

Columbus Parks and Recreation Department

2024 Annual Report



Department of
**PARKS
& REC**
Columbus, IN



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Department Overview

Executive Summary

The Columbus Parks and Recreation Department is proud to present our 2024 Annual Report.

2024 was a transformative year for the Columbus Parks and Recreation Department. We proudly continued our mission “To enrich lives” by expanding access to exceptional recreation opportunities and welcoming community spaces for all. The long-anticipated opening of NexusPark marked a major milestone, introducing new amenities and creating exciting opportunities for our community to gather, play, and grow.

Throughout the year, we delivered outstanding recreational programs, maintained high-quality facilities, and hosted memorable events that brought people together across generations. These accomplishments were made possible thanks to our dedicated staff, whose commitment to excellence and community service is the foundation of our success. We also extend our deepest appreciation to the many volunteers and supporters whose time, energy, and passion continue to make a lasting impact.

We are proud of all we’ve achieved together and look forward to what 2025 will bring for our parks, our people, and our vibrant community.



Mark Jones, Director
Columbus Parks and Recreation

Vision Statement

“To build a community where everyone belongs”

Mission Statement

“To enrich lives”

#EnrichLives

Core Values

Equitable, Exceptional, Welcoming, Fun

Parks and Recreation Staff

Director of Parks and Recreation, Mark Jones
Associate Director of Recreation, Nikki Murphy
Associate Director of Business Services, Pam Harrell
Associate Director of Park Operations, Casey Ritz
Associate Director of Sports, Brady Buckley
Administrative Assistant, Jessica Prowant
Taylor Henson, Travis Tindell
Maintenance Supervisor, Danny Brown
Facilities Supervisor, Stephanie Heck
NexusPark Maintenance Supervisor, Simon Mellencamp
Project and Resource Development Manager, Celeste Reynolds
Marketing Coordinator, Maredeth Sims
The Commons Manager, Shanda Sasse
Aquatics Manager, Jim Lemke
Recreation and Columbus Gymnastics Center Program Manager, Jacob Hendricks
Fitness Health and Wellness Manager, Jordan Bunch
NexusPark Fieldhouse Sports Manager, Harvey Scruggs
Sports Programs Manager, Seth Rice
Assistant Recreation and Columbus Gymnastics Center Program Manager, Melissa Dishinger
Sports Coordinator, Collin Lollar
Hamilton Community Center and Ice Arena Manager, Carleen Fry
Golf Pro/Manager, Keith VanDeventer
Payroll/HR Specialist, Tonia Medaris
Accounts Payable Specialist, Crystal Wright
Customer Service Specialist, Madeline Soelberg
Park Operations Administrative Assistant, Lori Hedrick
The Commons Administrative Assistant, Pamela Carlson
Hamilton Community Center and Ice Arena Customer Service Specialist, Chris Noblitt

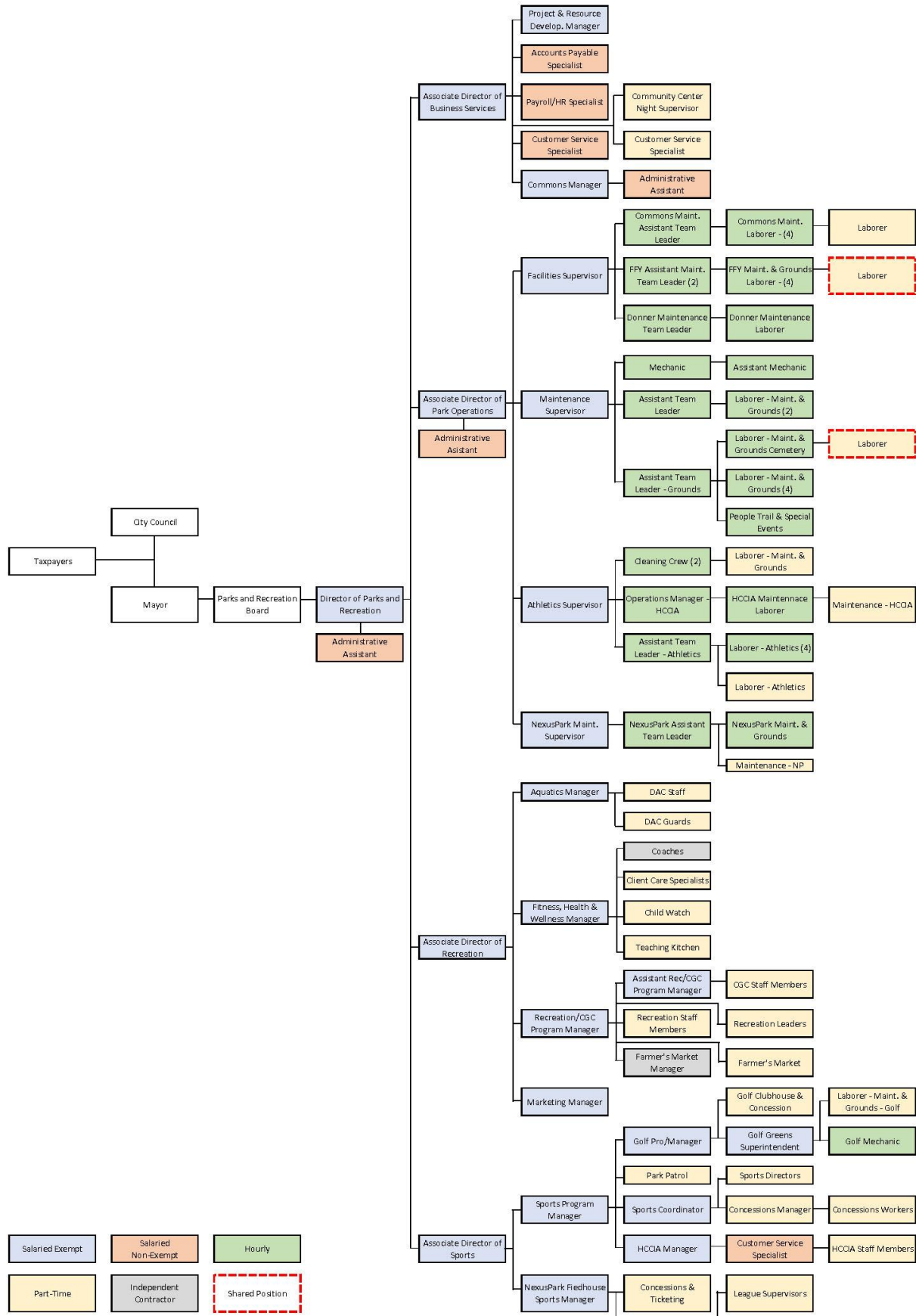
Parks and Recreation Board

President, Columbus Park Board, Mark Levett
Vice President, Columbus Park Board, Dave Bush
Secretary, Columbus Park Board, Miriam Portaluppi
Member, Columbus Park Board, Chaz Smith

Meetings of the Columbus Park Board are held on the second Thursday of each month at 4:00 p.m. at City Hall.

- January 11, 2024
- February 8, 2024
- March 21, 2024
- April 11, 2024
- May 9, 2024
- June 13, 2024
- July 11, 2024
- August 8, 2024
- September 12, 2024
- October 10, 2024
- November 14, 2024
- December 12, 2024

Organizational Chart



Programs and Major Accomplishments

Columbus Farmer's Market

The Columbus Farmers Market, managed by the Columbus Parks and Recreation Department, is a source of pride for the city, the department, and the community. This 20-week community event takes place every Saturday at Columbus City Hall, serving as an essential resource that meets the diverse needs of residents. For vendors, the market provides a valuable source of income and business growth. For many shoppers, it offers affordable, locally sourced produce. For others, it is a beloved tradition—a place to gather, explore, enjoy live entertainment, or simply savor a cup of coffee on a summer Saturday morning.

The vision of the Columbus Farmers Market is: *"To be the place to be in Columbus on Saturday mornings in the summer."*

The success of the Columbus Farmers Market is a collaborative effort, made possible through the hard work and cooperation of city departments, community organizations, and local vendors. Key highlights from this year include:

- Expanded SNAP Double Bucks Program – Through a continued partnership with CRH Healthy Communities, the market saw a record year of participation in the SNAP Double Bucks program, allowing EBT cardholders to double their funds for fresh produce.
- Power of Produce (POP) Program – The POP program distributed \$5,000 in market vouchers to children, encouraging them to purchase fresh produce and develop healthy eating habits.
- Reimagined Market Layout – A newly designed "Food Truck Row" created a designated space for made-to-order food and food truck vendors, which proved to be a major hit with market guests.
- The Columbus Farmers Market continues to grow as a vibrant community space, supporting local businesses, promoting healthy food access, and providing a welcoming gathering place for all.



Columbus Gymnastics Center

The Columbus Gymnastics Center (CGC) is a recreational gymnastics facility operated by the Columbus Parks and Recreation Department, dedicated to providing children with a safe, engaging, and high-quality gymnastics experience. Through structured classes, camps, open gyms, and special events, CGC fosters athletic development in a fun and supportive environment. The center continuously strives to enhance its programming, staff training, and facilities to ensure an inclusive and enriching experience for all participants.

Key Highlights:

- Sustained Participation Growth – Building on the success of 2023, CGC has maintained strong enrollment numbers, thanks to enhanced class quality, staff training, and improved customer service, leading to increased retention of new families.
- High-Demand Rentals – Saturday birthday party rentals remain fully booked months in advance, serving as a popular introduction to gymnastics for newcomers.
- Program Development – With improved class structures and instructional quality, children are progressing through skill levels at a faster rate, increasing demand for higher-level courses and leading to regular updates to existing programs.
- Facility Enhancements – To optimize training space and improve class focus, CGC removed the playground and reconfigured the beam area, allowing for safer mounting and dismounting techniques while unlocking new instructional opportunities.

The Columbus Gymnastics Center remains a pillar of athletic growth and community engagement, providing children with a foundation for both gymnastics excellence and lifelong physical activity.



Donner Aquatic Center, Volunteers, and People Trail

Donner Aquatic Center

2024 was another good year for the Aquatic Center. Donner had 24,390 people attend public session swims. The last hour of every day Donner is free to the public. This year we had 7,702 people attend our Free Swim sessions. DAC also had 1,076 swimmers in our swim lesson program. During the annual Jaime Miller Swim Meet hosted by Donner Swim Club we had 630 swimmers participate in the three-day event. Donner Aquatic Center partnered with the Columbus Park Foundation to host the first Movie in the pool. There were 357 people who enjoyed the pool while watching Moana.

Volunteers

Columbus Parks and Recreation is a member of the Bartholomew County Blazing Stars CISMA (Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area). The CISMA is a group of volunteers that educates the public on invasive plant removal to promote native plant growth. In 2024 we had 12 "Weed Wrangle" events. There were 217 volunteers who participated in these Weed Wrangles for a total of 615 volunteer hours. The Weed Wrangles were held in Greenbelt, Mill Race, Noblitt, Blackwell and Clifty. We would like to thank everyone in Park Operations and DPW for helping haul the brush away from these events.

