



City of Madison
Parks Division

2006
Annual Report

Madison Parks makes a big splash in 2006.



Irwin A. and Robert D. Goodman Swimming Pool

The debates and talks of a public pool in Madison date back over 60 years. The dreams of a pool finally became a reality on June 12, 2006, when Madison, WI opened its first public swimming pool.

Fundraising

Goodman Pool is truly a community pool. Not only did the community help determine the location and features of the pool, but they paid for it as well. To raise the money for the pool, the Madison Parks Foundation and the Ad-hoc Pool Finance Committee dove into action. Over \$4 million dollars was donated for this \$5 million dollar facility. Irwin and Robert Goodman donated approximately \$2.8 million, the Cooper Family Foundation donated \$250,000 and the Evjue Foundation, CUNA Mutual Foundation, and American Family Insurance each generously donated \$100,000. And to make sure the project did not belly-flop, over 2,000 citizens of Madison rounded out the fundraising effort by sending in checks ranging from \$1 - \$5,000; children sent in their weekly allowance, organizations sent in money from bake sales, and families sent in money just to make sure their children would have a place to swim. The balance was paid for from the City's capital budget.

Throughout the talks about the pool, there was always one constant theme— Madison needed a place where people and families of all backgrounds could come together and enjoy themselves. Built in a centrally-located, diverse neighborhood, and designed to meet the needs of many users, the pool exceeded everyone's hope of being a gathering place for all.

Attendance

Our attendance goal for the pool was 55,000 people. We exceeded that goal with 71,000 people visiting the pool this summer. On one hot day, over 2100 people came to the pool. Over 900 children took swimming lessons, of which 11% received full scholarships. In 2006, over \$16,000 of donated money was awarded to low-income families to help pay for swimming lessons and admission fees. Fund-raising continued throughout the summer. A perpetual scholarship fund was set up to generate over \$60,000 annually for swimming lessons, reduced admission costs and Life Guard training. The Madison Parks Foundation is



◀ *Goodman Pool on a hot July afternoon.*

currently seeking additional donations to keep this scholarship fund alive for years to come.

With the lines out the door, any question that Madison needed a public pool was put to rest. In fact it raised the question of when can the next pool be built?

Facility Design

The Irwin A. and Robert D. Goodman Swimming Pool is a 1000-person capacity facility, with 2 waterslides, 8 lane 25-meter lap area with diving boards, and a zero depth and shallow water play area for pre-school aged children. The facility also includes concessions, shower/changing rooms, including 4 family changing rooms, deck umbrella tables, rotating shade structures and a wet/sand play area. Goodman Pool won several awards and received several recognitions in 2006: Wisconsin Park and Recreation Association (WPRA) Outstanding Aquatic Facility Award and the Wisconsin Concrete Masonry Association Presidential Award. In additions, Irwin and Robert Goodman received the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Humanitarian Award for providing the impetus to have this pool built, and for all of their good works and generosity to our community. Goodman Pool was also featured in several national trade publications: Park and Rec Business, the Parasol Company brochure, and by Water Tech ads in the WPRA monthly magazines.

The surrounding neighborhood was taken into consideration in the design and location of the facility. The buildings' size and design were kept in scale to the neighboring houses and residential area. The buildings were made with structural block with varying finishes for interest and to minimize graffiti. The parking lot was wrapped around the facility so the neighborhood did not see one big parking lot from the road. To reduce concerns of vandalism, the lighting in the parking lot and in the fenced in facility was set to turn on if someone tripped the motion sensors. This feature made it easier for the police, and the neighborhood to keep a watchful eye on the pool. In keeping with the Parks Division's mission of protecting the natural environment, detention ponds planted with wetland species were installed around the facility to capture the building, pool deck and parking lot run-off.

Alternative and public transportation were also accommodated. A public bus stop was added next to the pool and a connection was added to the popular walking and biking path. Community groups organized a couple of walks from surrounding neighborhoods to demonstrate the safe walking route.

