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Press Release

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METRO EAST PARK DISTRICT ANNOUNCES \$2M IN GRANT AWARDS FOR NEW PARKS, TRAILS, QUALITY OF LIFE IMPROVEMENTS IN MADISON AND ST. CLAIR COUNTIES

16 New Park and Trail Projects Awarded MEPRD Grant Funding, as District Surpasses 200+ Funded Projects for the First Time in its 20-Year History

MADISON AND ST. CLAIR COUNTIES, IL – The [Metro East Park and Recreation District \(MEPRD\)](#) today announced that its Board has **awarded \$2 million in grant funding under the Park and Trail Grant Program to 16 projects across the Metro-East**, each representing a new development or improvement to a public park, regional trail, or recreation facility within Madison or St. Clair County, IL.

MEPRD’s Board of Directors approved the [FY 2022 Park and Trail Grant Program](#) earlier this summer with a total program budget of \$2M, offering up to \$100,000 in grant funding for eligible park projects and up to \$300,000 for trail projects. In July 2021, MEPRD began accepting applications for regional trail development projects within its jurisdiction and park improvements located in statistically underserved communities. By mid-August, all but 3% remained of the \$2M program allocation. All remaining grant funds were depleted soon after the program’s second grant round began on September 1st, at which point any eligible applicant with any eligible project type could apply.

The Metro East Park and Recreation District partners with municipalities, counties, park districts, 501(c)3 non-profit organizations, and others within its jurisdiction, supporting various projects that align with and advance its goals and mission. Following the awards approved under this latest grant cycle, **MEPRD marks a major milestone to coincide with its 20th anniversary: surpassing 200+ projects funded (at least in part) by the district since its formation in November 2000.** Accounting for all projects ongoing and completed, MEPRD has committed more than \$34.2M in funding to date toward 216 unique projects, leveraging \$4.60 in outside funding for every MEPRD dollar invested.

“The Park and Trail Grant Program—or at least some variation of it—has been at the core of MEPRD’s identity for the better part of this organization’s 20-year history, inasmuch as it has historically served as the key catalyst for advancing our mission in bringing about a true regional system of high-quality, interconnected public parks and trails,” said MEPRD Grant Coordinator Cole Preston.

“The same can be said of this year’s program. From 4 ½ miles of new regional trail development, to the addition of a new park and indoor rec facility, to accessibility improvements to existing parks, these 16 newly awarded projects are set to bring several exciting enhancements to some of your favorite trails and parks. And in a broader sense, these projects signify meaningful improvements to recreation,

transportation, and overall quality of life for all who live, work, or stay in these two counties,” noted Preston.

All FY22 Park and Trail Grant recipients are listed below, along with each corresponding project title, project type, and grant award. Among the 16 projects awarded an FY22 Park and Trail Grant, 6 are classified as regional trail developments and 10 are park improvements; 7 are located in Madison County and 9 in St. Clair County. **For additional information including detailed project scopes, visit the interactive table of projects and map of projects at www.meprd.org/projects.**

FY 2022 Park and Trail Grant Recipients:

Project Sponsor: Belleville, City of

Project Title: East End Park Improvements

Project Type: Park Improvement

MEPRD Grant: \$29,000.00

Project Sponsor: Cahokia Heights, City of

Project Title: Cahokia Park Splash Pad Facility Improvements

Project Type: Park Improvement

MEPRD Grant: \$43,500.00

Project Sponsor: Edwardsville, City of

Project Title: IL-159 Trail

Project Type: Trail Development

MEPRD Grant: \$237,590.00

Project Sponsor: Godfrey, Village of

Project Title: Fred E. Widman Trail, Phase 3

Project Type: Trail Development

MEPRD Grant: \$300,000.00

Project Sponsor: Mascoutah, City of

Project Title: L&N Railway Trail & Trailhead

Project Type: Trail Development

MEPRD Grant: \$64,415.00

Project Sponsor: Madison County Transit District (MCT)

