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2023 REPORT

Metro East Park and Recreation District
Decennial Committee on Local Government Efficiency Report

Approved December 12, 2023

Wilson Park, Granite City, IL

As required by
(50 ILCS 70/) Decennial Committees on Local Government Efficiency Act

A silhouette of a person riding a bicycle is centered in the background. The person is wearing a helmet and a backpack. The bicycle is a mountain bike. The background is a sunset over a body of water, with a bridge visible in the distance. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue. The water is dark with some reflections. The bridge has several tall, thin towers. The overall mood is peaceful and active.

23 YEARS

OF PROGRESS

AND COUNTING

Metro East Park and Recreation District is immensely proud to have established partnerships with 67 unique agencies and organizations throughout Madison and St. Clair Counties in Illinois. These collaborative efforts have resulted in the development and/or improvement of 256 park and trail projects throughout the region, thereby improving the lives of all those who live, work, and play in the Metro East.

Thank you for your support!

Metro East Park and Recreation District
Board of Directors and Staff

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This report is brought to you by
Metro East Park and Recreation District
and its Decennial Committee on Local Government Efficiency

Committee Members

Randy Randolph, Board President and Committee Chair
Linda Wheaton, Board Vice President
Mark Achenbach, Board Secretary/Treasurer
Jerry Kane, Board Member
Jon Greenstreet, Board Member
George Markezich, Board Member
Paul Evans, Former Board Member and Resident Member
Larry Gulledge, Resident Member

MEPRD Staff

Bryan Werner, Executive Director & Committee Member
Cole Preston, Grant Coordinator
Rene' St. Peters, Administrative Assistant

MEPRD Counsel

Edward J. Szewczyk



WHO WE ARE & WHAT WE DO

Metro East Park and Recreation District's primary role is to partner with other public entities throughout Madison and St. Clair Counties in Illinois for the purposes of improving parks, developing trails, and expanding recreational opportunities for the public's enjoyment. Secondly, Metro East Park and Recreation District strives to increase awareness, usage, and appreciation of those assets owned and operated by its partners.

1 ABOUT THE DISTRICT

AS OF DECEMBER 2023



**COMPLETED
PROJECTS**

MEPRD's Commitment
\$26,661,434
Total Value of Projects
\$140,403,078
Leverage Ratio
1:5.3



**ONGOING
PROJECTS**

MEPRD's Commitment
\$13,309,132
Value of Ongoing Projects
\$47,193,950
Leverage Ratio
1:3.5



**TOTAL
PROJECTS**

MEPRD's Commitment
\$39,970,566
Value of All Projects
\$187,597,028
Leverage Ratio
1:4.7

Peabody River King State Fish and Wildlife Area, New Athens, IL

METRO EAST PARK AND RECREATION DISTRICT

104 United Drive, Collinsville, Illinois 62234

(618) 346-4905 | info@meprd.org

www.meprd.org | www.metroeastrecreation.com | www.theparkwithaview.com



METRO EAST PARK & RECREATION DISTRICT LEGISLATION

SCCTD MetroBikeLink Trail, St. Clair County, IL

The Metro East Park and Recreation District (MEPRD) was created following the passage of Illinois HB 702 in July 1999, and the subsequent approval of “Proposition C: The Clean Water, Safe Parks, and Community Trails Initiative” by the voters in Madison and St. Clair Counties in November 2000.

The Metro East Park and Recreation Act authorizes the District to impose a one-tenth (1/10) percent sales tax within its jurisdiction, of which amount MEPRD receives 50% to advance the District’s mission. The remaining 50% is distributed back to each respective county for park, trail, and recreation-related purposes.

MEPRD partners with and supplements the efforts of other public agencies, as well as 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations, already engaged in the development, operation, and maintenance of public parks, trails, and recreation facilities within the two Counties.

METRO EAST PARK AND RECREATION DISTRICT ACT

70 ILCS 1605/ *et seq.*



Metro East Park and Recreation District was established by a referendum initiated and approved by the voters of St. Clair County and Madison County, Illinois in 2000, and is governed by the Metro East Park and Recreation District Act, 70 ILCS 1605/ *et seq.*

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MEPRD is currently governed by a board of six members, three from each county comprising the district. Pursuant to the Metro East Park and Recreation District Act, the Chief Executive Officer of each county, with the advice and consent of the county board, appoints two of the three members. The third member is then appointed by the minority members of the respective county board.

