2016 ANNUAL REPORT

Valpo Parks

City Leadership

Jon Costas, Mayor

Sharon Swihart, Clerk Treasurer

Bill Oeding, City Administrator

John Seibert, Parks Director

City Council

John Bowker

Robert Cotton

Lenore Hoffman

Trista Hudson

Matt Murphy

Deb Porter

Diana Reed

Board of Directors

President –Timothy W. Warner

Christa Emerson-Borlick

E. Ric Frataccia

Mark Hardwick

Core Values

Boldy Proactive

Creatively Frugal

Honestly Accountable

Respectively Compassionate

Surprisingly Responsive

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

I am thankful for this opportunity to reflect and recognize some of the highlights of Valpo Parks in 2016.

It was the first full year of operations of the Central Park Plaza experience. Response to the facilities and the activities planned by Valparaiso Events, non-profit partners and Valpo Parks exceeded expectations with an estimated 225,000 guests served.

Working with City of Valparaiso Engineering and the Redevelopment Commission, the Vale Park West Pathway was completed and dedicated in November. The City now enjoys almost 20 miles of pathways.

Other notable projects begun in 2016 that will be completed in 2017 through private/public partnerships will be the renovation of Tower Park, the development of a new Horticulture Center, the creation and operation of an off-leash dog park, and the establishment of a joint City of Valparaiso/Center Township Park District.

As in every year of service, the Parks Department is only as effective as its many partners. We thank Mayor Jon Costas, City Administrator Bill Oeding, Clerk-Treasurer Sharon Swihart, the City Council, the City Leadership team, our Park Board, and our partners in the business and the nonprofit sectors who worked with us and our Park Foundation to provide extraordinary support. A special thank you goes to our talented and devoted full-time and part-time staff. It is a privilege to serve with them all.

We thank each of you for your patronage and support in 2016 and look forward to serving you again in 2017!

Sincerely,

John Seibert, Parks Director

OUR STAFF

Administration
Steve Antonetti
Lisa Baisden
Phillip Blasko
Jane Grennes
Barbara Johnson
Christine Kulavick
Daniel Lukes
Daniel McGuire
Karen Mann
Brenda Piper
Helene Pierce
Tarrance Price
John W. Seibert

Golf Maintenance
Todd Adams
Beth Bowker
Daniel Robertson
Andrew Small

Horticulture
April Anderson
Paul Chen
Jon Jahnke
Steve Martinson
Vaso Stojic

Park Maintenance
Gerald Barker
Walter Bergstrom
Andrew Blastick
Scott Furto
Stephen Garland
Anthony Jefferson
Daniel Johnson
Mitchell Orsburn
Paul Pera
James J. Phillips
Anthony Thomas
Douglas Walls
Joshua Wilkinson
Daniel York

A Year of Recognition and Thanks

CENTRAL PARK PLAZA NAMED GREAT PUBLIC SPACE

The American Planning Association (APA) named Central Park Plaza as one of five Great Public Spaces on the organization's 2016 Great Places in America list. The Great Public Spaces of 2016 are places that are unique and exemplary in their amenities and infrastructure, cultural identity, and use of sustainable and innovative practices.

The Indiana Parks and Recreation Association (IPRA) also recognized the Valpo Parks with the Exceptional Facility Design Award for the Central Park Plaza west park campus expansion that included the William E. Urschel Pavilion.

TWO VALPO PARKS RECEIVED 2016 COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT AWARDS

