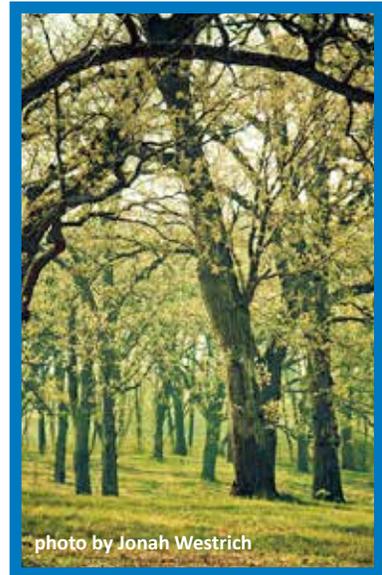


# 2013 Annual Report



MADISON PARKS DIVISION  
A DIVISION OF PUBLIC WORKS  
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**MADISON  
PARKS**

# Managing Our Community's Investments

## Central Park

Construction was underway for most of the year with the installation of the tabletop improvements to Ingersoll Street, plazas, pathways, lighting, irrigation, a new restroom building and other amenities for the park. Finishing touches will be completed in the spring of 2014. The design of the skatepark at Central Park is also underway, as well as the Few Street crossing; both are slated for construction in 2014.



Central Park Restroom

## Rennebohm Park Tennis Court Lighting Improvements

The existing lights at Rennebohm Park Tennis Courts were replaced with a much more efficient lighting system. The new lighting system is a big improvement, needing only 4 poles instead of 12, reducing energy costs by up to 50% and reducing trespass light by 70%.

## Dog Parks

A new off-leash dog park was approved by the Park Commission and designed and constructed at Odana School Park. Improvements were also completed to the entrance of the dog park at Quann Park.

## Tenney Park Maintenance Bridge

Staff worked with a bridge design consultant on a project that included removing an old concrete bridge that connected Thornton Avenue to the island at Tenney Park and replacing it with a new concrete bridge that allows maintenance staff to access the island with larger maintenance equipment. Extensive coordination was required with the State Historical Society and City Historic Planner as the entire park is on the National Register of Historic Places. The project was completed early this year. In addition, City Engineering designed and reconstructed Thornton Avenue, providing an improved entrance to the park and additional parking and pathways.



Tenney Park Bridge

## Bowman Park Lighting Improvements – Phase One

A new electrical distribution system was installed at Bowman Park for the softball and baseball field lights. The distribution system includes a new transformer, a lighting control panel and electrical conduit routed to the existing light poles. In Phase Two of the project new light fixtures will be added to the existing poles; this will be constructed in 2014.

## Reservoir Park Playground

The outdated play equipment was removed and a new playground was installed at Reservoir Park. A new accessible path was also included with the project. A portion of the funding was provided by Madison Water Utility.

## Hoyt Park Fence Replacement

The City of Madison replaced approximately 950 linear feet of fencing along the bluff at Hoyt Park. This included removing approximately 40 invasive, dead or dying trees along the fence line.

## Native Plantings

Staff designed and oversaw the installation of native plant restorations at Baxter Park, Giddings Park, Hoyt Park, James Madison Park and Mayfair Park. This included installation of approximately 3000 native forbs and grasses, and seeding approximately 2 acres of parkland with native prairie seed.

## Worthington Park

Staff has been working with the neighborhood at Worthington Park to make several improvements to the park. The old, deteriorated fencing has been removed, the basketball courts reoriented and reconstructed and the path system improved. In addition, the playground has been replaced with new equipment and surfacing.



Worthington Park Playground

# Park Improvements Continued . . .

## Warner Park Bike Path

Staff worked with City Engineering on a project to replace the bike path and bridges throughout Warner Park. The bike path was upgraded to meet current American Association of State Highway & Transportation Officials standards, and two bridges were replaced to meet these standards as well as ADA accessibility requirements. Landscaping improvements and benches along the path will be added in 2014.

## Tenney Park/Yahara Parkway

Staff continues to work with the Friends of the Yahara River Parkway on the historic restoration of the landscape along the Yahara. The Friends of the Yahara River Parkway assisted in the removal of smaller invasive species while staff contracted the work to remove larger invasives and provide native seeding on the southwestern shore of the Yahara River between Williamson and Rutledge Streets. The contractor also completed installation of native forbs and shrubs, along with removal of reed canary grass along the southwestern shore of the Yahara River between East Washington Avenue and East Main Street.

## Park Landscaping

Staff designed and oversaw installation of landscaping at Baxter, BB Clarke, Burrows, Glenway Golf Course, Glenwood, Hammersley, Hiestand, James Madison, Linden Grove, Lost Creek, Marshall, Odana Golf Course, Olive Jones, Reindahl, Tenney, Thut, Warner and Westmorland Parks and several Madison Water Utility sites. Improvements included the planting of trees and shrubs, improved landscaping around park signs and other projects.