People Trails

In 2024 a new section of People Trail was added. That section is along Poshard Dr from Middle Rd. to Deerbrook Dr.



Fitness, Health and Wellness

AEI Fitness Center at NexusPark

The AEI Fitness Center at NexusPark is a non-traditional community center fitness center which focuses on impact, community, individualized fitness programs, and state-of-the-art equipment.

- Analytical Engineering, Inc. (AEI) was a naming donor in the amount of \$250,000 which was used to help with the construction of the space and additional startup supplies.
- AEI Fitness Center at NexusPark, opened May 13, 2024, with record breaking pre-sale numbers for our Small Group Personal Training business model.
- There are currently over 120 active members, which exceeded our originally projected goal.
- The fitness center focuses on positive personal impact and lifestyle improvements.
- Future program planning includes Sports Performance Training, Group Fitness Classes, Personal Training Offerings, and Large Group Personal Training.

Teaching Kitchen at NexusPark

The Teaching Kitchen at NexusPark is dedicated to advancing preventative wellness, ensuring nutrition security, and fostering food innovation in our community. The following guiding principles were established by the Teaching Kitchen committee: 1) Education - encourage and prioritize programming that offers knowledge and skill building to support healthy lifestyle changes; 2) Equitable Access - provide low-barrier, equitable access to programming; 3) Cultural Diversity - provide programming that is culturally diverse and sensitive to cultural food patterns; 4) Whole foods focus - encourage and prioritize programming that supports current evidence-based guidelines for disease prevention; 5) Nutrition security - lower barriers and improve access to healthy foods; 6) Social Benefits - encourage and prioritize programming that forms and nurtures social activities and groups that support healthy habits.

- Cummins, Inc. was a naming donor in the amount of \$250,000 which was used to help with the construction of the space and additional startup supplies.
- CRHF was a naming donor in the amount of \$300,000, with \$100,000 promised one time per year over three years. These funds were to be used for startup supplies and programming.
- The Teaching Kitchen at NexusPark held its first program in June of 2024. Throughout 2024, two programs were held, at no fee to the participants, wherein the participants from the CRH VIMCare Clinic were referred and educated about proper nutrition and fresh meal preparation.



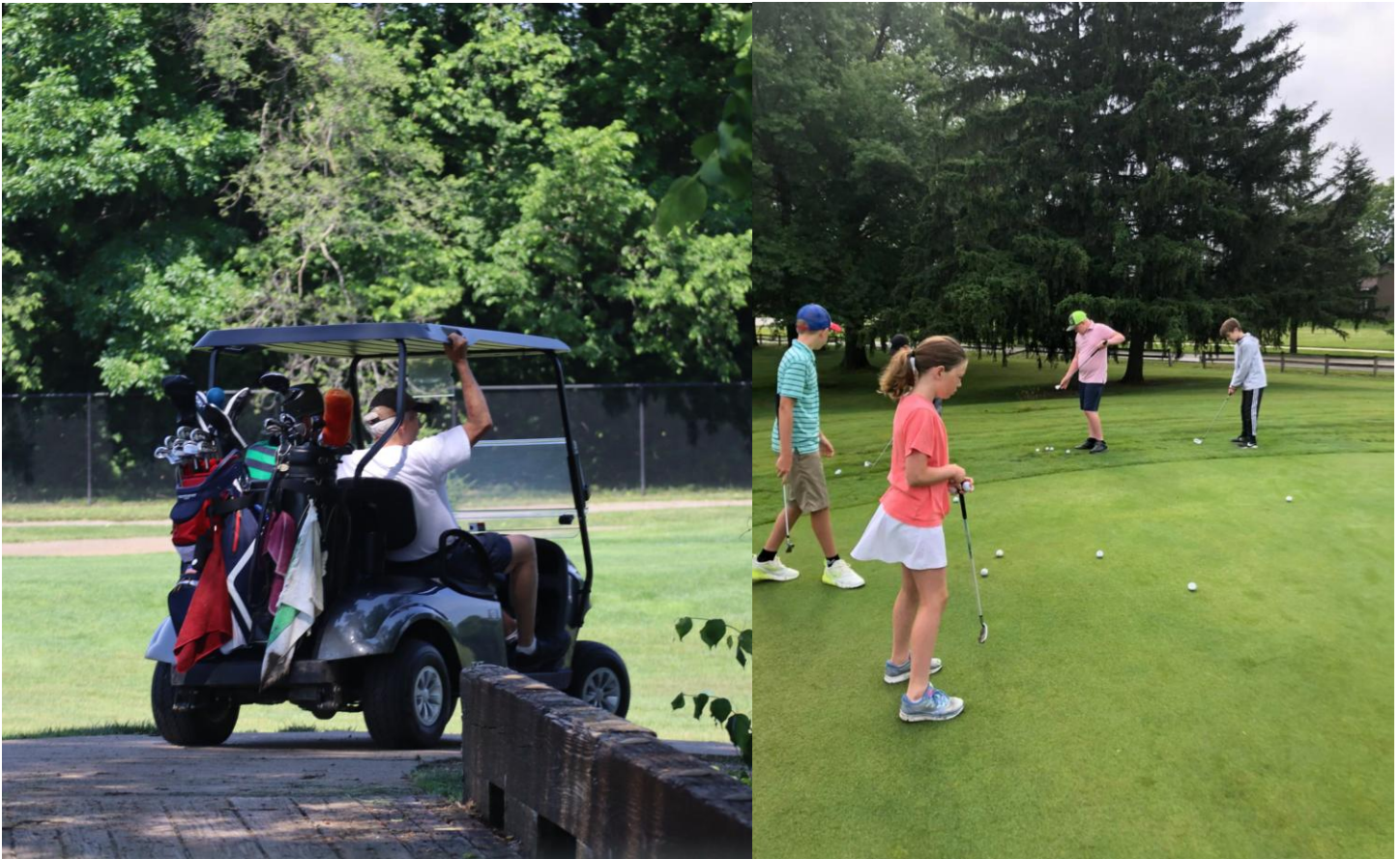
Golf Courses

The golf courses had a wonderful year in 2024. Our revenue exceeded \$500,000 for the second consecutive year, and we continue to support our young golfers. Our First Tee and Junior Golf programs were well attended, with over 75 players in total! The City Open returned to Greenbelt for the 2024 season with 43 players, and our very own Luke VanDeventer won the tournament by one stroke.

In 2025, we will continue to serve as the home course for our middle schools (Par 3). Par 3 will also feature summer activities with First Tee and Junior Golf league programs. Our adult leagues at Greenbelt were full in 2024 and we anticipate they will remain at those levels heading into 2025, providing a good balance between season pass holders and daily fee play. Our goals for this season have been set higher, and we are very excited to see what 2025 has in store!

Improvements:

- New cart paths were added at Greenbelt Golf Course.
- Our clubhouse has been updated with fresh displays and new merchandise.
- We are discussing improvements for the clubhouses in the future.



Hamilton Community Center and Ice Arena

Hamilton Community Center and Ice Arena Hamilton Community Center and Ice Arena had a busy 2023, with growth in our room rentals. Our staff, user groups and community have all worked together to provide safe and fun outlets for our community.

- Community and External Partnerships – Hamilton supports a number of user groups which provides a venue to meet the needs of ice sports and programs both in Columbus and from outside of the community. Our user groups this year included: Columbus Youth Hockey, Bloomington Blades Hockey, Lincoln Center Figure Skating Club, Midwest Broomball, Full Throttle Speed skating, and Five Hole Hockey from Philadelphia. Hamilton also helps to support the Chuck Wilt Youth scholarship fund by hosting our annual 5k walk/run Turkey Trot.
- Themed Skates - We have around 20 theme skates a year (Skate and Scare, Teen Night, Whoville skate) and fun special skates (princess teas, paint and skate) for the Public. This year we have added multiple Cosmic Skates
- Competitions and Tournaments – Hamilton was able to host multiple special events this year. The tournaments/events were: a Broomball tournament, the annual Ice Show, and 3 on 3 tournament, we were able to host the Indiana state College playoffs, State Figure Skating Competition, the annual Daffodil Society Show and a Women's hockey tournament. These tournaments and events help to not only sustain Hamilton but also contribute to the growth of the Columbus economy.
- Programs – Our pre-registered programs are picking up in numbers especially our Adult programs.

We added two new camps this year for figure skating and a new camp for hockey. All were very well attended.



Park Operations and Athletics

Park Operations consists of a maintenance crew, a cleaning crew, a grounds crew, a mechanics crew, the NexusPark maintenance crew, the FFY maintenance crew, The Commons maintenance crew, a Donner Center maintenance crew, a Hamilton Center maintenance crew, and the Athletics crew. These crews or teams provide all the maintenance performed in the Parks, on the People Trails, and in the various facilities that make up our Parks Department. They have completed numerous projects and gone through lot this past year. Starting with several teams dealing with turnover in employees and retirement. For an example, out of approximately 40 full time maintenance employees, 22 positions were newly filled in 2024. The Athletics crew had to be re-created and positions filled, two separate times. Several hours were devoted to onboarding and training of these new employees.

After 77 years of Parks Administration operating out of Donner Center, we engaged all teams in assisting with the planning and implementation of moving the Parks headquarters from Donner Center to NexusPark. Our focus was on moving Staff offices efficiently with no disruption to community services. A great deal of time was spent in the inventory of items in Donner Center to determine our business needs moving forward without losing past historical information.

In addition, maintenance staff supported numerous community events including Ethnic Expo, the Festival of Lights Christmas Parade, Mill Race Marathon, and the Solar Eclipse event in April. Planning for the Eclipse was challenging from the standpoint we had never hosted an event of this magnitude. We split crews on two shifts to cover the whole day. Our first concern was safety since we did not know what “dark” meant in the middle of the afternoon. With the volume of tourists’, we were told to expect, it was clear parking and trash collection could be overwhelming to our department. We also focused on visitor’s safety while protecting the City’s assets.

Staff also worked with several different volunteer groups, senior project events, and readied the City Cemetery for the annual placing of the flags for Memorial Day for approximately 890 hours of service. Numerous Parks capital projects including cart paths at Greenbelt Golf Course, court resurfacing at Mill Race basketball, Harrison Ridge Park tennis courts, and several equipment pieces where purchased including a trim mower and utility carts. These projects and items purchased all helped to advance the quality of our Parks system. I am proud of everyone on our team, as they strive to complete all the extra requests, meet expectations, and still preform their regularly scheduled maintenance plans.



