



Preservation Parks

10 Year Plan: For the years 2019-2028 – UPDATE AUGUST 2021

On November 7, 2017, Delaware County voters approved a 0.6-mill renewal plus a 0.3-mill additional levy for the purpose of operating, maintaining and improving park sites, acquiring land for future parks, and continuing and expanding nature education programming. Information about proposed park expansions and acquisitions, improvements, and programs are outlined in the Park District's [10 Year Plan for the Years 2018-2028](#). *Much has already been accomplished in just three years to fulfill these promises.* This document provides an update on our progress.

The mission of Preservation Parks of Delaware County is to protect and conserve the natural and historic features of Delaware County and to inspire outdoor exploration and learning. With 1,680 acres of protected land and 17 miles of trails, Preservation Parks provides rich experiences in nature, places to reflect and explore, free educational programs, trails to get fit and stay healthy, and picnic areas and shelters to enjoy time with family and friends – seven days a week, 365 days a year.

LAND ACQUISITION

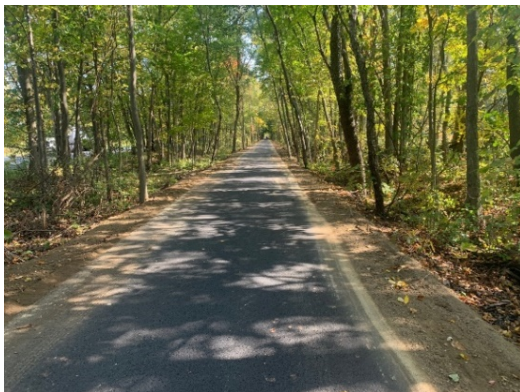
Preservation Parks has increased parkland by **261 acres** since passage of the levy.

2019-2028 Ten Year Plan	Where we are
Expansion of existing parks	Emily Traphagen Park expansion – 20.5 acres Deer Haven Park expansion – 30 acres (in progress) Char-Mar Ridge Park expansion – 21.5 acres Hogback Ridge Park expansion – 4 acres
New parkland in Orange Township	McCammon Creek Park expansion – 91 acres
Acquisition of land for multi-use trails	Ohio to Erie Trail Expansion – 35 acres
ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN ADDITION TO THE 10 YEAR PLAN	NEW PARK OPENED: Sycamore Run Park – 22 acres along the Olentangy River with paddling access
ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN ADDITION TO THE 10 YEAR PLAN	NEW ACQUISITION: Sandel Phase 1 – 37 acres along Perfect Creek. Additional phases will eventually total 478 acres

TRAILS

According to several recent surveys conducted statewide as well as countywide, trails continue to rank no. 1 in outdoor recreation and facility needs. Preservation Parks provides a variety of trail types within the parks as well as multi-use trails connecting parks, municipalities, recreation areas, and shopping and dining areas throughout the county. To achieve this, the Park District partners with townships and cycling organizations including Delaware County Friends of the Trail, the Ohio to Erie Trail Foundation, Rails to Trails, Olentangy Powell and Liberty (OPAL), various townships and others to capitalize on multi-use trail development opportunities.

2019-2028 Ten Year Plan	Where we are
Construct additional hiking trails in existing and new parks	<p>Shale Hollow Park: Graveled the grass pet trail near Hyatts Road</p> <p>Emily Traphagen Park: Gravel the meadow trail (in progress)</p> <p>Emily Traphagen Park: 3/4 mile of new hiking trails to be constructed in newly acquired parkland by Spring 2022</p> <p>McCammon Creek Park: Recreational Trail grant applied for to construct a 70-foot pedestrian bridge over recently restored stream</p>
Construct Delaware County trail segments of the Ohio to Erie Multi-Use Trail, as right-of-way segments are acquired. Once acquired, the Park District will apply for Clean Ohio Trail grant funds for the estimated \$2,750,000 needed to construct the trail.	<p>Ohio to Erie Trail: Paved one mile of the Sandel Legacy Trail in 2018</p> <p>Ohio to Erie Trail: Constructed 3.6 miles of paved multi-use trail in 2020 and 2021</p> <p><i>During the levy period so far, Preservation Parks was awarded \$816,500 in grants for design and construction of the trail PPDC's grant match amount was \$286,500</i></p>
Pending the granting of necessary easements, construct a 1.5-mile multi-use trail from Smith Park in Delaware City to Gallant Woods Park.	Smith to Gallant trail: PPDC continues to pursue an easement from First Energy to achieve this goal
Initiate a Multi-Use Trail Grant program to assist townships and municipalities with planning, engineering, and/or construction of important connector trails in Delaware County.	<p>Community Trail Improvement Grant (CTIG) Program Established</p> <p>2019 award: Concord Twp (\$15,000)</p> <p>2021 awards: Liberty Twp (\$35,600) and Village of Sunbury (\$64,000)</p>