## Splash Parks

Staff procured consultants to design a new splash park for Reindahl Park and a new splash park for Elver Park. Product systems were evaluated, neighborhood meetings were held and equipment was selected. Designs have been completed and contract documents prepared. Both projects will be bid as one contract in early 2014 for spring/summer construction.

## James Madison Park

Walkway improvements along the seawall were completed as part of Engineering's annual sidewalk contract, as well as an evaluation of the shelter to bring it up to current code requirements and options for other improvements. Staff also held a public input meeting to hear from the neighborhood about improvements for the park.

## Warner Park Boat Launch Dredging

The Warner Park boat launch was dredged at the end of 2013. The launch area was dredged to a depth of 5 feet below summer minimum. The dredged material was trucked to Cherokee Marsh where it was used to fill in a borrow pit. Once re-graded, the fill site will be planted in prairie.

## Blackhawk Park

Staff worked with the area neighborhood association in selecting and locating a new shelter for Blackhawk Park. The installation of the shelter was completed in December 2013. In addition, a recurring ponding problem on the playground was addressed. Staff designed and oversaw construction of a new drainage system to alleviate the problem, along with additional improvements to the playground including new playground surfacing, border timbers and the installation of two new play features.

## Other Improvements to Parks

A new shade structure was installed at Cypress Spray Park in time for the summer season. The backstop was replaced at Waltham Park, and striping and other improvements were completed for the basketball court at Lucia Crest Park as well as the reconstruction of basketball courts at Acewood and Droster Parks. Swings were installed at Eastmorland Park and an old play structure removed. Land surveying to support all our park development projects was conducted, and two Certified Survey Maps were completed to consolidate and adjust property rights for Highland Manor Park & Lisa Link Peace Park.



Warner Park bike/ped bridge



Splash Park



Blackhawk Park shelter

# Strengthening Community Through Programs



Madison Parks was recognized with TWO Silver Star awards from the Wisconsin Park and Recreation Association:

- Miracle Moonlight Movie
- Hayride Program

## ICE SKATING LESSONS

Madison Parks hosted outdoor ice skating lessons for youth and adults at Tenney and Elver Parks. These lessons began in January and lasted 7 weeks. There were 69 participants in six different classes offered at each location. It was a great way to introduce new participants to ice skating and the beautiful outdoor Madison Parks ice skating rinks and lagoons.

## RIDE THE DRIVE DOWNTOWN & WESTSIDE

Madison Parks hosted two Ride the Drive events: Ride the Drive-Downtown on June 2 and Ride the Drive-Westside on August 18. This carefree, car-free event featured a 3-5mile loop along some of the city's most beautiful streets Downtown and on the Westside in the Hill Farms neighborhood. Over 20,000 Downtown and 12,000 Westside participants of all ages enjoyed Ride the Drive this year.

## MADISON MEET & EAT

After a very successful first year in the Meadowood neighborhood, Madison Meet and Eat expanded to the city's south and north sides in 2013. This unique event brings a collective of Madison's food carts and vendors to local neighborhoods to encourage friends, family and the community to connect and enjoy a night out. The success of this program has led to a number of neighborhood-organized food cart events.

## WARNER PARK COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

WPCRC continues to serve the Northside by organizing and sponsoring many family events. The quarterly Sunday night suppers provide an excellent venue for families to get together, meet new and old friends, and enjoy a meal together. In 2013, the Center provided meeting space for 131,025 customers including a youth summit and a very successful youth basketball program.

## MADISON PARKS VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Madison Parks volunteers continue to donate their time and skills to our community's parks. In 2013, over 1,000 people donated 10,000 hours in over 70 of our parks. Many of the projects were in conjunction with the annual Earth Day Challenge, Adopt Ice Partnerships or through their companies or place of worship.



## MOONLIGHT MOVIE SERIES

Madison Parks kicked off a new program in 2013: Moonlight Movie Series. The movies were co-hosted by the Madison Mallards, sponsored by Zimbrick Honda and in celebration of the 10 year anniversary of the Madison Parks Foundation. The Moonlight Movies series began with a miraculous start at the Tenney Park ice skating rink for the outdoor showing of the movie "Miracle" and the chance to meet 1980 Olympians Mark Johnson and Bob Suter. This particular event won a Silver Star Award presented by the Wisconsin Park and Recreation Association. The movie series continued throughout the summer and fall with three additional movies at Olbrich Park, Goodman Pool, and Garner Park, as well as three movies shown by the Mallards at the Duck Pond.