Recreation and Special Events

The Columbus Parks and Recreation Department offers a diverse range of recreational programs and special events for all ages, including both free and fee-based activities. These programs encompass educational classes, adult and youth programming, fine arts activities, community sales, summer camps, teen programs, outdoor education, recreational sports, and community concerts. Many events are held in collaboration with community partners, enhancing accessibility and engagement.

Key Highlights from 2024:

- **Disc Golf Growth** – Disc golf has become a major component of Columbus Parks and Recreation programming. In 2024, we hosted multiple local tournaments at the Donner Park Disc Golf Course, an indoor winter putting league, and the NexusPark Open, a 9-hole indoor disc golf event at the Circle K Fieldhouse at NexusPark. Since its opening in September 2024, the Donner Disc Golf Course has logged an estimated 37,000 hours of play with nearly 3,500 unique players (based on data from UDisc, a course-tracking program).
- **Summer Youth Programming** – Free summer programming, such as Fun Days and Come Out and Play, has expanded in both availability and quality. The Come Out and Play program offers a free, supervised summer camp-style experience, operating Monday through Friday from 12–5 PM. Transportation is provided from neighborhood parks, and Donner Shelter serves as a central drop-off and pick-up location. Children receive free lunch daily through BCSC, participate in weekly field trips, outdoor games, and crafts, and enjoy an enriching outdoor experience. To teach basic financial literacy, the Parks Bucks program rewards children for positive behavior and completing tasks. These “bucks” can be spent at the Camp Store, which, thanks to donations from the Columbus Park Foundation, provided nearly 75 pairs of brand-new Nike shoes, art kits, sports equipment, books, and games just in time for the back-to-school season.
- **REC Usage at NexusPark** – The REC at NexusPark has become the primary indoor recreation space for many programs. In 2024, it hosted youth day camps, fencing classes, and various other recreational programs. This modern, multi-use facility has significantly improved program offerings, both functionally and aesthetically.
- **Free Community Programs & Events** – The Recreation Division serves as the department’s leading provider of free programming, including Movies in the Park, Come Out and Play, Halloween Fall Fest, and Santa at the Commons. In addition, several free events were hosted at the Circle K Fieldhouse, giving the community access to this incredible new resource through summer free days, winter family nights, and large-scale events such as the Easter Egg Hunt and Festival of the Young Child.

Through continued innovation and community collaboration, the Columbus Parks and Recreation Department remains committed to providing high-quality, inclusive, and engaging recreational opportunities for residents of all ages.



Sports

Circle K Fieldhouse at NexusPark (Indoor Sports)

- Tournaments & Events – We hosted a diverse range of sports tournaments and events, including youth basketball, youth baseball and softball, wrestling, taekwondo, commencements, and even a concert. Our largest event of the year was the 2024 USA Girls Midwest Nationals Wrestling Event, which attracted 1,000 wrestlers and over 2,000 spectators, making it the largest event of its kind in the United States in 2024.
- Internal and External Partnership – In 2024, the fieldhouse served as home to several user groups, including Columbus Express Soccer Club (CESC), Indiana University of Columbus (IUC), and Select Athletics. The IUC Men's and Women's Basketball teams, along with the Cheer and Dance teams, practiced at the fieldhouse, with the basketball teams also hosting their home games there. From November through March, CESC utilized the facility to train over 300 athletes. Select Athletics made use of the fieldhouse year-round, offering volleyball, basketball, baseball, and softball practices and tournaments. Looking ahead to 2025, we hope to welcome additional long-term user groups to the fieldhouse.
- Programs – In 2024, we established partnerships with organizations to offer our community a wide range of sports activities. These partners provided sports programs not previously offered by the department. Our 2024 partners included Columbus Pickleball Club, Cincinnati Reds, and Indy Eleven. Additionally, we launched our own recreation leagues, which included adult men's and women's basketball, both of which had strong inaugural seasons. In 2025, we plan to introduce several new recreation leagues for both youth and adults.

Outdoor Sports

- Economic Impact – In 2024, we generated \$3.4 million in direct spending for the City of Columbus through sports tourism. These tournaments included youth baseball, youth and adult softball, and soccer. Lincoln Park and Clifty Park hosted two state baseball tournaments, featuring a total of 215 teams. Both tournaments are set to return in 2025.
- Internal and External Partnership – In 2024 the sports department continued to provide facilities to user groups such as Columbus Express Soccer Club (CESC), Bartholomew County School Cooperation, Indiana University of Columbus (IUC), and the Columbus Pickleball Club. The Columbus Pickleball Club hosted their 6th Annual Discover Columbus Pickleball Tournament at Donner Park Tennis Courts and the Donner Park Pickleball Courts. Participants ages ranged from 13 to 80 years old with a total of 219 men and 133 women. There were a total of 352 participants, which is our largest tournament to date. Players came from the following states: Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina and one from Maharashtra India!
- Programs – In 2024, we continued our partnerships with organizations that offer our community a wide range of sports activities. These partners provided sports programs not currently offered by the department. Our 2024 partners included: Columbus Pickleball Club, The National Basketball Academy, Challenger International Soccer Camps, Columbus Rugby Football Club, and Indy Eleven. Additionally, we expanded our adaptive programming by introducing Basketball Buddies, which had 23 participants in its first year.

The Commons

In 2024 The Commons hosted 571 non-profit meetings and events that were attended by approximately 45,500 guests. As with past years, we aimed to offer a balance of free, ticketed and private events. The 2026 booking window opened on December 1st. We bid farewell to Bobbie Clarkson and welcomed Pamela Carlson (Administrative Assistant), Bobby Eisenmender (Maintenance), Beth Hughes (Marketing) and Austin Whitted (City Attorney) to our team. We also welcomed the new Blacksheep Pizza & Craft Cocktails restaurant! Their lease was executed in June and once construction was completed, they opened their doors to the public in November.

- A/V System Upgrades: Repairs were made to the stage floor pocket A/V transmitter, video distribution to the wall TVs and light yokes. A new presentation podium for the Performance Hall stage area was also acquired.
- Other improvements throughout the building included repairs to the sprinkler system, elevator, the Stomp game foot pads, flooring & wood panels in the playground and upgrades to the security camera system. Assessment of our HVAC system is included in the ongoing building utilization study.
- In December Parks & Rec hosted a free Santa Meet & Greet and a parade viewing party in the Performance Hall later that evening as part of the Columbus Festival of Lights festivities.
- Our very own Elf on a Shelf, Bing Berry Buttons visited The Commons over the holidays. We shared his daily shenanigans on and around our block each morning which led to a 74.2% increase in social media views and a 263.5 % increase in content interactions on our page. Guests and staff enjoyed this festive addition and we'll probably see Bing again next year!
- Art & Exhibit Displays included:
 - Umoja Unveiled Kwanzaa Exhibit, celebrating Black History Month
 - Design an Ad Entries from W.D. Richards Elementary 5th Graders
 - 50 Years of Chaos! Exhibit
 - Legacy of Leadership Mayors of Columbus
 - Rockcreek Elem. Students Artwork "Just make a mark & see where it takes you"
 - Youth Leadership Bartholomew County Banners

Events by Location

Xenia Miller Room:	221
Lower Conference Room:	177
Lower Lobby:	12
Upper Lobby:	51
Performance Hall:	106
Patio:	0
Full Rental:	4

Events by Type

Total Private Events:	65
Total Free Events:	65
Total Ticketed Events:	43
<i>(excludes conference room meetings)</i>	

<u>Total 2024 Events:</u>	571
<u>Total Estimated Attendees:</u>	45,552 Guests



Marketing

In 2024, the focus was on establishment of a marketing strategy in consideration of the multitude of facilities, programs, events, and parks spaces that fall under the scope of Parks and Recreation. Increasing operational efficiencies, establishing key performance indicators, more widely disseminating information, continuing collaborative outreach, and establishing internal training on public messaging were our top initiatives.

Efficiencies and Information Dissemination - Information dissemination is vital to connect users to our programs.

- In 4Q, we created a monthly one-pager event and registration calendar for community distribution within targeted email campaigns, in public spaces, and physically distributed to community groups allows users to easily see the broad and numerous programs we offer and quickly connect them with the link to register.
- We simplified the weekly Sunday Funday email sent to our distribution list to for greater accessibility with a simple list of upcoming programs, events, and registrations. In conjunction with the streamline of information, we've created an internal social media content calendar to ensure we are consistently either informing the public about upcoming events and registrations or educating the public about our Parks offerings.
- We held an internal social media marketing training for all program managers. This training focused on how audiences engage on social media and what type of content produces interest and engagement. The goal is quality, not quantity. We began grouping social media posts and communications grouped by registrations based on type (upcoming sports, upcoming recreation, upcoming education and certification opportunities). We established social media engagement goals mid 4Q as increased engagement results in further reach of content.
For reference, our 4Q engagement rate was 3.67% compared to 1.76% in 4Q of 2023. Our departmental goal is a 4% social media engagement rate. In December alone, we decreased our number of posts by 71%, but increased engagement by 60% compared to December of 2023. See table below.
- Signage in NexusPark became fully functional 4Q and consistently broadcasts upcoming parks and recreation events and programming while also supporting our sponsors, and greeting event attendees.

Outreach - We have continued collaborative efforts with BCPL, CYD, and ASAP on several events. We joined BCPL at their fall fest in October, co-hosted a teen event at Hamilton Community Center & Ice Arena with IYG and CYD and are currently working with ASAP on a potential partnership. We have a Heart Healthy event planned in February, co-hosted with CRH.

It's important to continue to engage with community groups and associations to directly educate the public about Parks and Recreation. We will continue to showcase our offerings in 2025 with the goal of one "road show" per month.

Public Relations and Communications - We created a FAQ guide disseminated to all parks employees to field questions we frequently hear from the public to ensure accurate and consistent messaging.

We began laying the groundwork to update our Parks and Recreation and Circle K Fieldhouse websites partnering with TD Advertising. Our focus will be ensuring our websites provide quality information for park users and event/tournament hosts and attendees.

The Columbus Park Foundation

The Columbus Park Foundation is striving to build a vibrant culture by supporting the development of programs and facilities that encourage connection and participation for all residents. The Foundation supports recreational programs, sports, and facilities that provide valuable mentoring for youth, important activities for families, and welcoming spaces for our community and visitors to gather. In 2024, the Columbus Park Foundation provided funds to Columbus Parks and Recreation's programs so they can stay free and low-cost to our community, and provided scholarships to the children in our community to remove all financial barriers.

Chuck Wilt Youth Scholarship: The Chuck Wilt Youth Scholarship Program provides children in our community more than chance to participate in their favorite activity, but also an opportunity to indulge in their passion for a sport or program that they may not have otherwise been able to experience. A record amount of scholarship funds (\$27,142) were used in 2024.

