

**FOR IMMEDIATE
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Mayor Joe Hogsett joins Lilly Endowment, Indy Parks, Partners to Announce Historic Investment

\$80 million to go towards 42 locations across Indy Parks system

INDIANAPOLIS – Today Mayor Joe Hogsett joined leadership from Lilly Endowment, Indy Parks, the Eagle Creek Park Foundation, the Friends of Garfield Park, the Holliday Park Foundation, and the City-County Council to announce \$80 million in grants from Lilly Endowment towards improvements across the Indy Parks system. The announcement took place at Washington Park, one of the 42 parks that will benefit from funds for improvements.

Lilly Endowment awarded four grants in response to a coordinated application by the City of Indianapolis Department of Parks & Recreation (Indy Parks), the Eagle Creek Park Foundation, the Friends of Garfield Park, and the Holliday Park Foundation. The grants are:

- \$71,900,000 to the City of Indianapolis Department of Parks & Recreation to support improvements in 42 parks located in all nine townships of Marion County.
- \$2,600,000 to the Eagle Creek Park Foundation to support improvements at the westside park.
- \$2,500,000 to the Friends of Garfield Park to support improvements at the southside park.
- \$3,000,000 to the Holliday Park Foundation to support improvements at the northside park.

A complete list of projects is located at the bottom of this release.

“Today’s announcement continues a streak of transformative investments for our city’s public parks,” Indianapolis Mayor Joe Hogsett said. “With Circle City Forward, funds from the American Rescue Plan and today’s incredible \$80 million dollars of support from Lilly Endowment, we are sending a clear message about the fundamental role a well-funded park can play in a healthy community.”

The projects align with Indy Parks’ five-year master plan launched in 2017. The plan prioritizes parks based on geographic diversity, the large-scale impact of improving parks with high visitation rates, and an equity analysis that examined park amenity conditions alongside race, income and other demographics of the census blocks adjacent to each park. Indy Parks engaged residents throughout the planning process through surveys, stakeholder groups, community advisory committees and public meetings. Many residents expressed a desire for more modern and specialized amenities, including water spray grounds, comfort stations and refreshment facilities, and competition-quality sports fields.

“Lilly Endowment is delighted to add this funding to its long history of support for major capital upgrades to our city’s impressive array of public parks,” said Lilly Endowment President Jennett



Hill. “Parks and greenspaces are essential elements of healthy and appealing communities. We were especially pleased to see the broad diversity of park projects that were prioritized for funding by Indy Parks in these grant requests and the level of community input that Indy Parks sought in developing its grant recommendations.”

Project design and construction schedule will run through 2025. The total grant awards represent 14 times the annual Parks capital budget.

In February 2021, Mayor Joe Hogsett announced a \$45 million investment into Indy Parks facilities through the Circle City Forward initiative. The plan set aside \$20 million for Frederick Douglass Park’s new family center, \$11 million for upgrades to Riverside Regional Park, and \$7 million for Grassy Creek Park and Krannert Park. In addition to the Circle City Forward Initiative, the City has established funding priorities for park investments, committing an additional \$67 million in funds dedicated to parks projects. The City is also leveraging an additional \$862 million in Department of Public Works and Department of Metropolitan Development funds for various infrastructure and development projects within a half-mile of the parks.

“Knowing how much parks mean to the people we serve, our entire Indy Parks team is grateful for the opportunity to bring much needed resources to enhance park spaces inside and out,” said Phyllis Boyd, director of Indy Parks. “With this historic award from the Lilly Endowment, we can dream big and deliver on reshaping parks in ways that impact communities, programs, and activities throughout the city.”

“The Endowment’s gift to Indy Parks promises to transform not just our municipal parks but our collective view of our parks system, from one that sees parks as a local amenity to one that views our parks system as a vital marker of our community’s civic health,” said City-County Council President Vop Osili. “The equitable Indy Parks system we’ve been working together to build is a dynamic institution that underlies the physical, economic, and environmental wellbeing of our city and its residents.”

