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Press Release

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LOCAL PARK DISTRICT RECOGNIZED BY GLOBAL MARKET LEADER IN GIS

MADISON AND ST. CLAIR COUNTIES, IL – Esri, the global market leader and leading international supplier of geographic information software with over 350,000 organizations served, often elevates the unique and meaningful applications of its mapping and spatial analytics software, ArcGIS, by its users to observe, learn about, and engage the world around them. The latest organization to receive recognition from Esri is one of the St. Louis area's own—the Metro East Park and Recreation District (MEPRD) in Illinois—for the District's use of ArcGIS as a platform to further its mission and deliver data-rich maps and applications for those residing, working, recreating, or staying in the Metro-East.

“Not only does MEPRD leverage useful parts of the ArcGIS like storytelling and content sharing capabilities, they also embrace new tools and emerging technology that enable them to satisfy their mission as a recreation district,” commented Shane Matthews, Esri Senior Product Engineer. Esri’s recognition of MEPRD’s work can be found at <https://www.meprd.org/Esri-Article>.

The Metro East Park and Recreation District, which marked its 20th anniversary earlier this year, has worked fervently in support of its mandate to develop, improve, and maintain a public system of interconnecting parks and trails throughout the District. “Much of what has been accomplished over the past twenty years can be attributed to MEPRD’s partners, i.e., local municipalities, park and transportation districts, and others already engaged in park and trail development) and our ability to support them on projects that align with the District's goals,” remarked MEPRD Grant Coordinator Cole Preston. “MEPRD is constantly looking for new and innovative approaches not only for advancing our cause, but also to make strides in key areas that complement park and trail development, like improving awareness, appreciation, and use of the fantastic recreational opportunities here at home... And what better way to do that than to bring our data to life in a way that is both meaningful and practical for the people who work and live in the Metro-East and greater St. Louis area.”

Utilizing Esri’s ArcGIS software, MEPRD supplies interactive park, trail, and related maps for public use, all of which are accessible from MEPRD's website, at www.meprd.org. The MEPRD Parks Map, for example, allows users to quickly glance at all the amenities found at a particular park in the two-county area (as well as the location of those amenities) or filter by a specific park amenity, like pickleball, to find parks that feature a pickleball court. The MEPRD Trail Map shows existing trails by type, surface, and

name and includes optional layers for future trails, as well as trail segments currently in development, catering not only to trail users but also to those who are planning future bicycle-pedestrian corridors and connections.

But MEPRD's GIS endeavors go beyond just park and trail maps. The District also contributes its park and trail data to Esri, biannually, via the Community Maps Program and makes use of the technologies offered by ArcGIS to increase awareness, appreciation, and use of local parklands such as by engaging the public with [story-based maps](#).

"We are proud of the work we have done and continue to do in the geographical information system space for the communities in our jurisdiction, and we are profoundly honored to have that work recognized by Esri," said Preston.

To explore all MEPRD's online maps, visit www.meprd.org/maps. For MEPRD's story-based maps, which are released weekly and feature general information, a photo gallery, and an interactive map for 20+ parks, nature preserves, and trails in Madison and St. Clair Counties, IL, visit www.meprd.org/featured.

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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 to develop and improve 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