PARK DEVELOPMENT

Preservation Parks has added amenities to many of the parks, providing ease of accessibility and adding features that park users value. Park improvements provide additional ways for the public to enjoy the parks, allowing them to extend their visits and learn more about the natural world.

2019-2028 Ten Year Plan	Where we are
Delaware Township - Development of the Logan property on Pollock Road into a park. The Park District will spend \$2 million to develop this park for public use and enjoyment. Conceptual design is underway; planned amenities include: Year-round multi-use facility, trails, wetland and woodland restoration, natural play features, parking and roadway, sled hill, and a fishing pond	Hickory Woods Park – this park will open to the public in fall of 2021. Amenities to date include an entrance drive, parking lot, pond, boardwalk and trails. Restroom engineering and design will occur in 2022 with construction planned in 2023 (pending utility access, etc.)
How will land acquisition and park development levy help in Delaware Township/Hickory Woods Park? Funds from this new levy will free current funding dollars to speed up planning and construction of a year-round multi-use facility	
Orange Township – Development of a park along Alum Creek. The Park District will spend approximately \$3.5 million to develop this park with the following amenities: Renovation of the Bicentennial Barn for year-round reservable use; hiking and multi-use trails; restrooms; picnic areas; parking; access to Alum Creek for fishing, canoeing, and kayaking; and woodland, stream, and wetland restoration.	McCammon Creek Park - Stream restoration was completed near Alum Creek in 2020 with 319 grant funds, deteriorating outbuildings and site debris were demolished/removed. Installation of trails north of Orange Road are planned in 2022. Design development of Bicentennial Barn and parking is underway. Park opening TBD, likely in sections. Preservation Parks Foundation will launch a future capital campaign to restore the Bicentennial Barn.
How will the land acquisition and park development levy help in Orange Township/McCammon Creek Park? Funds from this new levy will free current funding dollars to speed up design and construction of the park (parking lots, trails, Bicentennial Barn event center, play area, shelter, etc.)	
Shale Hollow Park - Conversion of an existing garage to an open shelter to provide additional reservation and school field trip opportunities.	The shelter engineering, design and permitting is complete. A NatureWorks grant was prepared and submitted for shelter construction; the District is awaiting a decision.
Blues Creek Park - Widen and pave the park entrance drive and pave the parking lot	The driveway was chip-sealed in 2019
Emily Traphagen Park - Expand the parking lot to nearly double the number of spaces	After further evaluation of visitation numbers and parking needs during COVID, a decision was made to expand the parking lot at Char-Mar Ridge Park instead of Emily Traphagen Park. Construction in 2021 increased this lot from 27 spaces to 67 spaces. Much of the funding was provided through the ODOT Metropark Paving Fund.

Other Improvements to new and existing parks

Deer Haven Park – An aviary was constructed in 2021 in partnership with Ohio Nature Education, featuring birds of prey that cannot be released back into the wild

Sycamore Run Park – An entrance drive and parking lot were added in 2020, and a kiosk and signage were added in 2021

River Run Park – Chip-sealed in 2021

Deer Haven Office Expansion – New office space was added in 2019, creating four new workstations.