Plunge Into Parks: In 2024, the Columbus Park Foundation introduced a new signature event: Plunge Into Parks! This icy adventure isn't just about braving the; it's about raising funds for the Columbus Park Foundation. The Foundation put a pool on 4th Street and invited the community to raise money to make local celebrities take the plunge or take the plunge themselves. Partnering with businesses on 4th Street, participants and on lookers enjoyed watching people take the plunge, music, drinks, and warming stations. The inaugural event raised almost \$11,000 for the Columbus Park Foundation.



NexusPark

NexusPark opened its doors to the public in 2024 with the relocation of the Parks Administrative offices to the community center portion, the grand opening of the Circle K Fieldhouse, the launch of the AEI Fitness Center and Teaching Kitchen, and the opening of the REC which is home to our youth and adult recreation programming. Construction continued throughout 2024 on various stages of the project, bringing to life the formerly lifeless Fair Oaks Mall property. Through our partnership with Columbus Regional Health and Veritas Realty, the NexusPark property started to feel vibrant and alive, with new retail tenants and public use of the public spaces throughout.

- Opened for operation in April of 2024, including the relocation of the Parks Administrative Offices.
- Community Center includes the Parks Administrative Offices, AEI Fitness Center, meeting rooms, the REC, Teaching Kitchen, Child Watch, The Hub and access to the Circle K Fieldhouse.
- The Circle K Fieldhouse is a 150,000 SF indoor space with hard court and turf surfaces set to receive both sports and large-scale events.
- Future buildout options include potential for Parks Partner Tenants that will lease from the Parks Department and should align with the services provided through Parks and/or at NexusPark.
- The exterior campus will include a 1-mile loop trail, a 2.5-acre park, an outdoor restroom facility and should be completed by Sprint of 2025.



Budget and Financials

2024 Budget

Columbus Parks and Recreation utilizes four funds (Parks General Fund, Parks Non-reverting, The Commons Non-reverting Fund & NexusPark Fieldhouse Non-reverting Fund) in order to offer continuous programming for all age levels, events, maintain people trails and to maintain green space and facilities for both visitors and community members.

The 2024 Parks General Fund budget was \$7,736,451. These funds are derived primarily from tax dollars (property tax, excise tax, financial institution tax and commercial vehicle excise tax). They are invested in salaries, services, supplies and maintenance of the Parks and Recreation system comprised of approximately \$100,000,000 plus of assets.

The 2024 Parks Non-reverting budget was \$2,762,482. Unlike the Parks General Fund, which is financed through city tax revenue, this fund is financed from revenue collected from user fees. Examples of user fees include: ice rink admissions and concessions, facility rentals, golf fees, and program and class registrations.

The 2024 Commons Non-reverting budget was \$1,299,257. This fund is solely responsible for the operations and upkeep of the Commons facility. This fund is partially funded from an economic development income tax distribution from city tax revenue and user fees for rentals of the facility. Any money left in this fund at the end of each year remains and will be used for future capital and operational needs of The Commons to lessen the burden to the taxpayers of Columbus.

In 2023, a new fund was created for the NexusPark Fieldhouse Fund. This fund is solely responsible for the operations and upkeep of the new NexusPark Fieldhouse facility. For 2024, the city funded the startup amount of \$500,000 until the Fieldhouse is self-sustaining and operational. Any money left in this fund at the end of the year will remain in this fund just like our Commons fund for future capital and operational needs.

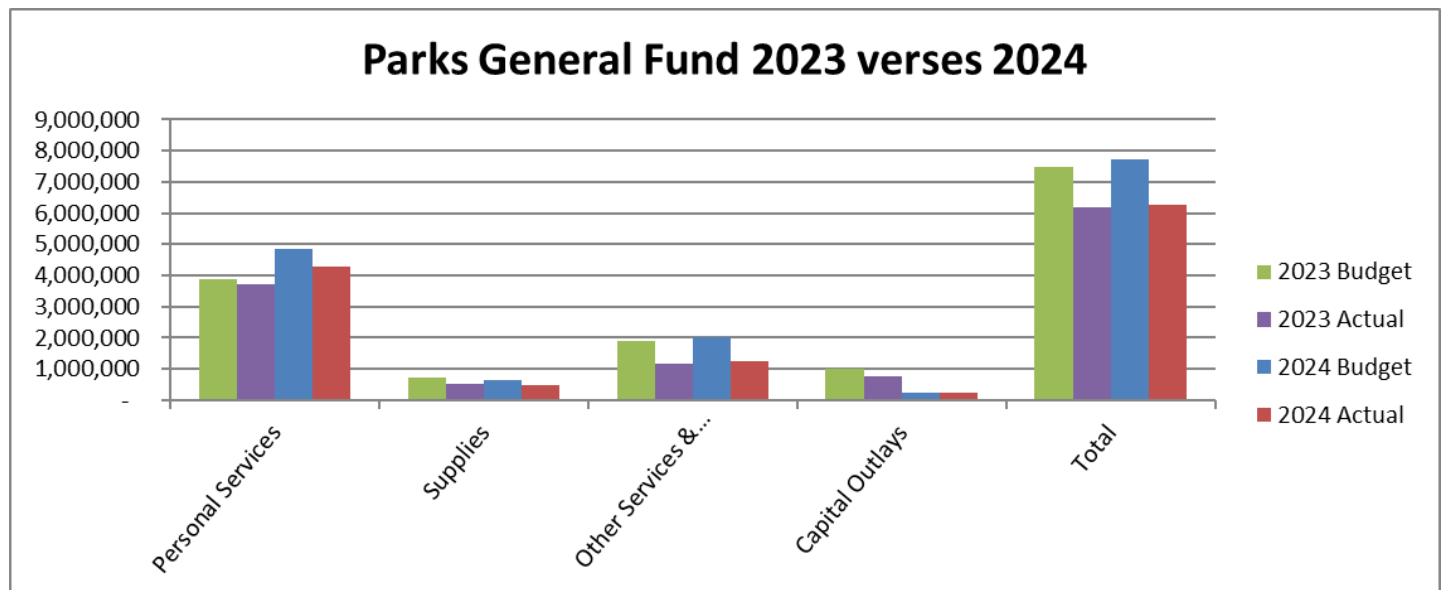
In 2024, we did have an increase in the ending cash balance in general fund by \$1,652,396 or 71.74%, from 2023 to 2024. This is primarily due to periods of vacant positions and NexusPark still being under project contracts for the build out. In our non-reverting fund we increased our ending cash balance by \$277,938 due to our revenues exceeding our expenditures in 2024 by this amount across all divisions in this fund. The Commons fund ending cash balance decreased by \$141,315 which is mainly due to a vacant tenant space in the food court area and one corner space being vacant for buildout of the new BlackSheep restaurant for six months. The NexusPark Fieldhouse Fund had a remaining cash balance of \$328,540 from the startup cash that was provided by the City along with some revenues for a partial year of rentals.

2024 Capital Spending

2024 Overview Projects	Budget Amount	Spent/Encumbered	Remaining Amount	Comments
Greenbelt - Replacement of Cart Paths	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 96,912.00	\$ 3,088.00	Completed
FFY - Replacement of Tables & Chairs	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 13,280.52	\$ 1,719.48	Encumbered
CGC - Gym Equipment and Upgrades	\$ 12,890.00	\$ 13,415.00	\$ (525.00)	Encumbered
Blackwell/Dick Wigh Replacement of Goals	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 14,780.24	\$ (780.24)	Completed
Lincoln Park - Replacement of Pitching Mounds	\$ 23,500.00	\$ 22,318.84	\$ 1,181.16	Encumbered
HCCIA - Addition of Locker Room	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 200,000.00	\$ -	Encumbered
3/4 Ton Pick Up Trucks	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 54,350.18	\$ 15,649.82	Encumbered \$14,826.78
Car	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 35,000.00	\$ -	Encumbered
Utility Cart	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 31,797.64	\$ 8,202.36	Encumbered
Trim Mower	\$ 36,000.00	\$ 34,754.98	\$ 1,245.02	Completed
Trailer	\$ 16,000.00	\$ 9,400.00	\$ 6,600.00	Completed
Turbine Blower	\$ 6,800.00	\$ 7,988.52	\$ (1,188.52)	Encumbered
Greens Roller	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 17,149.86	\$ (2,149.86)	Completed
Floor Scrubber	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 5,692.00	\$ 3,308.00	Completed
Overlay Seal Coat & Striping	\$ 79,157.50	\$ 79,157.50	\$ -	Encumbered \$44,632.50
Fencing	\$ 53,485.83	\$ 25,497.00	\$ 27,988.83	Encumbered \$13,455.00
Court Resurfacing & Restriping	\$ 65,000.00	\$ 64,530.06	\$ 469.94	Encumbered \$57,038.14
Curbing & Sidewalks	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00	\$ -	Encumbered
People Trail Maintenance	\$ 65,000.00	\$ 64,275.00	\$ 725.00	Encumbered
Tech Software	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 21,000.00	\$ 24,000.00	Encumbered \$6,000
Water Fountains	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 29,100.00	\$ 20,900.00	Encumbered
Jackson Street Property Purchase	\$ 34,166.67	\$ 34,166.67	\$ -	Completed
Batting Cage Refurbish	\$ -	\$ 76,321.99	\$ (76,321.99)	Encumbered
ABI Force Infield Groomer	\$ -	\$ 33,894.00	\$ (33,894.00)	Encumbered
Total Capital Dollars Spent for 2024	\$ 1,000,000.00	\$ 999,782.00	\$ 218.00	

