



MADISON PARKS

# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

BY THE NUMBERS

Door Creek Park by Andrea Gugel

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**MADISON  
PARKS**

## Equity • Public Health • Sustainability • Adaptability

Through data and analyses, the 2023 Madison Parks Annual Report highlights the work of Parks staff and volunteers. The 2023 year saw its challenges with poor air quality canceling outdoor activities and a mild winter resulting in fewer traditional winter recreation opportunities. Using the [2018-2023 Park and Open Space Plan's](#) four guiding lenses of equity, public health, sustainability and adaptability to further illustrate our work and our commitment to the community and the world beyond.



**Equity:** The inherent worth of each individual in Madison should be esteemed and fostered, enabling them to reach full potential.



**Public Health:** The access and contribution to mental and physical health of a community.



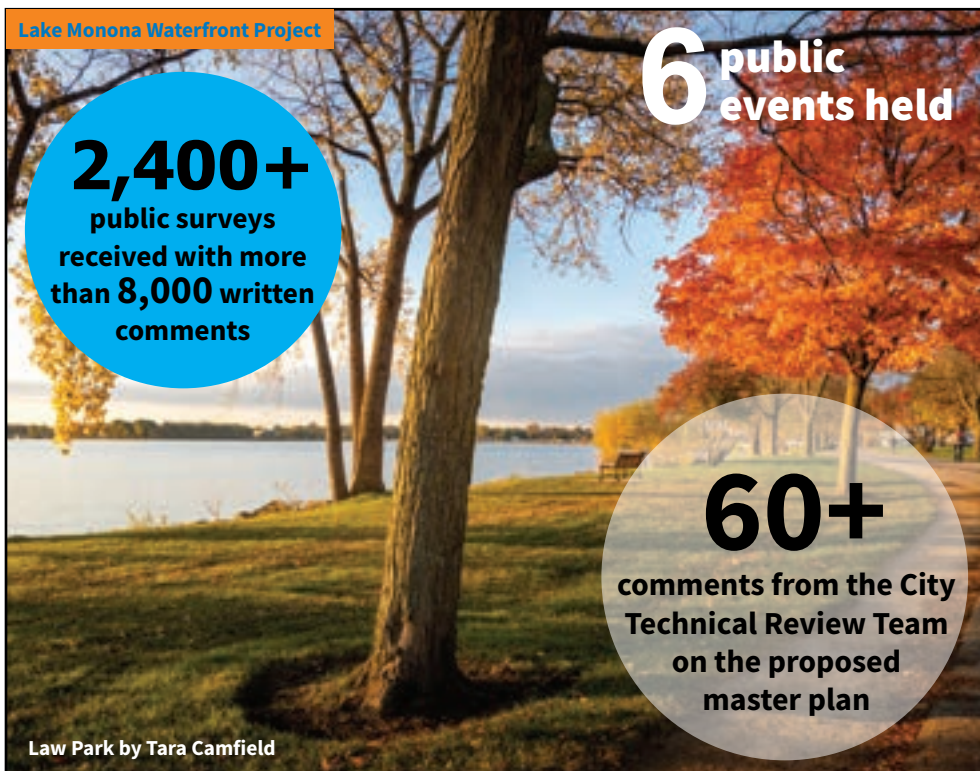
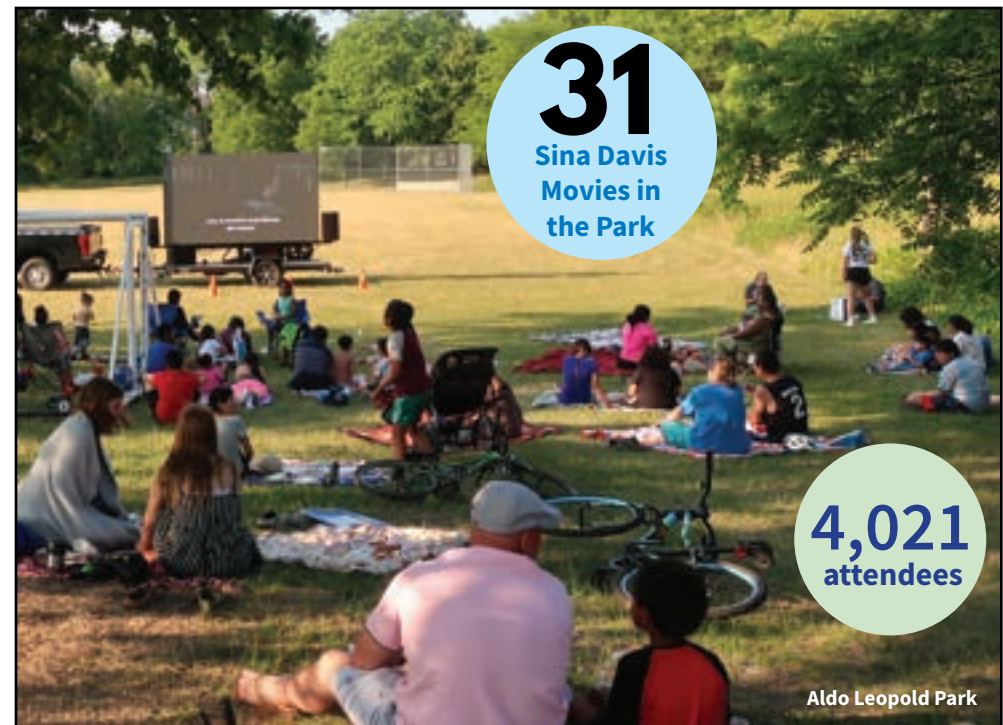
**Sustainability:** Management of resources to promote welfare and equity for current and future generations.