Hogback Ridge Park – The roof of the headquarters building was replaced in 2020

Gallant Farm – The following additions were constructed: corn crib, barn loft, woodshed, granary overhang, farmhouse improvements, livestock fencing, overhang on the implement shed, and giving garden. Pigs and cows were introduced.



Deer Haven Aviary



Red-Shouldered Hawk



McCammon Creek Park Stream Restoration



Sycamore Run
Park



Sycamore Run Park



Gallant Farm Corn Crib

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

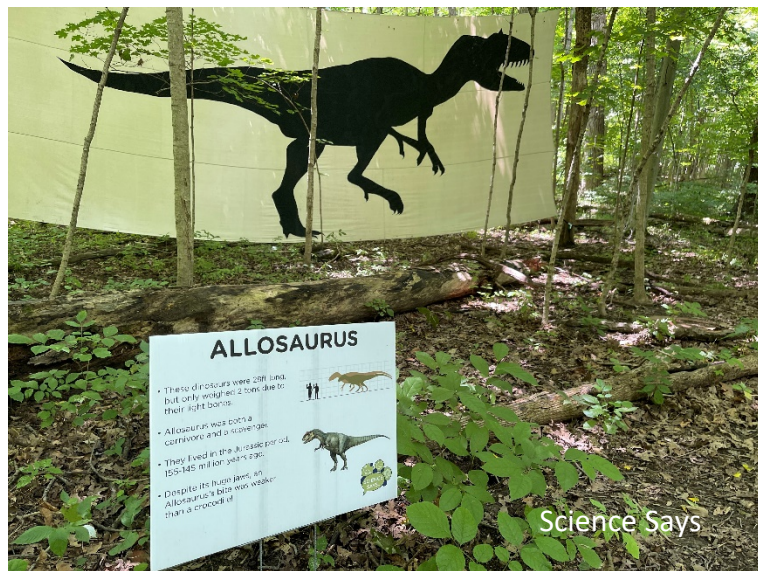
Preservation Parks provides high quality learning experiences for a diverse audience - from free public programs in the parks, to hands-on learning experiences at Gallant Farm, to classroom programs in the schools, and more. Staff connects residents to Delaware County's natural and historic resources, engages visitors through a variety of enjoyable and educational programs, and inspires them to help protect and conserve natural and historic features for current and future generations to enjoy.

2019-2028 Ten Year Plan	Where we are
Expand summer camp opportunities to reach new ages and provide new outdoor experiences	Once the new year-round multi-use facility is constructed at Hickory Woods Park, the district will be better equipped to provide an improved camp experience for various ages.
Create special exhibits and programs related to an annual interpretive theme	Starting in 2017, the Park District began special programming and exhibits related to an annual theme reaching over 66,000 people: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2017: Into the Ice Age • 2018: Adventures in Flight • 2019: World of Water • 2020: Cancelled due to COVID • 2021: Science Says Theme Parks • 2022: Weather and Climate theme
Continue to provide field experience grants to assist schools in visiting the parks	\$1,600 has been granted to six area schools to assist with transportation to our parks.
Partner with county schools to develop grade-level specific nature and agricultural curriculums	In the process of designing a survey to determine academic needs of local schools
Develop a mobile "nature center" that will visit schools and community events	Not yet started
Increase adult and senior programming experiences	Expanded adult program offerings through partnerships with OSU, Delaware County Bird Club, SourcePoint, and Central Ohio Wild Ones.
Grow outreach programs to reach new sites and diverse audiences	Added new archery, kayaking and biking programs along with an Adventure Run, and an Outdoor Expo. Virtual audiences: Extended outreach efforts in 2020 through use of virtual content and social media to reach over 32,000 viewers.
Expand livestock at Gallant Farm to further enrich visitor experiences	Cows and pigs were welcomed to Gallant Farm in 2019 and 2021
Enhance existing partnerships and seek out new partners	New partnership with Ohio Nature Education to establish an aviary at Deer Haven Park in 2021. New partnership with Delaware County Antique Machinery Club to offer an annual antique equipment show and other activities at Gallant Farm. Expanded our partnership with Delaware County Library System to create new story trails called Story Walks at 3 parks in 2021.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN ADDITION TO THE 10 YEAR PLAN

Created a Park Ambassadors Program to enhance guest services to park visitors during peak visitation periods in 2020 and 2021.