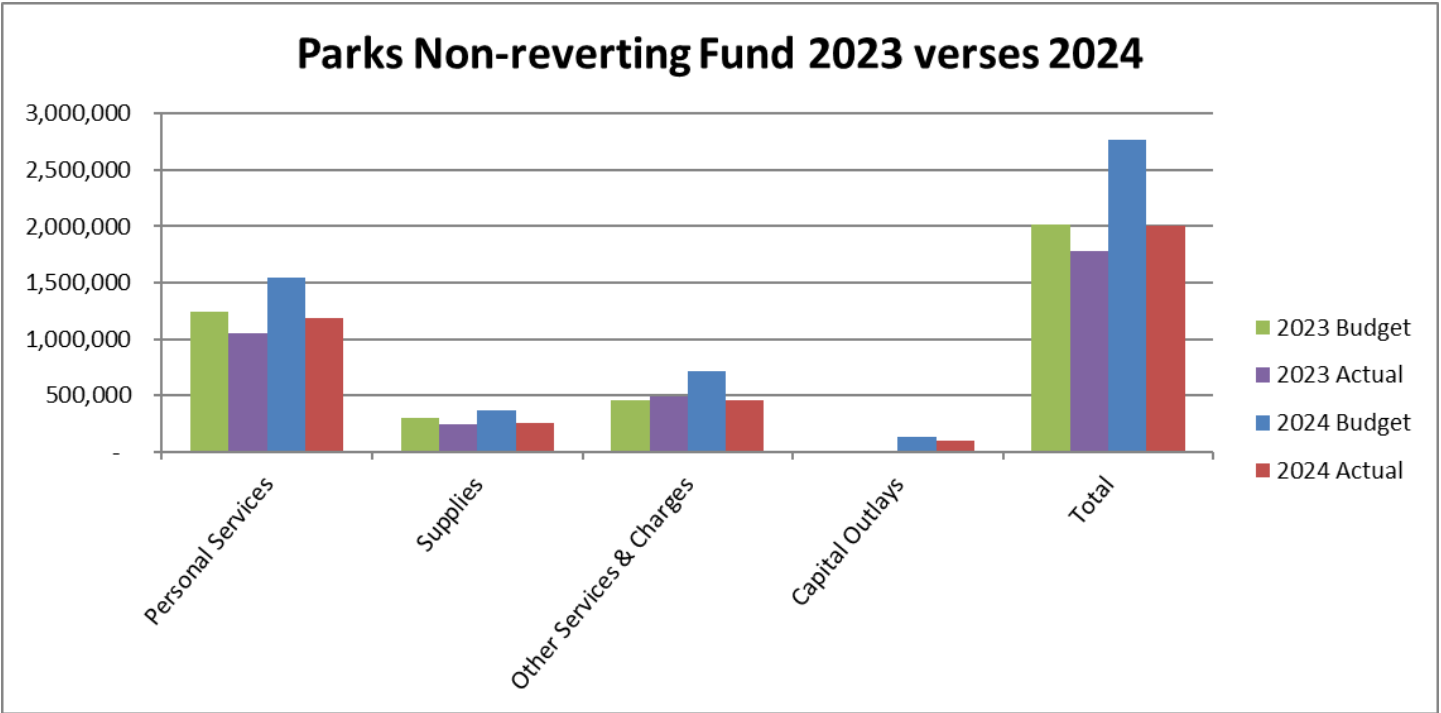
Parks General Fund

Parks General Fund	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2023 Percent Spent	2024 Budget	2024 Actual	2024 Percent Spent
Personal Services	3,879,171	3,710,588	96%	\$ 4,831,493	\$ 4,270,927	88%
Supplies	715,886	535,033	75%	\$ 635,420	\$ 501,099	79%
Other Services & Charges	1,880,127	1,189,373	63%	\$ 2,029,826	\$ 1,245,932	61%
Capital Outlays	989,538	757,883	77%	\$ 239,712	\$ 239,278	100%
Total	7,464,722	6,192,877	83%	\$ 7,736,451	\$ 6,257,236	81%



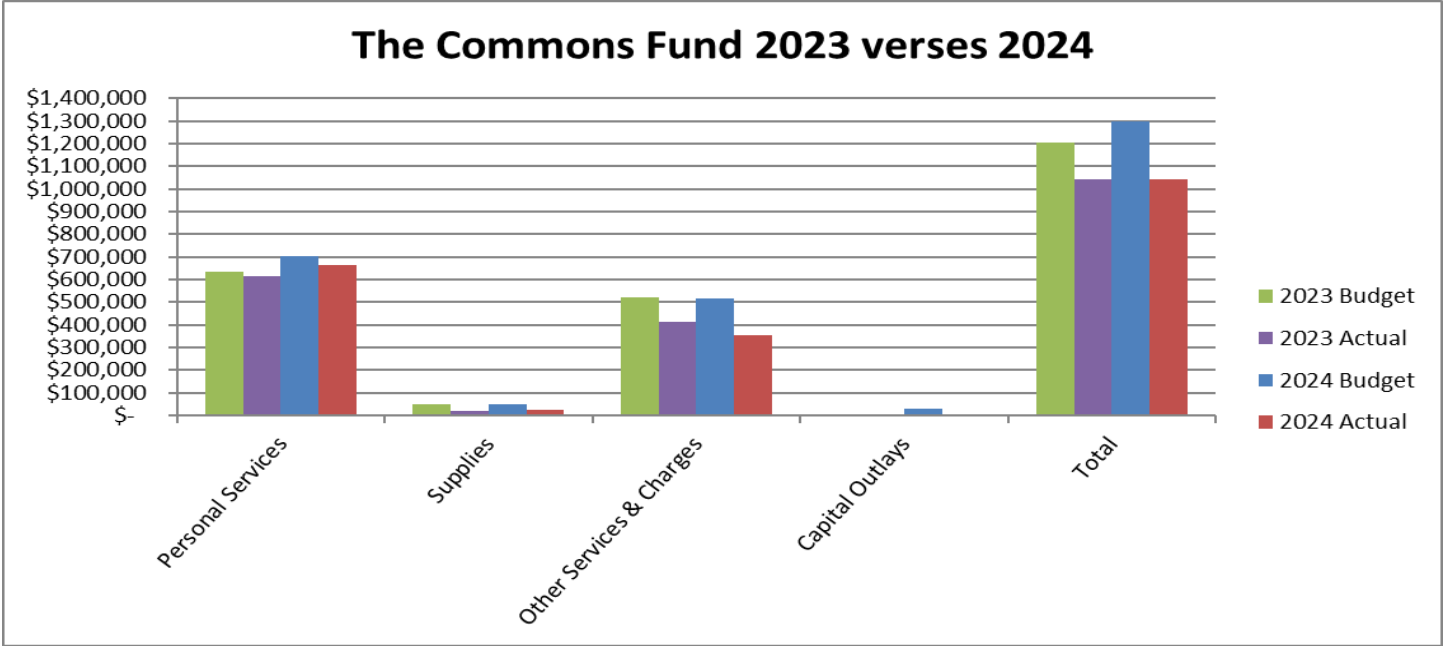
Non-Reverting Fund

Parks Non-Reverting Fund	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2023 Percent Spent	2024 Budget	2024 Actual	2024 Percent Spent
Personal Services	1,247,979	1,047,812	84%	\$ 1,541,912	\$ 1,189,560	77%
Supplies	305,541	245,165	80%	\$ 367,701	\$ 251,399	68%
Other Services & Charges	459,415	486,366	106%	\$ 715,869	\$ 460,101	64%
Capital Outlays	-	-		\$ 137,000	\$ 98,900	72%
Total	2,012,935	1,779,343	88%	\$ 2,762,482	\$ 1,999,960	72%



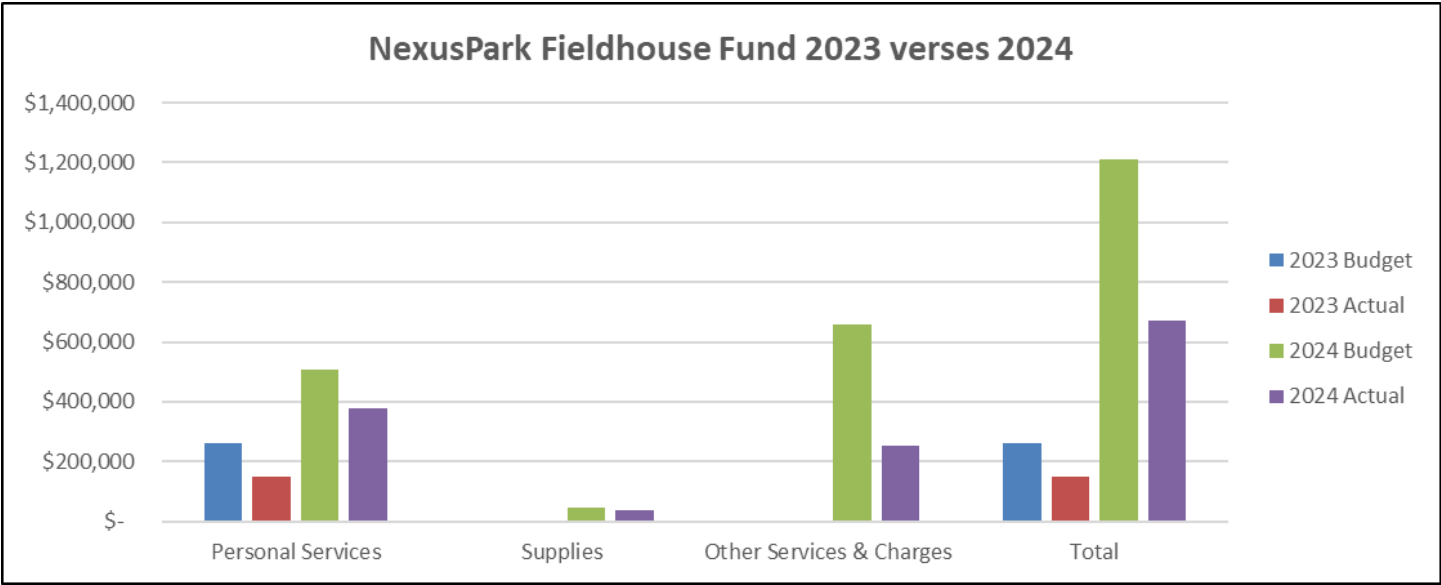
The Commons Fund

			2023 Percent Spent			2024 Percent Spent
Parks Commons Fund	2023 Budget	2023 Actual		2024 Budget	2024 Actual	
Personal Services	\$ 634,273	\$ 614,652	97%	\$ 702,150	\$ 664,748	95%
Supplies	\$ 47,804	\$ 17,669	37%	\$ 50,479	\$ 24,263	48%
Other Services & Charges	\$ 521,628	\$ 410,245	79%	\$ 516,628	\$ 353,570	68%
Capital Outlays	\$ -	\$ -		\$ 30,000	\$ -	0%
Total	\$ 1,203,705	\$ 1,042,566	87%	\$ 1,299,257	\$ 1,042,581	80%



