebrate

2016 REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



**METROPARKS
TOLEDO**



4.7 million visits

93.5% favorability ranking
(*Community survey, Nov. 2016)

Middlegrounds:
First downtown
Metropark

12,000 acres

New Downtown Park is Part of Something Bigger

It rained, and rained hard. The new water management system at Middlegrounds Metropark was showing its strength on the day we gathered to celebrate the park's grand opening, September 17, 2016. The spillway into the new kayak cove became a waterfall!

But the dreary weather didn't dampen the mood inside a big tent where more than 200 people gathered to celebrate an historic day.

Middlegrounds is the fourth new park to open in the past two years. It's the fifth Metropark on the Maumee River, the second in the Toledo city limits and the first in downtown. It's also an important link in the park system's plan to site a Metropark within five miles of every resident of Lucas County.

That bold ambition is already paying off with record attendance at the 14 Metroparks and accolades from a statewide parks and recreation association. It's even brought national attention to the region. Last summer, the Toledo area made the US News and World Report Best Places Rankings at No. 2 in the "Top 5 Places to Live if you Love the Outdoors."

Most important, new parks and programs are making it more inviting than ever before to

Get Outside Yourself

Rain or shine.



Record
6 first place
honors



*Jack Hanna
Award for
Conservation*



11 Awards

Parks, Programs, Plan Earn State Honors

Metroparks was honored to receive a record six first-place awards, and 11 awards in all, from the Ohio Parks and Recreation Association in its annual Awards of Excellence contest for 2016.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

- Middlegrounds, 1st place, projects \$2.5 million or more
- Fallen Timbers Battlefield, 1st place, projects \$1 million to \$2.5 million
- Westwinds, 2nd place, projects less than \$1 million

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION

- 1st place, Strategic Land Acquisition Plan

MARKETING

- 1st place, redesign of MetroparksToledo.com

SPECIAL EVENTS

- Holidays in the Manor House, 1st place
- Outdoor Adventure Expo, 3rd place

PROGRAMS

- Fallen Timbers dedication, 1st place, historical and cultural arts programs
- Outdoor Skills programming, 2nd place, recreation programs
- My Mentor and Me, summer camp program in partnership with the Ability Center of Greater Toledo and the Lucas County Board of Developmental Disabilities, 3rd place, special populations programs.

JACK HANNA CONSERVATION AWARD

- Tim Schetter, director of natural resources



3 NEW PLAYGROUNDS



4.5 *miles of trail added*



Park Improvements

Highlights from a year of aggressive capital improvements to maintain the parks and deliver additional visitor services.

- New perimeter trail at Pearson North with boardwalk extension, observation tower and parking/trail access on Lallendorf Road.
- Isaac Ludwig Mill, Providence, phase 2 of a two-year project to stabilize the historic building.
- Improvements at the Brookwood property, a future Metroparks facility on Swan Creek Drive in South Toledo.
- Swan Creek Preserve Window on Wildlife renovation.
- Red Trail overlook replacement at Wildwood.
- New Juliette Low trail at Westwinds.
- New playgrounds at Wildwood Preserve, Swan Creek Preserve and Oak Openings Preserve.
- New kayak launch and Towpath Trail connection at Providence.
- Wabash Cannonball extension on River Road from Jerome Road to Ford Street at Side Cut, paid for with grant funding secured by the City of Maumee.
- New kayak access and canoe storage shelter at Silver Lake, Side Cut.
- New small boat access to the large quarry at Blue Creek.
- Work started on Oak Openings corridor trail at Secor