The unique and colorful shade structures were chosen with a rotating feature, allowing for maximum sun protection and minimizing clutter on the pool deck by needing only one post. The concession area also has the rotating shade structures in both the reservable 'cabana' areas and the public concession area. The concession building was also designed for walk-up business from the adjacent popular softball and soccer complex.

Many public facilities that are built with donated money install a "Donor Wall." In keeping with the uniqueness of the facility, instead of a wall, the donor recognition plaques were incorporated into concrete lounging pieces. This area provides opportunities for impromptu seating, lounging and playing.

Goodman Pool was awarded a \$75,000 arts grant, which was used to commission an artist to create an entrance gate. The piece chosen was called "The Ripple Effect." That piece of art was used in turn as the inspiration for the creation of the facility's logo. The drop of water symbolizes the gift of the pool, and the two rings around it symbolize the two Goodman Brothers. The gift of this one pool has had a ripple effect in the Madison community. Irwin and Robert Goodman say it best in a recent statement, "Madison's first community pool has clearly become a center for bringing people of different economic, racial, and ethnic backgrounds together-helping to unite us as one community to the benefit of all."





Forestry Program

- Planted 2,647 street trees and increased street tree diversity with Kentucky Coffee Tree, Tatarian Maple, Turkish Filbert, Ironwood, Autumn Blaze Pear, Danada Charm Elm, Miyabe Maple and Armstrong Maple.
- Awarded Tree City USA designation for 17th year.
- Celebrated Arbor Week with eight Madison elementary schools, the Mayor and four alderpersons.
- Processed over 3,700 work requests. One major storm on July 20, 2006 yielded 500 customer calls.

Conservation Parks

Implemented a new program of hiring private contractors to use forestry mowers (which can mow down woody plant growth up to 4 inches in diameter) to clear large areas dominated by exotic shrubs. Using this method staff was able to clear 6 acres of brush in a prairie remnant at Prairie Ridge Conservation Park, 6 acres in an oak savanna at Edna Taylor, 5 acres of woodland at Turville Point, and 4 acres under an oak savanna at Prairie Ridge. Stump resprouts were treated with a foliar application of herbicide, followed by a seeding of native grasses and forbs. Using these techniques enabled staff to restore large areas in an economically and ecologically sound manner.

Low Mow Park Meadows

One of the Madison Parks Division's planning goals is to achieve a balance in the park system of 2/3 active park areas such as mowed play fields and 1/3 natural park areas such as woods, prairies and meadows. In recent years all new parks have included unmowed, natural areas. In 2006, the Parks Division added an additional 100 acres of previously mowed turf to the already existing 700 acres of park meadows. The new low-mow meadow areas were on hillsides, lowlands and among tree clusters. These areas were difficult to mow and required additional staff time.

With expanding parklands, rising fuel costs and shrinking budgets, the conversion to low-mow meadows and prairies had many undeniable benefits: less use of fossil fuel, creation of an improved infiltration system for storm water run-off, improved habitat for animals and insects, and the opportunity to re-install native plant communities, thus increasing the plant diversity in our community.



*Top: Arbor Day Celebration at Bordner Park
Bottom: Low Mow Meadow at Kennedy Park*



Warner Park Community Recreation Center

- 269,565 visitors – a 2% increase from 2005. This was the smallest percentage increase in 7 years. Facility participation is leveling out as facility prime time space is at maximum utilization. However, the Exercise Room set a new record for participants, with 32,318 admissions.
- 1,246 reservations, of which 556 were free.
- Hosted nine Middle School Socials with approximately 265 middle school students attending.
- Provided over 360 hours of free gym time to the North East Side Youth Basketball Program. This program serves middle school-aged children, 80% minority, from Madison's north side.
- Conducted two "Free Fitness for Food" campaigns yielding 650 lbs of food for the local food pantry.
- Received an Achievement Award for Excellence in Food Safety and Sanitation from the Department of Health.
- Revitalized the landscaping in front of the exercise room. Staff extends a special thanks to the Mendota Gardeners.