Full Project List:

- **Al Polin Park:** Al Polin Park is in the Mapleton-Fall Creek neighborhood and was established in 1973. Approximately \$600,000 of Lilly Endowment funding will go toward a basketball court upgrade, walkway improvements, playground replacements, and beautification.
- **Chapel Hill:** This park is located at 900 Girls School Rd. Indy Parks worked with Chapel Hill United Methodist Church in developing the park’s master plan and entered into a long-term land lease agreement. \$2 million in Lilly Endowment funding will help replace the playground, upgrade the basketball court and baseball diamond, and add pickleball courts, a comfort station and a splash pad.
- **Dubarry Park:** Located at 3698 Dubarry Rd., this 27-acre east side park offers a playground, comfort station, fishing pond, and sledding hill. \$700,000 in Lilly Endowment funding will go to a new splash pad.
- **Eagle Creek Park:** With more than 5,000 acres, Eagle Creek Park is the largest park in the Indy Parks system and celebrated its 50th birthday in 2022. Recent investments in the park have resulted in \$831,362 in improvements. \$2.6 million from Lilly Endowment funding will support accessibility upgrades for the Pin Oak Trail near the Earth Discovery Center, additional community program engagement, and the development of a documentary about the park’s history.

- **Franklin Township Community Park:** This 99-acre park is located next to Franklin Central High School. \$2.85 million in Lilly Endowment funding will support construction of a new playground, shelter, hardcourts, and the paving of the existing nature trail.
- **Frederick Douglass Park:** Located in the Martindale-Brightwood neighborhood at Andrew J. Brown and E. 25th Street, the 43-acre park was established in 1921. As part of Circle City Forward, the City has secured almost \$23 million for a new family center, including fitness areas, locker rooms, a gym, and program activity space. In spring 2021, project organizers and designers began meeting with the public to create plans for the new facility, and the final design was presented in July 2021. \$5.268 million in Lilly Endowment funding will support construction of a new playground, multi-use synthetic sports fields, and office furnishings and appliances.
- **Garfield Park:** Established in 1876, Garfield Park is the city's oldest park and includes unique amenities, such as a conservatory, the Sunken Gardens, and the MacAllister Center for the Performing Arts. \$5.5 million in Lilly Endowment funding will improve the Pagoda, playgrounds, and Sunken Garden fountains.
- **Geisse Soccer Park:** The Mary and John Geisse Soccer Complex at Eagle Creek Park will receive \$2.458 million in Lilly Endowment funding for improvements to the park's drainage system, pavilion shelter, and comfort stations to accommodate expanded programming.
- **Graham Edward Martin Park:** Located on 67 acres near Fall Creek Parkway East Drive and W. 16th Street, this park will benefit from \$1.86 million in Lilly Endowment funding. The project includes construction of a splash pad, a shelter, two parking lots, pickleball courts, a comfort station, and improvements to the sports fields near Crispus Attucks High School. The City has committed an additional \$450,000 to improve playground facilities.
- **Grassy Creek Regional Park:** Located at the intersection of E. 30th Street and N. German Church Road, Grassy Creek has many natural amenities such as wetlands, lowlands, and forests. \$5.65 million in Lilly Endowment funding will go to construct new playgrounds and park trails and provide furnishings and appliances for a new environmental center. The City has secured an additional \$8.6 million in funding to acquire 82 acres of land and construct the environmental center.
- **Gustafson Park:** This 30-acre park is located at 3010 Moller Road. Planned improvements include a new digital scoreboard, comfort station, playground, and basketball courts. \$1.6 million in Lilly Endowment funding will help upgrade the existing football field to a synthetic multi-purpose field.
- **Holliday Park:** The 94-acre Holliday Park is home to the Ruins, a 13,000-square-foot nature center, and more than 3.5 miles of trails. \$1.5 million of City-secured funding and \$3 million in Lilly Endowment funding will go to playground and signage improvements, walkway upgrades, and gazebo maintenance.
- **Krannert Park:** This park is located adjacent to Interstate 465 between Rockville Road and W. Washington Street. The existing family center is being improved to make room for new exercise areas, multi-purpose rooms, locker rooms, a new enclosed swimming pool, and an exterior splash pad. \$10.6 million in Circle City Forward funds will go to the family center renovation, while \$3.73 million in Lilly Endowment funding will upgrade the playground, trails, and basketball court.
- **Kuntz Sports Complex:** This park is located at 1502 W. 16th St. \$2.75 million in Lilly Endowment funding will help convert the practice field from natural turf to synthetic turf, improve the grade and irrigation of the main field, and install new LED stadium lighting at both fields.
- **Major Taylor Skate Park:** Part of the Indy Cycloplex at 3649 Cold Spring Rd., the skate park features the Major Taylor Velodrome, criterium bike course, and a BMX track. \$750,000 in Lilly Endowment funding will help expand the popular skate park and add LED sports lighting to extend operational hours.