**Adaptability:** Preparedness and ability to respond to and recover from hazards and threats with minimal damage to safety, health, security, and the economy.

The Park and Open Space Plan (POSP) is a tool used to guide decisions for issues such as city policies, park acquisitions, facility development and park funding and will be updated again in 2025.







Warner Park



Yahara Hills Golf Course



Warner Park Community Recreation Center





**344,000**

visitors to **Olbrich Botanical Gardens**  
1% increase from 2022  
despite reconstruction  
of Atwood Avenue

**21,158**

volunteer hours  
at **Olbrich Botanical Gardens**



**79**

disc golf kits checked  
out from **Madison Public Libraries**



**282**

permitted park events  
7% increase  
from 2022

Warner Park by Kristin Mathews



**4**

bicycle &  
pedestrian  
accessible gates  
installed

Westmorland Park

**12,809**

park visits by  
ranger staff



**680+**

youth served  
through the Quality  
Discount Program  
pilot



Photo Courtesy of Southside Raiders Youth Football



**1**

lifesaving award  
presented to Park  
Ranger Brien



**14,447**  
volunteer hours  
for Madison  
Parks



**1**

new driving range  
donated at Hiestand  
Park disc golf course  
in memory of  
Tasha Cheney



**26**  
Parks Alive  
events

Penn Park



**41,334**  
athletic  
reservation  
hours

Warner Park by Rita Cairns



**38,966**  
admissions to  
Goodman Pool  
17% increase  
from 2022

Goodman Pool by Stephanie Skladzien



**80**  
seasonal banners  
changed 4 times  
per year by mall  
maintenance  
crew

## The Impacts of Climate Change

For the first time in notable history, the summer of 2023 in Madison saw the air quality index (AQI) reach levels of more than 150 and several days reached levels skirting 200 AQI. Anything more than 151 AQI is deemed unhealthy for prolonged outdoor activities. Days and weeks of hazy, milky skies blanketed the Madison area. As such, Madison Parks, in guidance and consultation from Public Health Madison & Dane County modified or canceled numerous outdoor activities and events.

A beloved winter recreation activity saw a significant change. The City's potential ice-skating locations saw a drastic reduction in the number of skateable days. The average number of skateable days decrease by nearly 80% from the previous winter, seeing just 8 days in the 2022-2023 winter season compared to 38 days in 2021-22 and 40 days in 2020-21.

Is this the new normal? What does this mean long-term for the future of outdoor activities? As we continue to monitor and compare data, staff will make the best decisions for outdoor recreation in Madison's parks.

**433**

**athletic reservation  
hours canceled due to  
poor air quality helping  
to create a 33% decrease  
in hours from 2022**

**7**

**full days Goodman  
Pool closed due to  
poor air quality or  
weather**

**9**

**Parks Alive events  
canceled due to  
poor air quality or  
weather**

**79%**

**decrease in  
skateable days  
across all potential  
ice skating locations**

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