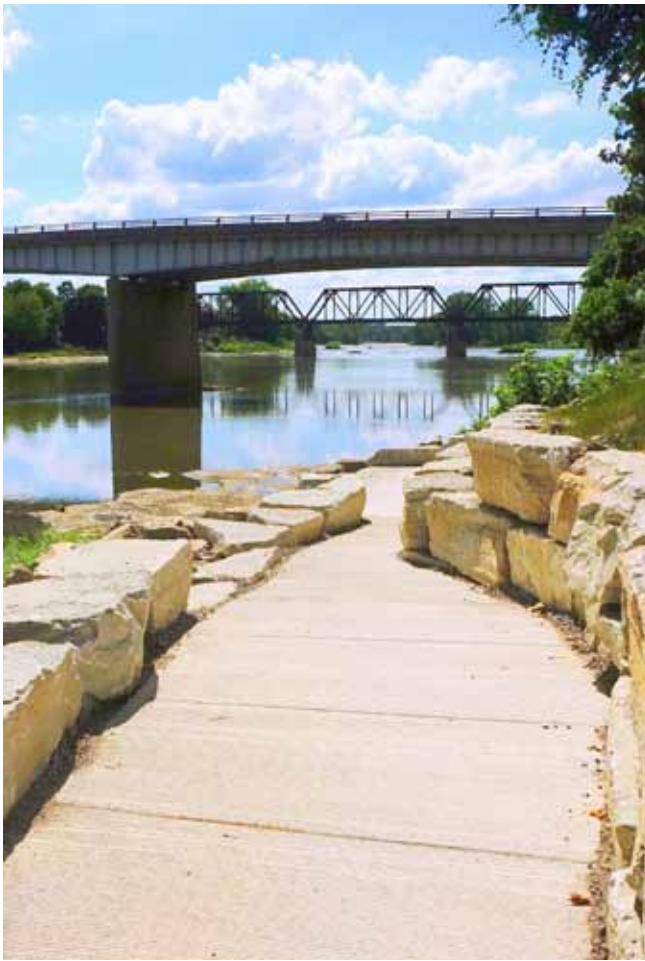


47,752

VOLUNTEER HOURS

172 Community
Events

2,108
members



Engaging The Community

VOLUNTEERS, DONORS

The region's first singletrack trail for mountain bikes is taking shape at Oak Openings Preserve, thanks to the support of the local bicycling community and 106 volunteers who gave 960 hours of their time to the project. Nearly half of the 11-mile trail was completed before winter. At Westwinds, the first stretch of the first Girl Scout Trail in the country – the Juliette Low Trail – opened in the fall. Ellie Leonard, who oversaw the work as her Gold Award project, cut the ribbon at a grand opening celebration.

These projects are just two examples of the lasting impression volunteers leave on the park system. Nearly 48,000 hours of volunteer time in 2016 equated to about 16 percent of staff time, stretching taxpayer dollars and delivering benefits to park visitors beyond what staff alone could accomplish.

Volunteers also served as ambassadors, making 20 appearances as the Metroparks mascots and putting in 567 hours at information tables at 172 community events.

Metroparks Members Grants allowed Metroparks to purchase a second roving interpreter vehicle, River Rover, a nature center on wheels used to engage park visitors and audiences at local festivals and parades. Members Grants also provided summer camps for 360 under-served youth through the Metroparks Connections Camps program. A new cabin for overnight accommodations at Oak Openings Preserve will open this spring, also thanks to the financial support of Members.



22,000
people toured Holidays
in the Manor House



83,640
people attended programs



Programs and Special Events

Nearly 84,000 people attended programs and special events in 2016. That includes 22,000 people who toured Holidays in the Manor House over nine days in December and four new special events.

A series of events spotlighted Hidden Gems in the Metroparks: Pearson North, the new Wiregrass Lake, the Providence Dam area and the quarry at Blue Creek in Whitehouse.

The annual Outdoor Expo in May invited visitors to try their hand at outdoor skills like archery and kayaking.

BugFest, the Happy Trails 5K and a series of nighttime 5K run/walk events were other ways people enjoyed their Metroparks in new and entertaining ways.



745 ACRES
wetland restoration



Preserving and Restoring Natural Areas

A new Metropark is taking shape in Jerusalem Township. Howard Marsh is slated to open in spring 2018 after completion of the first 745 acres of a 1,000-acre wetland restoration near Lake Erie. It is the largest project of its kind currently underway on the Great Lakes.

On the opposite end of the county, in Whitehouse, Blue Creek Metropark grew by 106 acres, including more than a mile of the namesake creek. Blue Creek, at 676 acres, is now the third largest Metropark after Oak Openings Preserve and Howard Marsh.

The total acres of habitat management increased to over 3,800 acres.

The park district's deer management program reduced the number of deer at Oak Openings and Wildwood Preserve by a total of 195 deer, resulting in a donation of 6,700 pounds of venison to local organizations that feed the hungry.

**METROPARKS
OF THE
TOLEDO AREA**

**BOARD OF PARK
COMMISSIONERS**

Scott J. Savage
President

Lera Doneghy
Vice-President

Fritz Byers
Vice-President

**METROPARKS
ADMINISTRATION**

Dave Zenk
Executive Director

Matt Cleland
Deputy Director/Treasurer

Financials

OPERATING EXPENSES

2016 REVENUES

Local Property Taxes	\$ 14.3 M
Donations, Federal/State Grants	\$ 6.8 M
Income From Fees	\$ 0.7 M
	<u>\$21.8 M</u>

2016 EXPENSES

Salaries/Personnel	\$ 9.1 M
Park Development/Major Maintenance	\$ 3.8 M
Park Operations, Utilities, Materials, etc.	\$ 4.4 M
Other	\$ 0.5 M
	<u>\$ 17.7 M</u>

LAND ACQUISITION FUND

Land Acquisition Capital Outlay	\$ 4.5 M
	<u>\$ 4.5 M</u>

BUDGET DOCUMENT WINS PRAISE

Metroparks received the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for its 2016 budget document from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada. The award “reflects the commitment of the governing body and staff to meeting the highest principles of governmental budgeting,” the GFOA said.

The Government Finance Officers Association is a nonprofit professional association serving nearly 17,400 government finance professionals throughout North America. The GFOA's Distinguished Budget Presentation Awards Program is the only national awards program in governmental budgeting.

A close-up photograph of a field of flowers. The background is filled with tall, thin stems of blue flowers, likely lupines, with small, bell-shaped blossoms. In the foreground, there are several clusters of bright yellow flowers, possibly buttercups, with green foliage. The text "Get Outside Yourself" is written in a white, cursive font across the middle of the image.

Get Outside Yourself



**METROPARKS
TOLEDO**

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

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