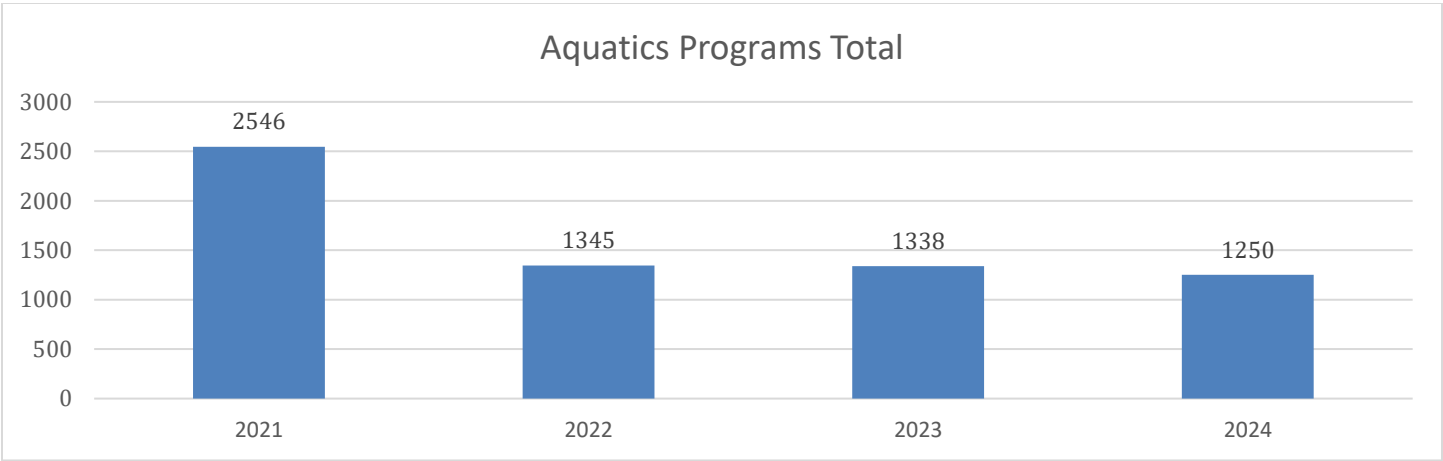
NexusPark Fund

Parks NexusPark Fieldhouse Fund	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2023 Percent Spent	2024 Budget	2024 Actual	2024 Percent Spent
Personal Services	\$ 260,000	\$ 148,617	57%	\$ 508,642	\$ 379,882	75%
Supplies	\$ -	\$ -		\$ 43,600	\$ 38,761	89%
Other Services & Charges	\$ -	\$ -		\$ 656,681	\$ 251,074	38%
Total	\$ 260,000	\$ 148,617	57%	\$ 1,208,923	\$ 669,717	55%

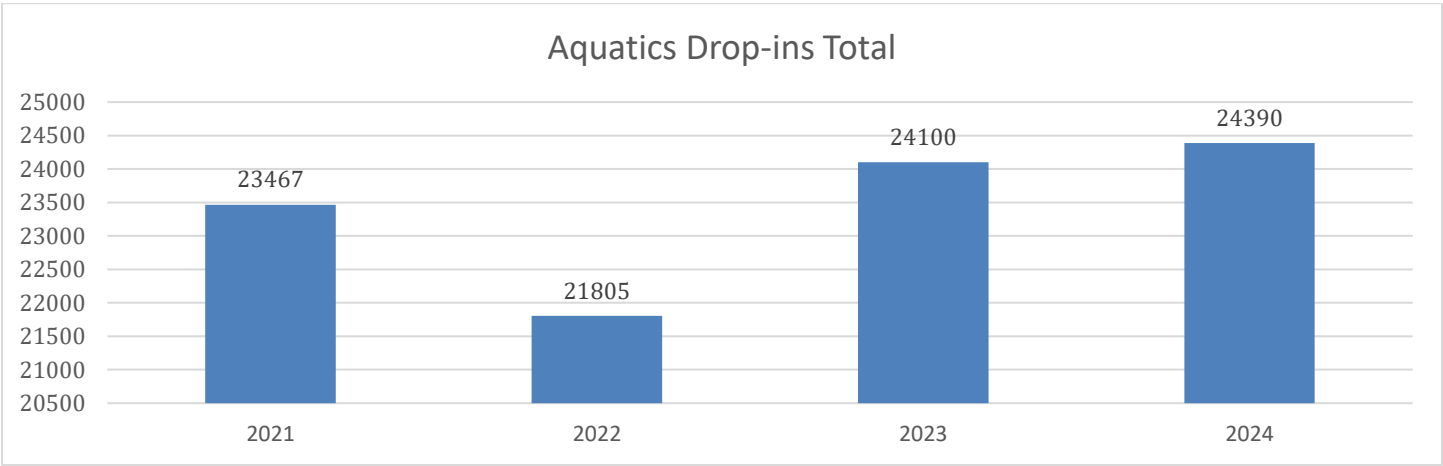


Addendum

Aquatics

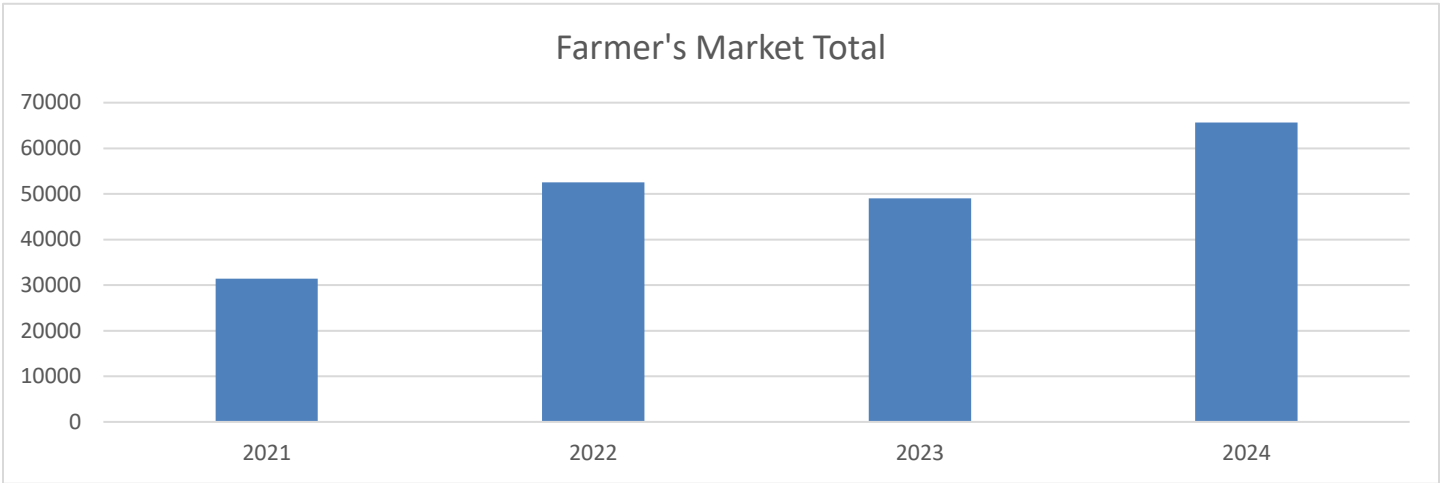


Adult and youth aquatics programs offered through the department.

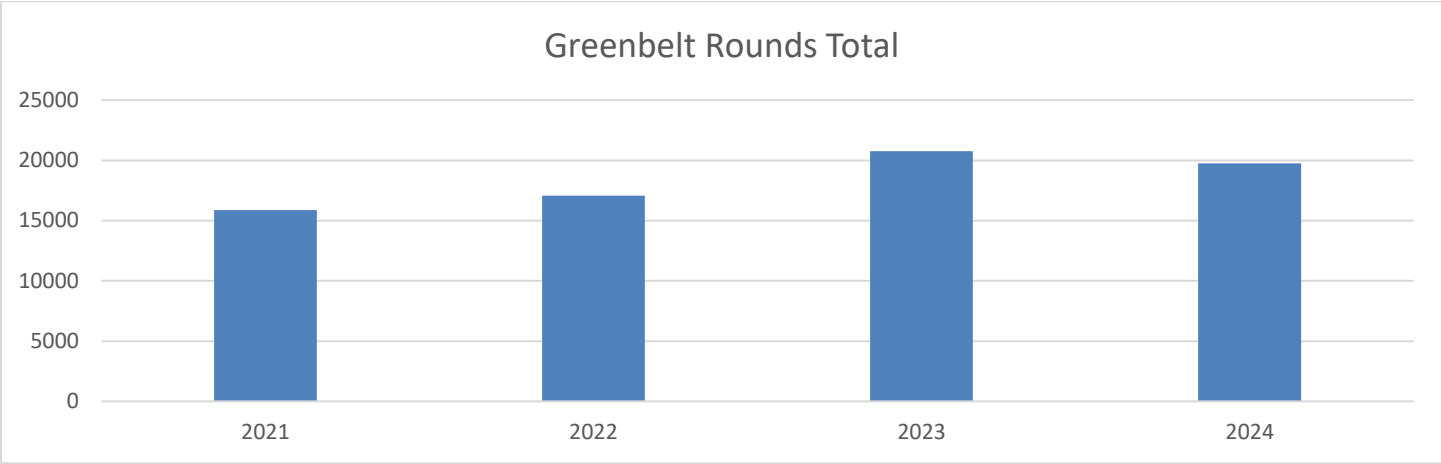


Includes all drop-ins including public sessions, preschool swim, master’s swim, and free swim.

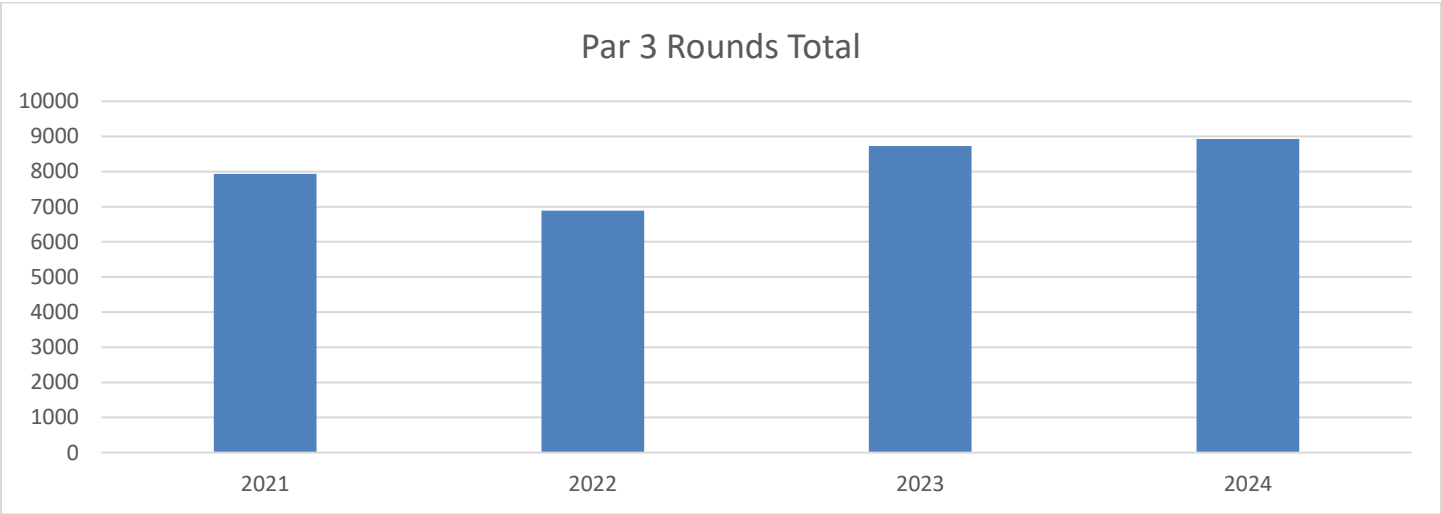
Columbus Farmer’s Market



Golf



Greenbelt: Includes both 9 and 18 holes of golf played at Greenbelt Golf Course.