Project Title: MCT Schoolhouse Trail, Tunnel Under IL-157

Project Type: Trail Development

MEPRD Grant: \$300,000.00

Project Sponsor: Millstadt, Village of

Project Title: Field Lighting – Tuffy Field

Project Type: Park Improvement

MEPRD Grant: \$44,374.24

Project Sponsor: O’Fallon, City of

Project Title: Ogles Creek Trail

Project Type: Trail Development

MEPRD Grant: \$300,000.00

Project Sponsor: St. Clair County Transit District (SCCTD)

Project Title: Old Collinsville Road Trail, Phase 4

Project Type: Trail Development

MEPRD Grant: \$300,000.00

Project Sponsor: St. Clair Township

Project Title: Centennial Park Kid's Area

Project Type: Park Improvement

MEPRD Grant: \$29,815.60

Project Sponsor: St. Jacob Park District

Project Title: Half-Mile Loop Project

Project Type: Park Improvement

MEPRD Grant: \$21,026.36

Project Sponsor: Sugarloaf Township

Project Title: Sugarloaf Township Park North

Project Type: Park Development

MEPRD Grant: \$27,024.00

Project Sponsor: Swansea, Village of

Project Title: Schranz Memorial Park Improvements

Project Type: Park Improvement

MEPRD Grant: \$69,390.00

Project Sponsor: Wood River Township

Project Title: Kutter Park Pickleball Courts

Project Type: Park Improvement

MEPRD Grant: \$33,864.80

Project Sponsor: Wood River, City of

Project Title: Emerick Sports Complex – Baseball Field Renovation

Project Type: Park Improvement

MEPRD Grant: \$100,000.00

Project Sponsor: Worden, Village of

Project Title: Worden Recreation Center

Project Type: Park Improvement

MEPRD Grant: \$100,000.00

MERPD also continues to see growing interest in its community planning grant, a separate funding opportunity first introduced in early 2020. The FY 2022 Community Planning Grant Program is available to public agencies in Madison and St. Clair Counties, IL for the development or modernization of a community-wide master plan for parks or bicycle-pedestrian infrastructure. The grant can fund up to 40% of project costs, up to a maximum award of \$40,000.

MEPRD's Board of Directors, in August, approved a planning grant application submitted by the City of Edwardsville, making it the sixth municipality to take advantage of the program and marking yet another step forward for the regional park district as it strives to encourage all communities within its jurisdiction to plan for the future by creating, adopting, and maintaining a park and bike-ped plan.

Applications for the [FY 2022 Community Planning Grant](#) are being accepted by MEPRD on an ongoing basis now through May 31, 2022, or until funding is depleted, whichever occurs first. Prospective applicants can learn more about the Community Planning Grant Program, download the application, and check available funding by visiting www.meprd.org/planning-grant.

FY 2020 – 2022 Community Planning Grant Recipients:

Project Sponsor: Edwardsville, City of

Project Title: Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities Plan (*ongoing*)

Project Type: Bicycle-Pedestrian Master Plan

MEPRD Grant: \$24,964.00

Project Sponsor: Godfrey, Village of

Project Title: Vision 2020-2030 Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan (*ongoing*)

Project Type: Parks Master Plan

MEPRD Grant: \$16,000.00

Project Sponsor: O'Fallon, City of

Project Title: 2020 Citywide Parks Master Plan Update (*ongoing*)

Project Type: Parks Master Plan

MEPRD Grant: \$17,000.00

Project Sponsor: Roxana Community Park District

Project Title: Roxana Community Park District Comprehensive Plan (*Completed in 2021*)

Project Type: Parks Master Plan

MEPRD Grant: \$9,800.00

Project Sponsor: Smithton, Village of

Project Title: Smithton Shared-Use Path Master Plan (*ongoing*)

Project Type: Bicycle-Pedestrian Master Plan

MEPRD Grant: \$6,770.00

Project Sponsor: Troy, City of

Project Title: City of Troy – Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (*ongoing*)

Project Type: Bicycle-Pedestrian Master Plan

MEPRD Grant: \$24,000.00

The Metro East Park and Recreation District (MEPRD) was formed by voters of Madison and St. Clair Counties, Illinois in November 2000. MEPRD partners with local governments, special districts, and other jurisdictions for the purposes of developing and improving parks, recreational facilities, and trails throughout the two-county area. MEPRD also increases awareness and use of these amenities by providing related maps, data, statistics, and marketing materials. For more information, visit www.meprd.org

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