Olbrich Botanical Gardens

- Olbrich Botanical Gardens was certified as a Travel Green Wisconsin destination with 83 points.
- There were 246,629 visitors, 25,880 hours donated to the Gardens by 1,265 individual volunteers and 9 groups of volunteers, and 1,441 uses of meeting rooms by various organizations and private renters.
- Completed a successful leadership transition in 2006.

Golf Program

2006 marked the fourth year in a row that rounds were down and the golf program did not make a profit. Rounds of golf in 2003 were 112,397 and in 2006 rounds were down to 90,380. The present market conditions is great for the golfers in the Madison area, as prices are being kept low to attract golfers and the conditions of the courses have never been better. Golf staff worked on the balance of reducing expenses while maintaining a high level of customer service.

Also in 2006, Madison Gas & Electric worked on a storm water infiltration pond located in Odana Hills Golf Course. The environmental benefits of the project are many, including better ground water infiltration and better nesting environment for wildlife. The project did, however, negatively affect cross-country skiing in the winter at Odana Hills and golf play into the spring and summer.



◀ *Top: Fun times at Warner Park Community Recreation Center
Bottom: Blooming Butterflies at Olbrich Botanical Gardens. Photo by Kai Skadahh*



Special Events

Hosted 220 special events on the State Street/Mall Concourse area and other city streets; including 33 Podium events and 61 neighborhood block parties. There were 1565 Park Shelter reservations; of which 116 were park special events and 256 were for Gates of Heaven. The special events ranged from 50 – 300,000 participants.

Recreation in Madison Parks

- 1750 soccer games, 1500 softball games, 2,641 tennis matches, 394 ultimate frisbee games, 191 kickball games, 95 football games and practices, 43 rugby games, 37 lacrosse games, 42 cricket match dates, 249 baseball games, 64 t-ball/coach pitch games, 557 playgrounds and day camps, 1 basketball tournament and 1 Australian rules football game.
- Beach user numbers rebounded slightly from the previous year, but continued on the downward trajectory evident over the past 2 decades: **1987:** 255,922; **1992:** 103,044; **1997:** 51,078; **2002:** 48,945; **2006:** 34,578.

Financial Support

Received financial support of \$39,000 from numerous individuals and neighborhood associations to improve their neighborhood parks. This support included: \$10,000 for Wexford Park, \$4,600 for a pier along the Yahara River, \$2,500 for Eken Park, \$3,000 for Lucia Crest Park, \$1,350 for Spring Harbor Park, \$1,300 for Carpenter-Ridgeway Park, and \$1,255 for Lucy Lincoln Hiestand Park. The Madison Parks Foundation ended 2006 with \$389,000 in total gifts.

Park Projects

- New Parks and expanded parkland: Opened 4 new parks in 2006: Veterans Memorial Park, Secret Places Park, Sauk Heights Park and Churchill Heights Park. The funding to expand Thut Park was secured and the planning process with the neighborhood began. Purchased a parcel of land adjacent to Edward Klief Park and purchased a parcel along Starkweather Creek along Blettner Group Blvd.
- Began work on the \$5.5 million Goodman Park Maintenance project. The post-World War II building was not up to code for employees, nor did it provide sufficient space needed for Parks maintenance operations.



◀ *Top: Soccer Game at Reindahl Park
Bottom: New climbing net at Wexford Park.*

Halloween on State Street 2006

For the past several years, Halloween on State Street has occurred as an unsponsored, relatively unstructured event. Since 2002, this annual “party” has ended with some level of violence and property damage, requiring law enforcement personnel to deploy pepper spray in an effort to quell the disturbance. Additionally, the public cost of the Halloween events continued to rise. In 2005, nearly \$600,000 was spent by government agencies that assisted in the policing of the event.

After Halloween 2005, the Mayor and City staff began considering alternative approaches to address the problematic aspects. The Mayor identified three principal goals: (1) improve the safety of the event; (2) recover some portion of the public cost; (3) address the over-consumption of alcohol and the use of illicit drugs.

What was different?