ADOPTED RULES, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES

As part of good governance and implementing best practices in the management of day-to-day operations, Metro East Park and Recreation District has also adopted the following rules, policies, and procedures:

- Employee Handbook
- Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Policy
- Investment Policy
- Rules of Conduct (Malcolm W. Martin Memorial Park)
- Sexual Harassment Policy

TRANSPARENCY AND OPPORTUNITIES TO CONNECT

The following information about Metro East Park and Recreation District may be obtained by the public in the location(s) listed.

- MEPRD Budgetswww.meprd.org/about.html
- MEPRD Organizational Chart.....www.meprd.org/about.html
- Annual Report & Financial Statements.....www.meprd.org/about.html
- MEPRD Meeting Schedule..... www.meprd.org/meetings.html

The Board of Directors meets monthly at the MEPRD facility in Collinsville, IL, on the second Tuesday of each month. Residents may attend and provide public comment at every meeting. Additionally, the public may contact or request information from MEPRD by phone at (618) 346-4905, by email at info@meprd.org, or online at www.meprd.org/contact-us.html.

Metro East Park and Recreation District also manages separate social media pages for MEPRD, Malcolm W. Martin Memorial Park, and Metro East Recreation, any of which can be used to interact with MEPRD.

PUBLIC RECREATION IN MADISON & ST. CLAIR COUNTIES

BY THE NUMBERS

230 MILES OF
BIKE TRAILS

A robust, regional network of bike trails, aka shared-use paths.

330 PUBLIC
PARKS & GREENSPACES

Endless opportunities to play and explore nature.

51 MILES OF
HIKING TRAILS

Unleash your inner adventurer and explore nature's hidden treasures.

30,290 TOTAL ACREAGE OF
PARKS & GREENSPACE

Parks, forests, prairie, wetlands & more.

92 MILES OF PARK
WALKING PATHS

Take a stroll through one of the area's many parks.

333 PUBLIC
PLAYGROUNDS

Opportunities for all ages and abilities.



67 PROJECT PARTNERS TO DATE

Metro East Park and Recreation District partners with other public entities, including municipalities, townships, counties, and transit districts, to advance its mission and goals. By supporting the projects of others that further our mission, MEPRD can maximize the impact of its funding, supporting a greater number of communities and projects than it would have otherwise on its own.

MEPRD is proud to have partnered with these entities over the years:

- Alhambra, Village of
- Alton, City of
- Americas Central Port
- Belleville, City of
- Bethalto, Village of
- Brooklyn, Village of
- Cahokia Heights, City of
- Collinsville, City of
- Dupo, Village of
- East St. Louis Park District
- Edwardsville, City of
- Edwardsville Township
- Fairmont City, Village of
- Fairview Heights, City of
- Freeburg, Village of
- Freeburg Park District
- Gateway East Trails
- Glen Carbon, Village of
- Godfrey, Village of
- Granite City, City of
- Great Rivers Greenway District
- Hamel, Village of
- Hartford, Village of
- Highland, City of
- Horner Park District
- Lebanon, City of
- Lewis and Clark Community College
- Madison, City of
- Madison County Transit District
- Marine, Village of
- Maryville, Village of
- Mascoutah, City of
- McKendree University
- Millstadt, Village of
- Nature Preserve Foundation
- O'Fallon, City of
- Pontoon Beach, Village of
- Roxana Community Park District
- Sauget, Village of
- Shiloh, Village of
- Smithton, Village of
- SIU Edwardsville
- Southwestern Illinois College
- St. Clair County
- St. Clair County Transit District
- St. Clair Township
- St. Jacob
- St. Jacob Park District
- St. Jacob Township
- St. Libory
- Stookey Township
- Sugar Loaf Township
- Swansea, Village of
- Tri-Township Park District
- Troy, City of
- Venice, City of
- Venice Park District
- Williamson, Village of
- Wood River, City of
- Wood River Township

2 REPORT PURPOSE

COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY

Metro East Park and Recreation District (MEPRD) formed its Committee on Local Government Efficiency on May 9, 2023, to study efficiencies and report recommendations regarding those efficiencies and increased accountability pursuant to 50 ILCS 70/1, et seq. (the Committee).



Our Jurisdiction

MEPRD's jurisdiction is comprised of St. Clair and Madison Counties in Illinois and has a total population of 523,259, as of the 2020 census.



Our Budget

MEPRD's annual budget for FY 2024 is \$3,502,750, excluding the mandated pass-through distributions to Madison and St. Clair County grant commissions.



Our Staff

MEPRD has three (3) full-time employees and no part-time employees.



Our Partners

MEPRD has proudly partnered with 67 unique agencies/organizations in Madison and St. Clair Counties.

3 EFFICIENCY COMMITTEE

MEETING SCHEDULE

Meeting #1: July 11, 2023 • 10:00 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.