Provided new individually paced experiences in 2020/2021 for park users including Winter 100, Winter Letterbox and Discover Delaware County Scavenger Hunt with total attendance over 4,000 people. Also created new self-guided trailside activities including Story Walks, Fact or Fiction, and Science Says.



HABITAT PROTECTION AND RESTORATION

Protecting and restoring natural areas within Delaware County is a key element of the park district's mission. As Delaware County continues to be a desirable place to live and work, natural areas and open space are disappearing quickly, dramatically reducing the natural habitat for hundreds of species. Our parks protect and restore forest, prairie, and wetland habitats. Staff and volunteers work to establish native plants, reduce invasive species, and restore wetlands in areas that have been altered by past land use. Whether through protection or active management, our goal is to ensure unique and valuable natural areas to be enjoyed by future generations.

2019-2028 Ten Year Plan	Where we are
Restore wetland habitat in areas that have been altered through drain tiles and ditches	McCammon Creek and Char-Mar Ridge Park: Restored wetland habitat and natural hydrology by removing over 2 miles of drain lines Gallant Woods Park: Constructed a 0.5 acre wetland Emily Traphagen Park: Constructed a 0.5 acre wetland
Establish and maintain diverse prairie habitats that improve soil conditions and benefit pollinators	Over 70 acres of former agricultural fields were seeded with a diverse mix of native flowers and grasses. Existing prairie and pollinator habitats were maintained through mowing or prescribed burns
Increase forest habitat in former field areas by planting native trees and shrub species	89,500 seedlings and 1,050 trees and shrubs larger than seedlings were planted to reforest newly acquired parkland.
Continue removing invasive plants that threaten our native plant and animal communities	Invasive plant management was completed in more than 300 acres of restoration project sites including 13 acres of wetlands and multiple reforestation sites.



Wetland Restoration



Purple Martin Eggs



Prairie Restoration

PUBLIC INFORMATION

The public's desire for information about parks and programs has grown exponentially in recent years, paralleling the expansion of the park system and the population growth in the county. The explosion of social media and other digital communication platforms over this time has allowed the park district to reach many more people in a wide variety of ways, many of which were unimaginable eight years ago. In fact, a recent survey conducted by the Park District showed that the majority of county residents prefer to receive information via social media or the Park District's website.

Currently, the Park District disseminates information in the following ways: traditional print and electronic media news releases; print publications (brochures and program guides); e-newsletters; website, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube; third-party websites and bloggers; google business pages; social media advertising; and digital advertising on popular websites.

2019-2028 Ten Year Plan	Where we are
Conduct periodic public surveys to gauge attitude, awareness, and needs, and most effective ways to share information with County residents	Conducted park trends survey Summer 2020 in response to increased park usage and outdoor activities due to COVID
Monitor social media trends and explore new ways to provide information to residents across a variety of digital platforms	Created a schedule for staff to post regular content to keep a growing digital audience engaged. Continue to meet growing demand for video.
Further expand PPDC presence at community festivals and other events	Events were canceled in 2020 due to COVID, but the District is participating in a limited number of 2021 events
Continue utilizing print media where effective, and become a regular presence in broadcast media (television and radio)	Utilize CTV (i.e., TV streaming services) to connect residents. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t9CouemIPbY
Continue to update our website and print material to respond to current social media and print trends	Streamline program registration and reservations by incorporating RecDesk. Created an Activity Book w/ the Education department in lieu of a summer program guide to respond to pandemic-related screen fatigue and reach our audience when they can't come to a park.



We're proud of what we've accomplished together in three short years and look forward to the future!