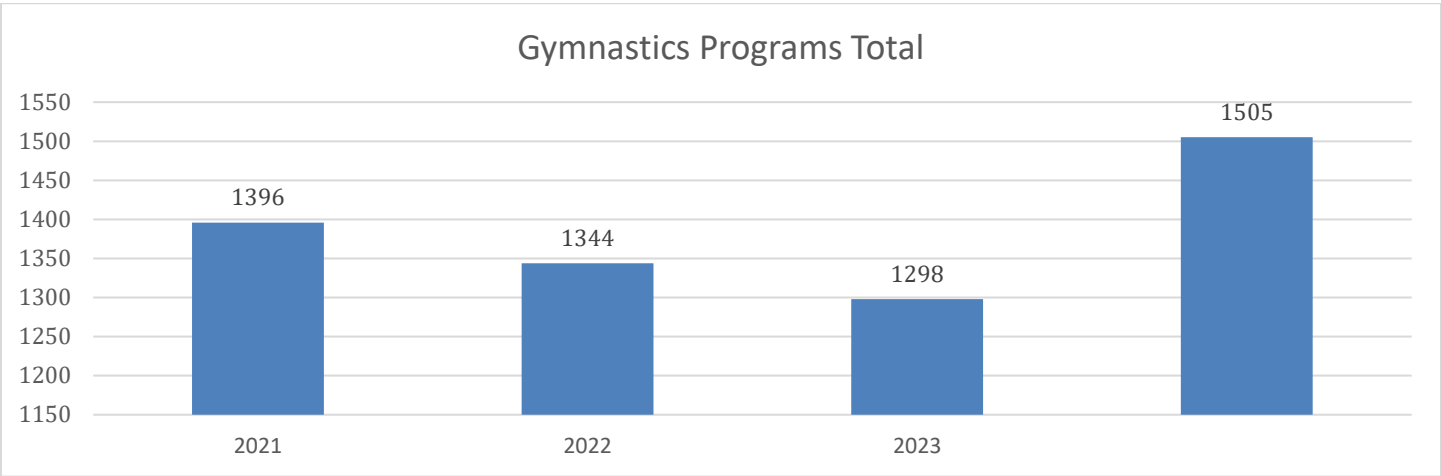


Par 3 – Includes both 9 and 18 holes of golf and footgolf played at Rocky Ford Par 3 Golf Course.

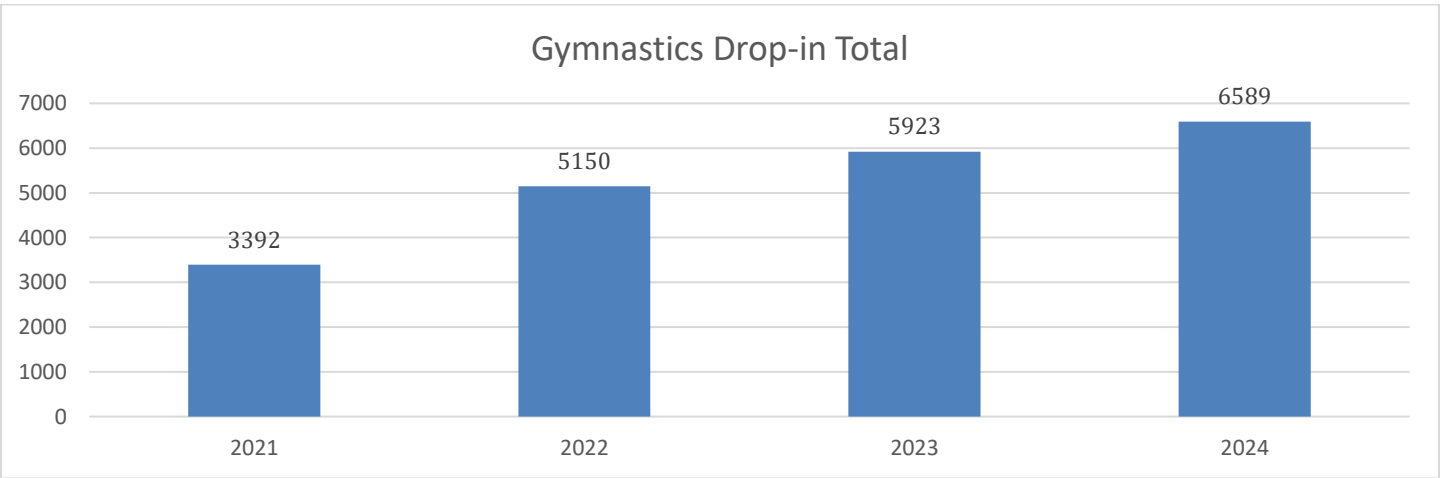


Includes all golf leagues.

Gymnastics

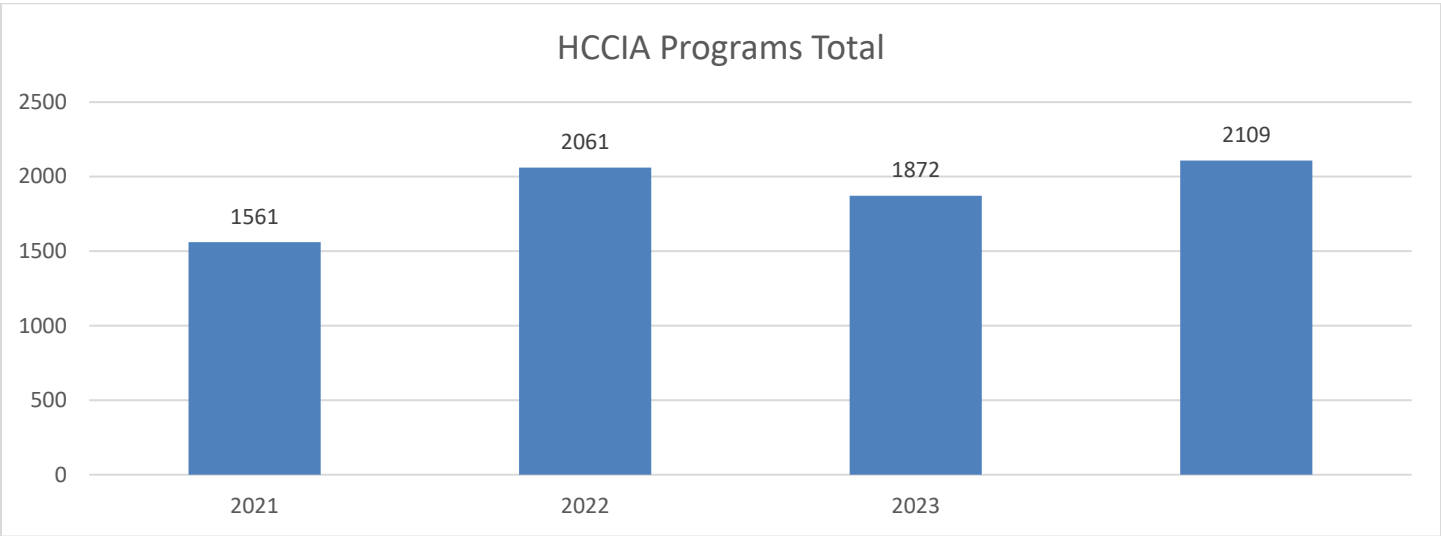


Includes all classes in addition to camps and special programs such as Flip and Paint and Field trips.

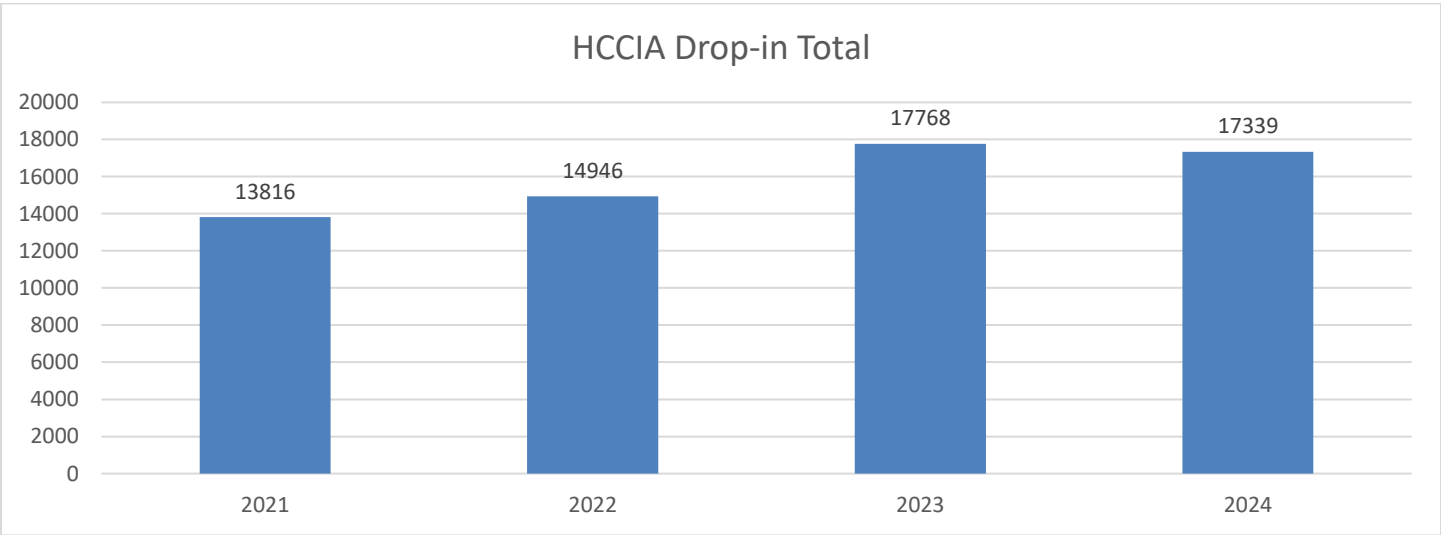


Includes all Open Gyms including preschool, Family, Field Trips, FFY and Sensory.