- Participants shared in the cost. In 2006, participants shared the burden of the expense by paying \$5 for admission to the State Street area on Saturday night.
- Offered constructive alternatives to alcohol. 2006’s event featured music and food to create alternative and constructive activities for participants. There were two stages inside the State Street area and food vendors on the Library Mall.
- Re-branded the event. Thanks to the generosity of Ad2 Madison, an organization of young advertising professionals, and the work of the Halloween Action Committee, a student organization from UW-Madison, the City worked to re-brand Halloween as a safe, positive, festive event.

How did the plan work?

State Street was fenced off beginning at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, October 28. Between the hours of 7:30 p.m. on October 28 and 1:30 a.m. on October 29, anyone wishing to enter the fenced area needed to show a ticket and have their hand stamped. Once their hands were stamped, participants were allowed to exit the fenced area and re-enter it up until 1:30 a.m. on Sunday, October 29 by showing their hand stamps to the gate attendants. Tickets were sold in advance on the Library Mall, and were sold at four different State Street locations on the day of the event. Access to the event was available through nine gates located from the Capitol Square to Lake Street. Those who lived or worked in the gated area were given free tickets.

The end result was a big success. Over 40,000 people attended the event. Arrests by the police were down considerably from previous years. The event ended peacefully.

Parks Division Staff Involvement

There were many different departments and employees involved in the planning and implementation of the event plan. The focus of this report is strictly that of the Parks Division’s involvement.

Over 1,756 hours of Parks Staff time was spent attending meetings, making preparations, selling tickets in advance and working on the day of the event. The Parks Division staff was responsible for selling and dispersment of the tickets, contracting and providing security for the entrance and exit gates, working with Public Works on fencing, portable toilets, and stage set up, dissemination of information to the public and media, and the not-so-trivial task of cleaning up after the event.

Staff was very proud of the work we did to help make this event a success. With very little lead time and limited resources, staff was able to design and implement a ticketing sales and dispersment system, fashion mobile ticket booths from Parks maintenance vehicles, provide tremendous input into the placement of the fences, gates, stages, and portable toilets, provide accurate and hourly ticket sale numbers to the safety teams, and worked early morning hours cleaning up State Street on both weekend mornings getting State Street clean and ready for business. The only mark on the event was that the security firm that was hired to staff the entrance gates did not fulfill the terms of their contract. Additional public works staff volunteered to fill in the gaps and worked as security for the event.

While the success of the Halloween event depended on the city as a whole, the Parks Division played a pivotal role. Staff was given a difficult assignment, but rose to the task.



 Mobile Halloween ticket booths made from Parks maintenance vehicles.

Madison Parks Overview

Madison is a unique city, built on an isthmus between Lakes Monona and Mendota. With over 255 parks and 6000 acres of parkland, Madison is known not only for its natural beauty but also for its abundance of outdoor activities.

The recreational opportunities are plentiful: championship golf courses, an award-winning public pool, soccer and softball fields, bike paths, a botanical garden, conservation parks, a community-recreation center, and, of course, the lakes – complete with beaches and boat launch/storage areas.

We invite you to enjoy our scenic parks from dawn to dusk year round. You will discover why Madison is one of the top cities in the nation to live, work and play.

Diverse Responsibilities

The City of Madison Parks Division operates and maintains public park areas and facilities, city forestry, median strips and greenways, Forest Hill Cemetery, Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Irwin A. And Robert D. Goodman Swimming Pool, 4 public golf courses, 13 public beaches, 18 reservable park shelters, Warner Park Community Recreation Center, public boat launches and boat storage/mooring facilities, dog parks, conservation parks, athletic facilities, and the downtown Mall/Concourse facilities and events.

Parks Division Staff

The Madison Parks Staff includes 160 permanent staff, 250 seasonal staff and 2,500 volunteers who work cooperatively with the Madison community, Park Commission, elected officials, and City management to provide exceptional services to our community.

2006 Retirements

Thomas Gilbertson, Parks Maintenance Supervisor, 35 years
James Keleny, Public Works Leadworker, 42 years
Bruce Marvin, Parks Maintenance Mechanic, 35 years
Eugene Osborn, Forest Hill Cemetery Manager, 31 years
Nancy Ragland, Olbrich Botanical Gardens Director, 30 years

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