# Exceeding Expectations Through Innovations

## MADISON PARKS PLAYGROUND RENEWAL

For the last several years, Madison Parks has been ranked #1 in the nation for playgrounds per capita (Trust for Public Lands, [www.tpl.org](http://www.tpl.org)). Madison Parks has over 170 playgrounds or 7.1 playgrounds per every 10,000 residents. While it is a great benefit to our community to have so many options for their families to play, unfortunately over the years the playgrounds have begun to show their age.

In 2013 Madison Parks began a strategic process to redevelop and renew these playgrounds. Madison Parks certified playground inspector created a priority list of playgrounds in greatest need of renovation. Staff held public input meetings to discuss the many playground aspects that need input from the community, such as the target age group of the playground, what type of equipment is needed and different safety surfacing options.

Reynolds, Nakoma, Eastmorland, Worthington and Reservoir Parks playground improvements were the first to go through this new process. In 2014 and beyond, staff anticipates 10-20 playground renovations each year.

## MAKING OUR OWN PLAYGROUND MULCH

Madison Parks continues to be one of the nation's most innovative and green park divisions. The City of Madison purchased a new commercial quality mulcher as well as a Triax 2010 Surface Impact Tester which allowed Madison Parks to become the first parks division in the nation to create its own certified playground mulch in-house. The in-house mulch processing cuts costs, recycles city plant materials and increases the flexibility of the Parks Division.

## DISC GOLF

In 2013 Madison Parks introduced a new permit fee for Disc Golf players. This permit fee brought the adult disc golf program in line with other Madison Parks adult athletic user fees. The disc golf courses at Elver Park and Hiestand Park were showing the wear and tear of increased usage. The disc golf permit fees are used exclusively on disc golf course maintenance and improvements: a designated Madison Parks Ranger to provide maintenance, repairs and education; new locations and tee pads at Elver Park Holes 8 and 9; and revising new hole locations for Holes 14 and 16. New benches were installed at some tee locations and the courses were aerated and re-seeded.

## BIRD CITY WISCONSIN

Madison was recognized as an official 'Bird City' by the Bird City Wisconsin Project. Madison Parks worked in collaboration with Madison Audubon Society, the Friends of Cherokee Marsh and other Bird City Partners for this prestigious designation.



**GOLF MADISON PARKS** We faced a challenge right out of the gate: a long winter and rainy spring. Compared to 2012's early start and long, dry season, 2013's season was 40 days shorter. Despite the shorter season, we still saw an increase in golf rounds by almost 1,000! The number of golf leagues remained the same. We even added two new fall leagues! The youth golf program The First Tee increased from 138 youth participants in 2012 at just one of the city golf courses to 266 youth participants in 2013 at all four courses. Madison Parks created 55 new AFSCME Local 60 union jobs, expanded the youth golf development programs and offered competitive pricing specials that included green fees, cart rentals and in-house concessions. The Odana Hills clubhouse was remodeled in 2013, creating a welcoming atmosphere in the pro shop and concessions area. Staff worked with golf maintenance in developing design improvements for the HWY 12/18 Beltline landscape buffer at the Odana Golf Course related to the ATC construction. Improvements included landscaping, fencing and berms to provide a visual and sound buffer between the golf course and the Beltline Highway.

# Protecting Our Resources

## EMERALD ASH BORER CONFIRMED IN MADISON



In November 2013, City of Madison officials received confirmation of the presence of Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) on the north side of Madison near Warner Park.

The City of Madison has been working on its tactical response to EAB since 2008. An Emerald Ash Borer Taskforce, including representatives of Madison Parks, Forestry, Mayor's Office, City Streets Division and City Fleet Division was created. Its job was to coordinate assessment of the EAB threat, plan various response strategies, review the latest research and act to mitigate impacts on the city's tree canopy, ensure public safety, protect the environment and contain costs. The EAB Plan was approved by the Common Council in September 2012 and updated in September 2013.

The City of Madison has an estimated 21,700 publicly-owned street (terrace) ash trees, an unknown number of ash trees in parks and thousands more on private property. In the Warner Park area where EAB is confirmed, there are over 2600 publicly-owned ash trees.

The following summary of the City's plans for public trees is based off the approved EAB Plan:



1. Madison Parks Forestry will continue to do branch sampling in the Warner Park area to find the epicenter of the infestation.
2. Over the winter, Forestry staff will remove publicly-owned ash trees (street and park trees) that are in poor condition and/or are located under power lines.
3. In the spring the city will implement a chemical treatment program for trees that are in healthy condition and over 10 inches diameter. The city will use the injection treatments rather than soil drench treatments to ensure the protection of ground and surface water quality.
4. Madison Parks Forestry will provide an "Adopt-a-Tree" program for private citizens to help save, at their own expense, a publicly-owned ash tree in a Madison park. The details on this program will be provided later in the winter as the treatment programs cannot start until spring.
5. Madison Parks Forestry will continue with branch sampling in all areas of the city to look for any other infestation locations.
6. Going forward, Madison Parks Forestry will replant publicly-owned trees in most locations. To support this undertaking, a specific fund has been created with the Madison Parks Foundation for those who would like to donate.