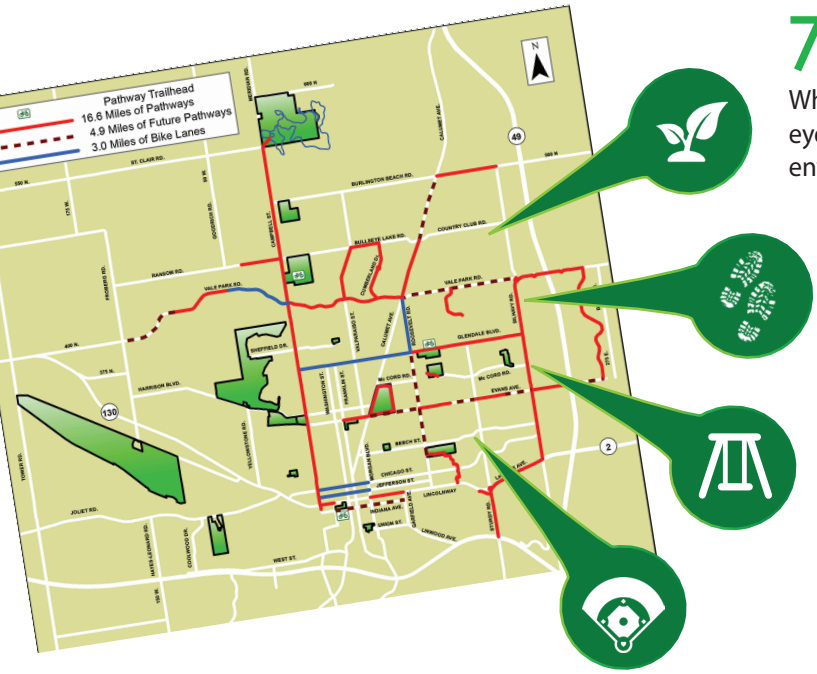
The Greater Valparaiso Chamber of Commerce recognized the city of Valparaiso and Valpo Parks, in 2016, with two Community Improvement Awards. The awards were presented for the all-inclusive playground, ValPLAYso–the Next Generation! and for the latest addition to Central Park Plaza, the William E. Urschel Pavilion. Both projects demonstrate a creative commitment to Valparaiso's future, as well as to enhance the quality of life and promote pride in Valparaiso.

PARKS DIRECTOR HONORED WITH 2016 DISTINGUISHED LEADER AWARD

The Greater Valparaiso Chamber of Commerce honored Valpo Parks Director John Seibert for his selfless commitment to his community with the 2016 Distinguished Leader award. But Seibert is the first to recognize his family, Parks staff and Board, and other community leaders and residents for being behind any success he has had as a professional, a servant leader, and a community volunteer.

"Valparaiso is home to many remarkable people who have created a culture of service. To be part of that is a privilege in my life." — John Seibert, Parks Director

What We Are…



708 ACRES OF PARKLAND

While we continue to build more park amenities we never take our eye off our parks. Our staff's number one priority is to provide a safe environment for our guests and employees at our parks.

18.75 MILES OF PATHWAYS

The addition of Vale Park West pathway connected two west side neighborhoods and advanced the City's commitment to connect your community through non-motorized pathways and greenways.

14 CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUNDS

From small neighborhood parks to the 17,000 sq. foot, ValPLAYso, kids can enjoy the simple art of playing. Little do they know that this sets a course of discovery, learning and connecting.

18,073 "LIKES"

This represents a 26% increase to our Facebook page. Thanks to you our popularity is growing.

27 ATHLETIC FIELDS

Park staff invests 60 hours a week, in season, to maintain the fields for daily use. The community's investment in Tower Park's new signature basketball courts and a state-of-the-art, multi-use sports field, is setting a new standard for the future.

31 FULL TIME STAFF

195 SEASONAL EMPLOYEES

Our staff and volunteers are our greatest resource. Our goal is for every guest to feel welcome and to enjoy their recreation experience with us.

11,000 VOLUNTEER HOURS

From youth sports coaches to master gardeners, we couldn't achieve the Valpo Parks mission without the generous and tireless work of our community volunteers.

18,193 FLOWERS PLANTED

Do you know that in addition to landscaping and maintaining your parks, the Valpo Parks horticulture staff produces and plants flowers and foliage for the city's streetscape features, city hall, six roundabouts and 1.5 miles of U.S. 30 corridor?

What we make possible....

225,000 PEOPLE @CENTRAL PARK PLAZA

Over 300 events and programs along with signature facilities made Central Park Plaza the place to be.

50,000 FIRST TIME ICE SKATERS

The ice rink at Central Park Plaza attracted 50,000 ice skaters. In the summer the Pavilion was also converted to a roller skating rink for the first time.