Meeting #2: September 12, 2023 • 10:00 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.

Meeting #3: December 12, 2023 • 10:00 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.

Meetings of the MEPRD Efficiency Committee were held at the Metro East Park and Recreation District facility located at 104 United Drive, Collinsville, Illinois 62234.

The agenda and minutes of the meetings are available on the MEPRD website (www.meprd.org/meetings.html) or upon request at the MEPRD office.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Randy Randolph	Board President • Committee Chair
Linda Wheaton	Board Vice President • Committee Member
Mark Achenbach	Board Secretary/Treasurer • Committee Member
Jerry Kane	Board Member • Committee Member
Jon Greenstreet	Board Member • Committee Member
George Markezich	Board Member • Committee Member
Paul Evans	St. Clair County Resident • Committee Member
Larry Gullede	Madison County Resident • Committee Member
Bryan Werner	MEPRD Executive Director • Committee Member

EFFICIENCY COMMITTEE REVIEW

The Committee reviewed the following, non-exhaustive list of laws, policies, rules, procedures, and other documents.

Applicable state laws

- Metro East Park and Recreation District Act (70 ILCS 1605)
- Decennial Committees on Local Government Efficiency Act (50 ILCS 70/)
- Illinois Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140)
- Illinois Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120)

MEPRD Budgets, Audited Financial Statements, and 5-Year Projections

- Metro East Park and Recreation District
- Malcolm W. Martin Memorial Park

MEPRD Policies

- MEPRD Bylaws
- MEPRD Employee Handbook Policy
- MEPRD FOIA Policy
- MEPRD Investment Policy
- MEPRD Sexual Harassment Policy

MEPRD Resolutions

- MEPRD Resolution 01-01 through all MEPRD Resolutions to date

MEPRD Intergovernmental Agreements and Partnerships

- MEPRD/Madison County Transit - Goshen Trail and Formosa West Trail Intergovernmental Agreement
- MEPRD/St. Clair County Transit District - Metro East Riverfront Trail Intergovernmental Agreement
- MEPRD/Gateway Center of Metropolitan St. Louis - Malcolm W. Martin Memorial Park Partnership
- MEPRD/Ameren - McKinley Bridge Bikeway Trail License Agreement
- MEPRD/United States Army Corps of Engineers - Eagle Points Trail Agreement

MEPRD Required Designations and Trainings

- Open Meeting Act training for board members (5 ILCS 120/1.05)
- Freedom of Information Act - FOIA Officer designation (5 ILCS 120/1.05)
- Sexual Harassment Prevention Training (775 ILCS 5/2-109(c))
- Statements of Economic Interests (5 ILCS 420/4A-101; 5 ILCS 420/4A-101.5)

MEPRD Long Range Development Plan

MEPRD Efficiency Committee Guiding Document

Gateway Parks and Trails 2004 - Report and Guiding Document

Closed Session Minute Review and Release Requirements (5 ILCS 120/2.06(d))

MEPRD Websites

- www.meprd.org (for business purposes)
- www.metroeastrecreation.com (for recreation purposes)
- www.theparkwithaview.com (for Malcolm W. Martin Memorial Park)

MEPRD Grant Programs

- Park and Trail Grant Program
- Community Planning Grant Program
- Event Sponsorship Program

Other MEPRD Offerings

- Regional Inventory of Recreation Assets
- Extensive inhouse GIS database
- Mapping services and public map collection
- Bicycle/Pedestrian and Recreation Plan Repository
- Regional marketing of recreation assets and opportunities

4 EFFICIENCY COMMITTEE FINDINGS

The Committee found no inefficiencies of Metro East Park and Recreation District to report. Metro East Park and Recreation District is, and has a long-standing history of being, efficient on all levels, from its lean but dedicated work staff, to the extraordinary oversight of the District's financials at the board level and exceptional leveraging of state and federal resources by MEPRD and its partners. Furthermore, MEPRD has a proven record of effective collaboration with other agencies, units of local government, and nonprofits to improve the efficiencies of the region as a whole. Throughout its 23-year history, MEPRD has consistently strived to maximize the impact and reach of the MEPRD tax revenue.



5 EFFICIENCY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Upon a thorough review by the Metro East Park and Recreation District Decennial Committee on Local Government Efficiency, it was recommended that Metro East Park and Recreation District continue operating as it is and as it has been since the inception of the organization.

Acknowledging the District's strong record of efficiency, the Committee commends Metro East Park and Recreation District's ongoing commitment to enhancing accountability, transparency, and efficiency. This dedication to good governance has been instrumental in the organization's success and the region's positive trajectory for over two decades and should be continued.