- **Perry Park:** Located on the city's south side and established in 1961, Perry Park offers outdoor recreational opportunities and includes Indy Parks' only permanent ice rink. The City has secured \$1.1 million in local funds for aquatic and park improvements and has allotted \$1.3 million in Lilly Endowment funding for a new playground and shelter.
- **Riverside Regional Park:** Established in 1903, the 862-acre park is located along the White River on the city's near west side. The Riverside Regional Park Master Plan responded to neighbor and stakeholder desires for new amenities and updates, including an aquatic center and athletic fields, converting Riverside Golf Course into an adventure park, building Riverside Promenade, and renovating Taggart Memorial into a performance venue. Through Circle City Forward, the City has secured more than \$6.5 million for the adventure park and promenade. A previous Lilly Endowment grant funded the Taggart Memorial project. Lilly Endowment's latest grant will provide \$11.55 million for new sidewalks and nature trails, enhancements along White River, upgrades to the soap box derby track and development of the Taggart Memorial Playground.
- **Sahm Park:** Located at 6801 E. 91st St., the park will be connected to the Nickel Plate Greenway once that trail is developed. Due to increasing demand for community rental spaces, \$2.7 million in Lilly Endowment funding will help renovate the tennis pavilion, add additional shelters and walkways, improve parking, and replace the playground (built in 1996), which will feature adult exterior fitness equipment.
- **Southside Park:** Located in the University Heights and Rosedale Hills neighborhoods, this park is a short walk from the University of Indianapolis and serves students and community residents. \$2 million in Lilly Endowment funding will help install new playground, adult fitness equipment, a sports field, hardcourts, and a shelter.
- **Southwestway Park:** This is the city's second largest park and features an extensive network of hiking and mountain biking trails, baseball and soccer fields, and a playground. \$1.25 million in Lilly Endowment funding will go toward construction of a comfort station, a shelter, an expanded parking lot and a playground with adult fitness equipment.
- **Tarkington Park:** Located near W. 39th and N. Meridian streets, the park boasts a splash pad, performance shelter, and basketball and tennis courts. \$3 million in Lilly Endowment funding will help complete phase two of the park's master plan by adding circular walkways, additional shelters, a farmers market pavilion, and field improvements to better serve youth football leagues.
- **Tolin Akeman Park:** This five-acre park is located at 4459 Shelbyville Rd. \$1.27 million in Lilly Endowment funding will go towards upgrading a playground, and adding a shelter, basketball court, pickleball courts, and a walking trail.
- **Washington Park:** With more than 120 acres on the city's near east side the park features extensive green space, a family recreation center, an outdoor basketball complex, walking trails, playgrounds, an 18-hole disk golf course, and a mountain bike course programmed in partnership with the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department. Through Circle City Forward, the City has committed \$437,000 to improve the family center, add a northside playground and shelter, and a new design for the center playground and splash pad. \$3.5 million in Lilly Endowment funding will help replace the central playground (built in 1995) and add a new splash pad, shelter, parking lot, and comfort station.
- **World Sports Park:** Located at 1313 S. Post Rd., this 46-acre east side park consists of three multi-use sports fields for cricket, lacrosse, hurling, rugby, and Gaelic football. The \$5.1 million dollar facility was completed in 2014. \$2.15 million in Lilly Endowment funding will go towards a new concession pavilion with restrooms and a paved parking lot.

Lilly Endowment funding will help strengthen the city's parks system with additional efforts:

- Playgrounds in 18 small parks across the city will be upgraded with \$8.38 million in Lilly Endowment funds. Updates will feature rubberized or synthetic turf play surfaces, accessible walkways and shade structures. The parks are located in some of the most economically disadvantaged neighborhoods in Indianapolis.
- An extensive outreach effort will inform potential program providers of opportunities for park-based programming. This includes releasing a request for information (RFI) for program providers, engaging potential respondents in information and feedback sessions, sharing program-related findings from the 2023 update of the Parks Comp Plan (funded by the City), and developing a phased approach to program implementation. \$80,000 of Lilly Endowment funding will go to support the programming initiative.

A portion of Lilly Endowment support, \$1.5 million, will be reserved for a contingency fund to offset cost increases and unpredictable supply chain delays.

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