116 DIFFERENT PROGRAMS & SPECIAL EVENTS

It was another busy year as we enhanced and expanded enrichment activities, sports leagues, fitness programs, and special events throughout the city.

80+ TONS OF MULCH

We value our volunteers who give back to their community! In 2016, volunteer groups joined to spread playground mulch.

100 HOURS OF WEEKLY MOWING

Our dedicated maintenance staff spends countless hours each summer on grasslands beautification and upkeep.

FUN, FIT & *ACTIVE*

3,000
kids played well together

Our sports leagues and clinic's emphasize having FUN. Whether they played baseball, lacrosse, softball, volleyball, tennis or ran track, it is our #1 goal to have players come smiling and leave smiling.

1700
campers had a great summer

Discovery Day Camp at Rogers-Lakewood Park provided structured fun for kids ages 3 – 14 with themed weeks and field trips too. The ten-week camp also offered a safe summer alternative for parents.

2,700
adults stayed active & had fun

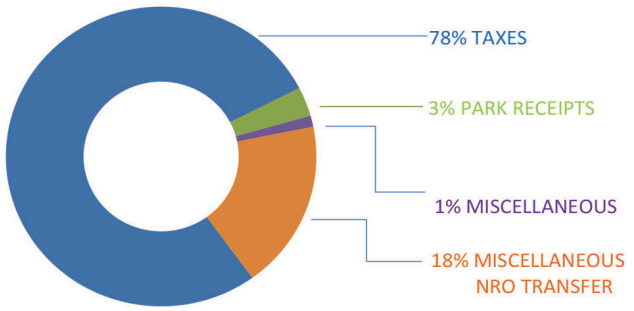
Friendly competition and league team play kept adults fit and young at heart. Team favorites continued to be volleyball, soccer and softball.

32,700
rounds of golf were played

In addition to the popular individual, league and tournament play at Forest Park and Creekside, golfers honed their skills by hitting nearly 1 million golf balls at the Creekside range.

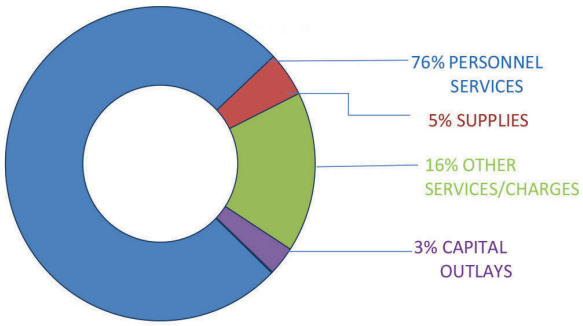
PARK DEPARTMENT FINANCIALS

General Fund Revenue



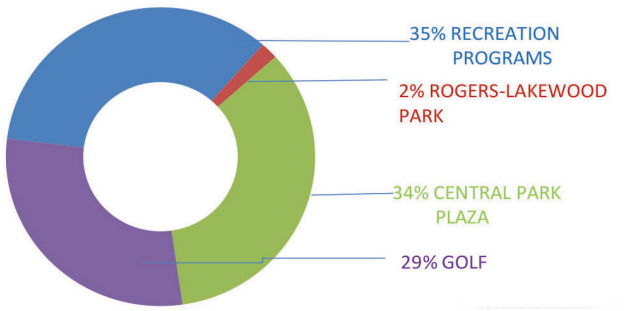
Total General Fund Revenue $2,749,375

General Fund Expenses



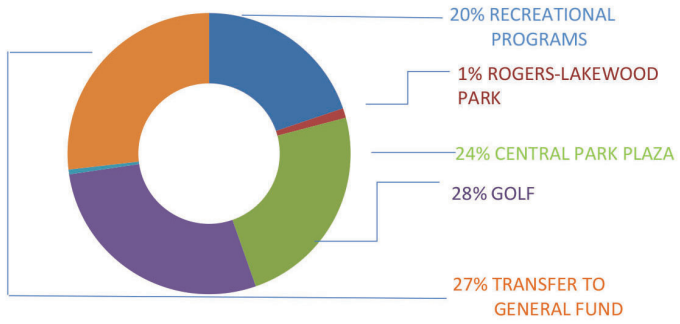
Total General Fund Expenses $2,900,288

Non-Reverting Revenue (fee based)



