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Press Release

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PROJECTS FUNDED IN PART BY MEPRD SURPASS \$100 MILLION

MADISON AND ST. CLAIR COUNTIES, IL – When it was created in 2000, the Metro East Park and Recreation District (MEPRD) set about on a mission: to develop and improve parks and trails throughout Madison and St. Clair Counties, striving to create an interconnected system. To accomplish their mission, MEPRD partners with local governments, special districts, and other jurisdictions working on such projects. As of 2019, their combined efforts total more than \$100 million in completed park and trail development in the Metro-East.

These projects add important value to each community and the region. The National Recreation and Park Association reports that America’s local park and recreation agencies generated \$154 billion in economic activity in 2015, nearly \$81 billion in value added, and more than 1.1 million jobs that boosted labor income by \$55 billion. Park and trail facilities not only help the local economy, they also help improve the health and wellness of individuals and the community itself.

MEPRD Executive Director Bryan Werner remarks, “Parks are often the heart of a community, offering space for recreation, socializing, and unity to residents. Every park or trail project represents an economic boost to the community, whether it’s jobs for professionals and youth, contracted work for vendors, or local spending on dining, lodging, entertainment, and products. It all adds up.”

Each year, MEPRD funds a Park and Trail Grant program to assist with the development and improvement of parks and trails in its jurisdiction. Since its inception, \$24,691,045 in grant funding has been awarded by MEPRD. A total of 128 projects have been completed and 42 projects are underway, including a variety of park improvements, playgrounds, sports fields/courts, lighting upgrades, pavilions, multi-use paths, pools and splash pads, outdoor fitness equipment, restrooms, and other recreation amenities. Over a half million citizens are served in the two-county area.

“Research has long shown that quality parks and recreation benefit the health, economy, and property value of a community,” notes Jen Cochran, MEPRD Grant Coordinator. “We’re proud to be part of a positive impact in the Metro-East.”

MEPRD encourages you to visit your local park or trail and take a moment to appreciate the value it adds to your life and those around you. To see a full list of the projects MEPRD has assisted with, go to www.meprd.org/projects.

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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 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