## LICENSING OF TREE CONTRACTORS

Arborists from the private sector will now be required to obtain a city license in order to prune, remove or treat city-owned trees in parks or along city streets. The license requires that the contractor is a Certified Arborist and has Pesticide Certification.

## BENEFITS OF STREET TREES QUANTIFIED

Madison's street tree inventory was evaluated by using i-Tree Streets (software developed by the USDA Forest Service), which is an analysis tool for City Foresters to quantify the dollar value of annual environmental and aesthetic benefits: energy conservation, air quality improvement, CO2 reduction, stormwater control and property value increase. For every dollar invested in street trees, the city receives \$3.35 of benefits in return. Madison's public street trees provide \$11,735,065 of annual benefits to the community.

# Conserving Natural Resources

## CONSERVATION PARKS CONTINUE TO FULFILL MISSION

The summer youth program with Operation Fresh Start was very productive. The Youth were instrumental in helping with restoration projects around the storm water ponds constructed in 2012 along Wheeler Rd. in the South Unit of Cherokee Marsh. Working with park staff, over 350 native shrubs and trees were planted. The youth also helped pull weeds in and near the ponds, and planted aquatic plants. At North Cherokee Marsh they dismantled a very old observation platform originally constructed when Madison Parks partnered with the Madison School District in the 1970s. After demolition, the OFS crew designed and built a replacement observation platform.

## NEW WINTER TRAILS AT YAHARA HILLS GOLF COURSE

Winter recreation opportunities for cross country skiers and snowshoers expanded with the addition of new trails at Yahara Hills Golf Course. Each user group was provided a separate trail route. Future plans call for expanding the ski trail network and remodeling the clubhouse to allow for winter use.

## HERITAGE TREE PROGRAM

Madison Parks Forestry initiated the Madison Heritage Tree Program. The program's goal is to recognize street and park trees for their contribution to our community. The Heritage Tree Review team submitted 3 nominations for approval by the Habitat Stewardship Committee. Finalists will be announced during Arbor Week.

## TREE CITY USA

Madison Celebrated 24 years as a Tree City USA. Madison Parks Forestry is responsible for 96,074 street trees on 1,742 lane miles. The crews planted 1,396 street trees, pruned over 12,747 trees, removed 2,421 trees and responded to over 4,233 customer requests.

## OLBRICH BOTANICAL GARDENS

- Attendance: 250,701 9:00a.m. – 4:00p.m.; plus event attendance
- Member Households: 6,226
- Facility Uses: 1,334 This includes public events & rentals
- Olbrich Education Programs: 511 programs with 10,747 participants (includes classes, guided and self-guided tours, school programs, and K-12 community organization programs)

### New Investments at Olbrich Botanical Gardens

The City of Madison and Olbrich Botanical Society funded a planning project for Olbrich Gardens' facilities to be conducted by the architectural firm HGA. Five well-attended public meetings were held from January to May, 2013 to evaluate and plan for the future needs of visitors and the Gardens. The final report is available at [www.olbrich.org/about/expansionproject.cfm](http://www.olbrich.org/about/expansionproject.cfm). When implemented, the visitor experience inside the visitor facilities will 'match' the visitor experience in the award-winning gardens.

Additionally, the City of Madison provided funding for a new roof and fully accessible restrooms at Olbrich Gardens. The roof provides a water-tight barrier and more insulation for improved energy efficiency. The restroom addition provides fully ADA accessible units for men and women with a much more tasteful décor that will complement many Olbrich events.



## JOHN OLIN TRUST FROM 1924 FUNDING TODAY'S PROJECTS

Olbrich's knowledgeable staff, particularly Director of Horticulture Jeff Epping, brought their expertise of sustainable and low-maintenance horticulture into several Madison Parks during the 2013 season. Low-maintenance horticultural improvements were implemented at Goodman Pool, Reindahl Park, Olin Park and James Madison Park. Olbrich staff worked in collaboration with Parks maintenance staff at those facilities to beautify high profile areas. In addition, Olbrich staff became more engaged with the ongoing maintenance of State Street's planters in 2013. Olbrich staff and interns have been planting State Street for years and for the first time shared in the maintenance. All of this additional work was made possible by the Olin Trust which funded the efforts.

# 2013 Madison Parks Division Annual Report

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We are proud to serve as a Division of the City of Madison  
Paul Soglin, Mayor  
Kevin Briski, Parks Superintendent

## MADISON PARKS VISION

To provide the ideal system of parks, natural resources and recreational opportunities which will enhance the quality of life for everyone.



*play*  
**MADISON  
PARKS**