Total Non-Reverting Revenue $2,097,324

Non-Reverting Operating Expenses



Total Non-Reverting Operating Expenses $1,865,084

THANKS TO OUR 2016 SPONSORS

Major Sponsors

Aldi, Inc.
Bloomfield Mechanical
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Country Inn and Suites
Culver's Valparaiso
Currie Motors
DeLaine Anti–Aging
Don Quijote Restaurante
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Growing Smiles Pediatric Dentistry
Kostidis Chiropractic Clinic
Lakeshore Bone & Joint
Luke Family of Brands
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Symphony of Chesterton
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Urschel Labs
Vale Park Animal Hospital
Van Gogh Drywall

Sponsors

Absolutely Dry
AM Stabilizers
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Bounce N Around
Brandy's Lock & Key
Extra Mile Fitness Company
Family Express Corporation
First Merchants Bank
General Insurance Services
Growing Kids Learning Center
Lance's Driveshaft & Components, Inc.
Lieske & Nondorf Family Dentistry
Little Caesars
M & S Collision Center, Inc.
McAfee Animal Hospital
Olsen Campbell, LTD
Pleasant Valley, MHC
RH Mechanicals, Inc.
Samardzija Sports Management
Shelemey Law Office
Soft Touch Car Wash
Strack & Van Til
Team Chevrolet
The Grounds Specialists
Von Tobel Lumber & Hardware
Wings, Etc.

Where Are We Going?

The Valpo Parks embarked on a rigorous master planning process last year, which included current facility and program assessments, public input and an open dialogue with our community. The 2017 Master Plan presented the following emerging issues as key opportunities to guide the direction the department will take with current and future programs and services.

EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES

Maximize efficiencies and collaborating with partners

- Commitment to **youth sports field improvements** has already begun with the renovation of Tower Park and possible partnerships to enhance open space near schools.
- Exploring **indoor public space** needs with dialogue about Banta Center, partnerships with local school and ideas for community-based, multi-generation or cultural centers
- Expanding the Valparaiso **pathways** will develop the missing links that connect parks, schools, and neighborhoods.
- The community's request for an **off-leash dog park** will be made possible with the addition of a new parkland and a partnership with Lakeshore PAWS.
- An outdoor **swimming pool/aquatics** center has made the wish list once again; this will take a major public—private partnership to accomplish.
- Creating a joint **City of Valparaiso/Center Township park district** will better serve greater Valparaiso.

Commitment to existing park properties and infrastructure with focus on "signature properties"

- Reinvesting in existing playgrounds and shelters and signature properties such a Kirchhoff Park and Rogers-Lakewood are as important as the development of new facilities.

Continue to align Essential, Important and Value-Added programs in terms of return on investment with community values and Department mission

- Evaluate Senior, Adult and Youth programming and best practices to meet community needs.

Ensure social equity and conservation

- Acquire and develop more parkland with priorities of South, West, East and North respectively and continue to developing missing pathway links.

The complete 2017 Valparaiso Parks and Recreation Master Plan will be available online at **ValpoParks.org** beginning April 15, 2017.

CONNECT WITH US

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Phone: 219.462.5144

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facebook.com/ValpoParks

twitter.com/ValpoParks

instagram@ValpoParks

Valpo Parks FOUNDATION

SHARE YOUR
passion, time and money.

We depend on you today and tomorrow.

OUR MISSION:

The Valparaiso Parks Foundation provides opportunities for the community to support the continuing legacy of high quality experiences provided by ValpoParks

CONNECT WITH VALPO PARKS FOUNDATION:

ValpoParksFoundation.org

FOREST PARK Golf Course

Discovery Cottage

ADVENTURE Valpo Parks RANGER DISCOVERY CAMP

Community Character Mind Body fit city VALPARAISO

CREEKSIDE Golf Course and Training Center Home of The First Tee

VALPLAYSO The Next Generation!