

Allegheny County Controller Chelsa Wagner's

# Allegheny County Parks

## Fact Sheet

March 2020



Allegheny County operates nine regional parks, which together comprise nearly 12,000 acres. These parks offer a wide range of amenities including wooded areas with nature centers, biking, and walking trails, picnic grounds, a golf course, the only downhill skiing available in Allegheny County, and other year-round sports and recreation facilities.

While more than \$40 million was spent on the Parks in 2018, sources outside County government and revenue generated in the Parks themselves covered more than three-quarters of that spending, meaning County property tax dollars covered less than \$10 million in Parks spending for the year.

### Revenue

The Parks are funded in large part through the Allegheny Regional Asset District (RAD), which receives one-half of the additional one percent sales tax in Allegheny County. In 2018, RAD provided the parks \$20.61 million in operating funding.

Another \$4 million has been provided to the Parks annually in recent years from Allegheny County's Hotel Tax, a 7 percent tax on hotel stays devoted to promoting tourism to the County.

The parks themselves generated another \$6.38 million in revenue: of that, \$1.29 million came from natural gas drilling royalties; \$3.37 million came from equipment & activity fees (like ski rentals and pool fees); and the rest came from food & beverage sales, and rentals of park shelters, stables, and other facilities.

### Spending

The 2018 operating budget for the Parks department was \$18.3 million: \$12.5 million of that went to salaries and benefits; \$4.3 million went to services (mainly utilities); and the rest went to supplies, materials, repairs and maintenance, and equipment.

The Parks Department had 458 employees in 2018: 317 seasonal and/or part time workers, and 141 full-time. Of those 458 employees: 309 worked in recreation, 114 worked in maintenance, 22 worked in the park rangers division, and 13 worked in administration.

Other County departments including the County Police, Public Works, and Facilities Management spent more than \$10 million on work in the Parks during 2018, which is recouped for the County's General Fund from the Parks' RAD funding and generated revenue.

In 2018, the County allocated \$6.3 million to capital projects in the Parks. While the primary source of capital spending is borrowing by the County, an additional \$965,000 was received from RAD for park facility and shelter improvements and restroom renovations.

(see reverse for details)



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## Allegheny County Parks Foundation

Allegheny County works with the Allegheny County Parks Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit established in 2007 to stimulate public investment in the Allegheny County parks system. The foundation organizes volunteers, raises money, and assembles other resources for park improvement projects. Projects currently in progress include ecological assessments of all nine county parks (four have been completed so far), restoration of The Cascades wading pools at South Park, habitat towers for migrating chimney swifts, and the Hartwood Acres Sculpture Garden.

An agreement between the Parks Foundation and Allegheny County commits Allegheny County to match funds raised by the Parks Foundation up to \$10 million for approved capital projects. As of December 2018, Allegheny County had matched, or committed to match, \$4.2 million of capital projects for the Parks Foundation; the 2019 Allegheny County capital budget allocated another \$4.5 million. Historically, Allegheny County has also provided \$250,000 in operating funds for the Parks Foundation each year: the current agreement runs through 2021, but the agreement can be extended for three additional one-year terms through 2024. ACPF's Board of Directors is jointly elected by the foundation's current board and representatives of Allegheny County.

According to the Parks Foundation's most recent audit report, "At December 31, 2018 and 2017 respectively, three donors accounted for approximately 67% and 42%, respectively, of total revenue and support; and two donors accounted for 93% and 96%, respectively, of total contributions receivable." Most donations to the Parks Foundations have donor-imposed restrictions: as of December 31, 2018, \$1.95 million of the Foundations \$2.25 million in total assets (87%) are subject to time or purpose restrictions.

### The 2018 Allegheny County capital budget allocated \$6.3 million for parks improvements and other projects.

- \$600,000 split equally for improvements in each of the nine parks;
- \$1,050,000 for park restroom upgrades;
- \$1,150,000 for parks facility repair projects;
- \$200,000 for parks masonry, electrical, plumbing, and other;
- \$400,000 for parks roof projects;
- \$250,000 for parks shelter projects;
- \$1,200,000 for pool repairs;
- \$1,250,000 for South Park Cascades Renovations.

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### Boyce Park

- 1,096 acres; located in Monroeville, & Plum; offers downhill skiing, tubing, wave pool, & skate park

### Deer Lakes Park

- 1,180 acres; located in Frazer & West Deer; offers fishing, an observatory, a spray park, & a disc golf course

### Harrison Hills Park

- 500 acres; located in Harrison; offers a Scenic overlook and environmental learning center

### Hartwood Acres Park

- 629 acres; located in Hampton & Indiana; offers an historic mansion, concert series, & cross-country skiing

### North Park

- 3,075 acres; located in Hampton, McCandless, & Pine; offers a golf course, kayaking, ice rink, pool, & dek hockey

### Round Hill Park

- 1,101 acres; located in Elizabeth Township; offers an exhibition farm & spray park

### Settlers Cabin Park

- 1,610 acres; located in Collier, N. Fayette, & Robinson; offers a wave pool, dive pool, tennis, & dek hockey

### South Park

- 2,013 acres; located in Bethel Park & South Park; offers concert series, golf course, wave pool, skate park, dek hockey, ice rink, & nature center

### White Oak Park

- 810 acres; located in White Oak; offers Wedding garden, bocce, volleyball, & horseshoes

South Park