Hamilton Community Center and Ice Arena

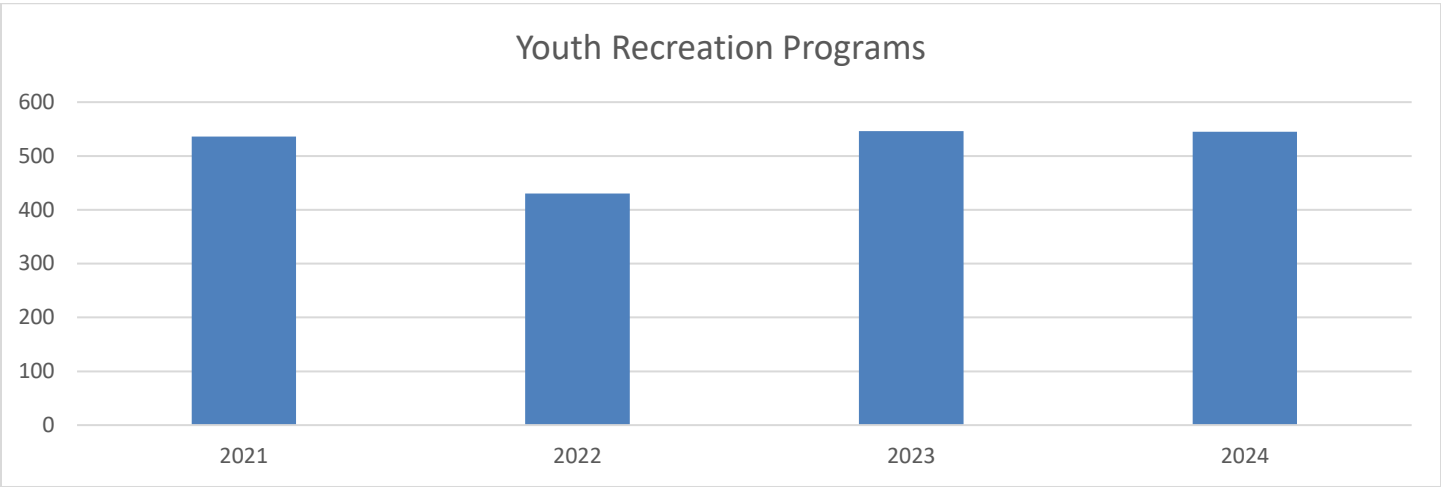


Programs include all levels of hockey, ice skating, specialty camps, public programs, tournaments etc.

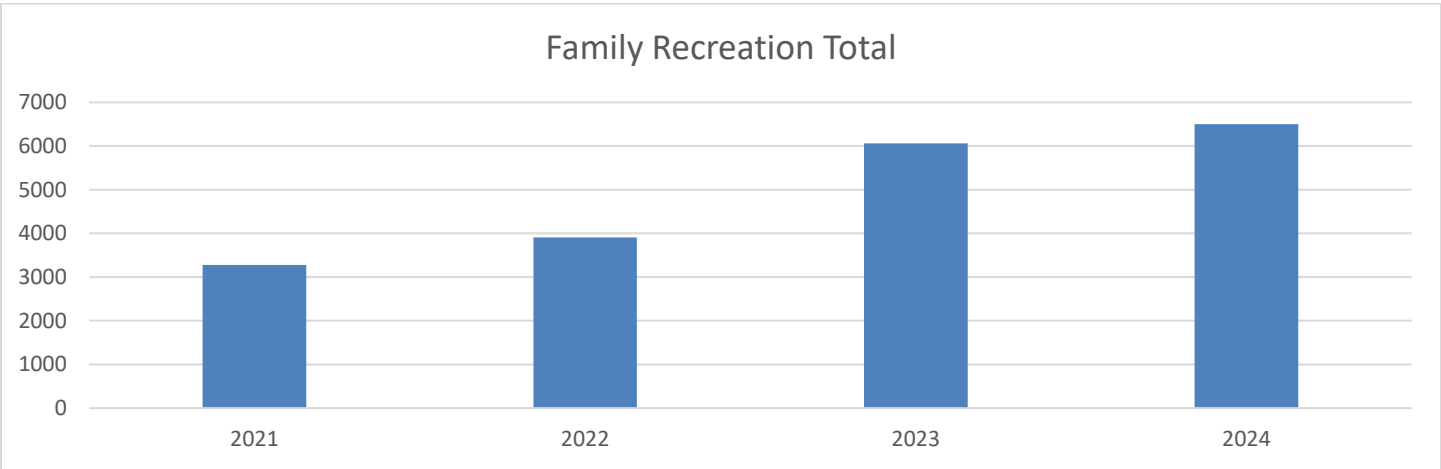


Drop-ins include stick and puck, adult, learn to play hockey, public skate, broomball, small ice, morning ice, etc.

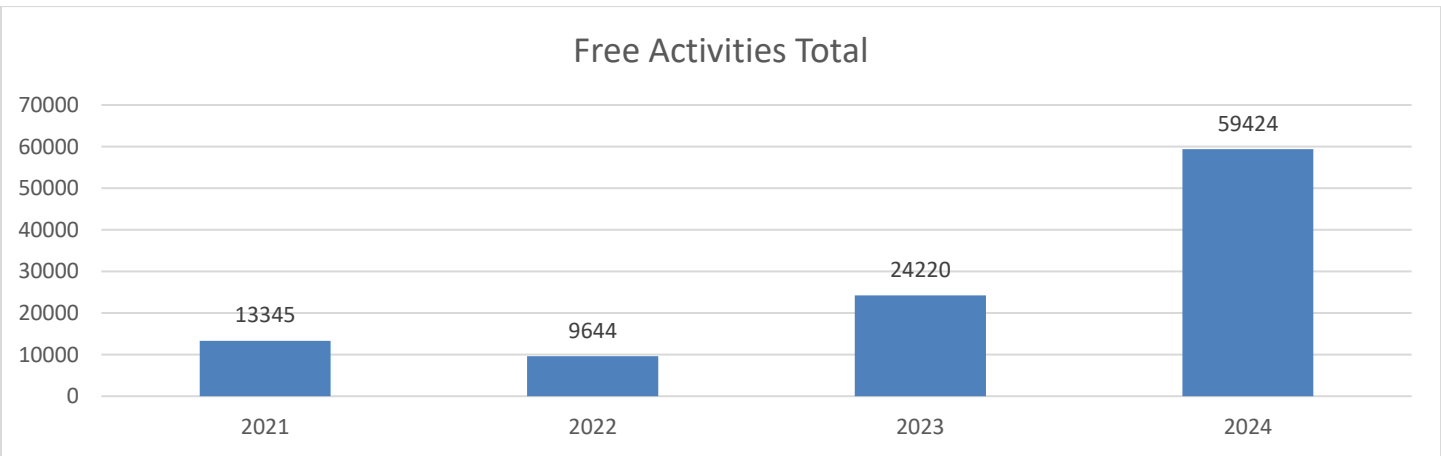
Recreation and Special Events



Includes all youth recreation including camps, classes, arts, drama, etc.

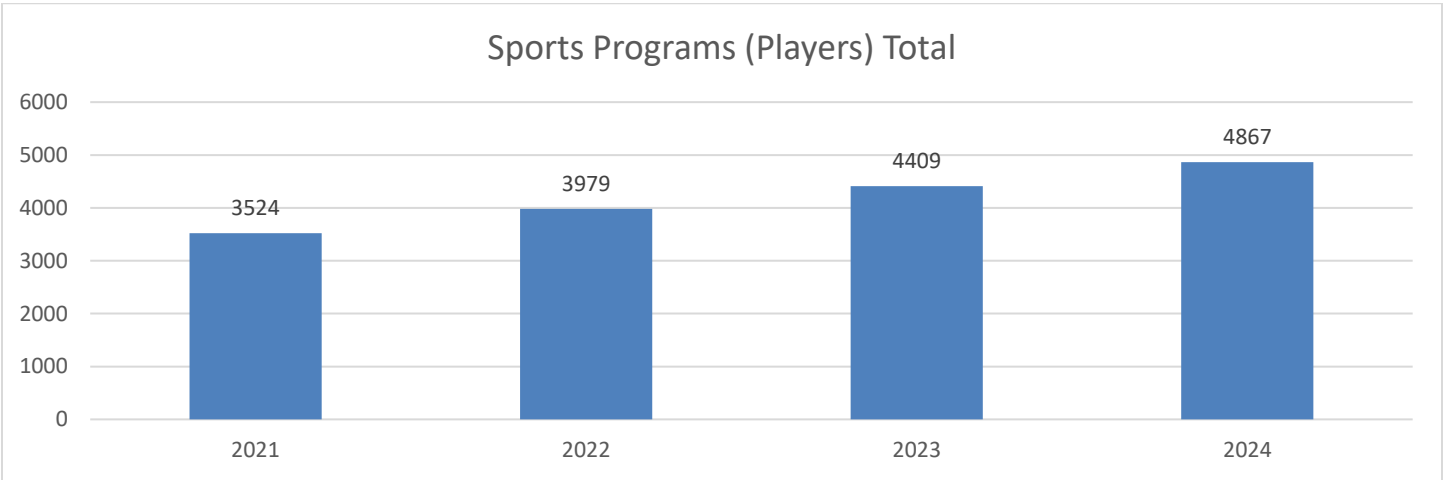


Includes all family recreation including family feast, great columbus campout, park of the living dead, halloween fall fest, etc.

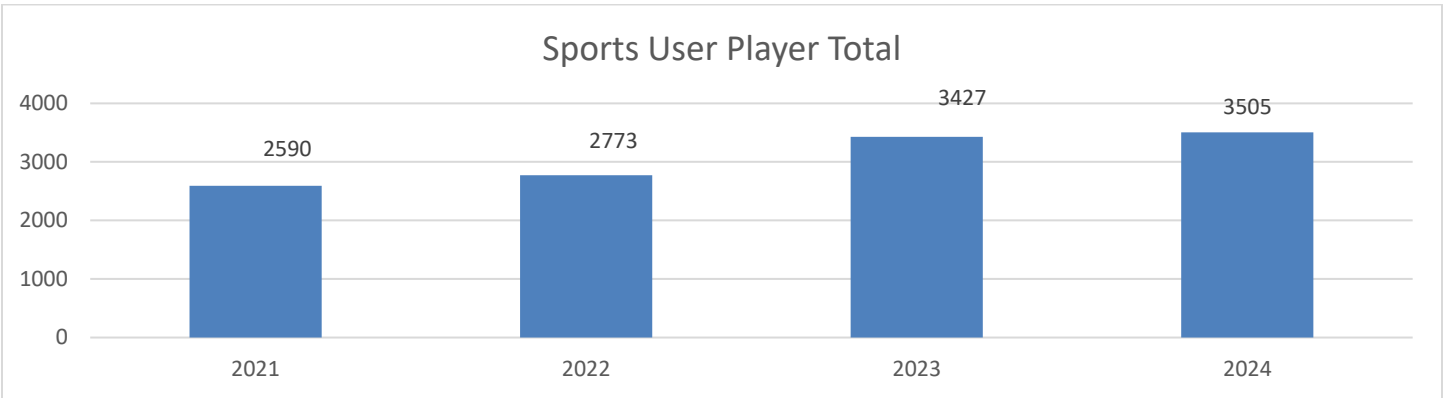


Includes all free programming including variety shows, bluegrass, movies in the park, fun datys, etc.

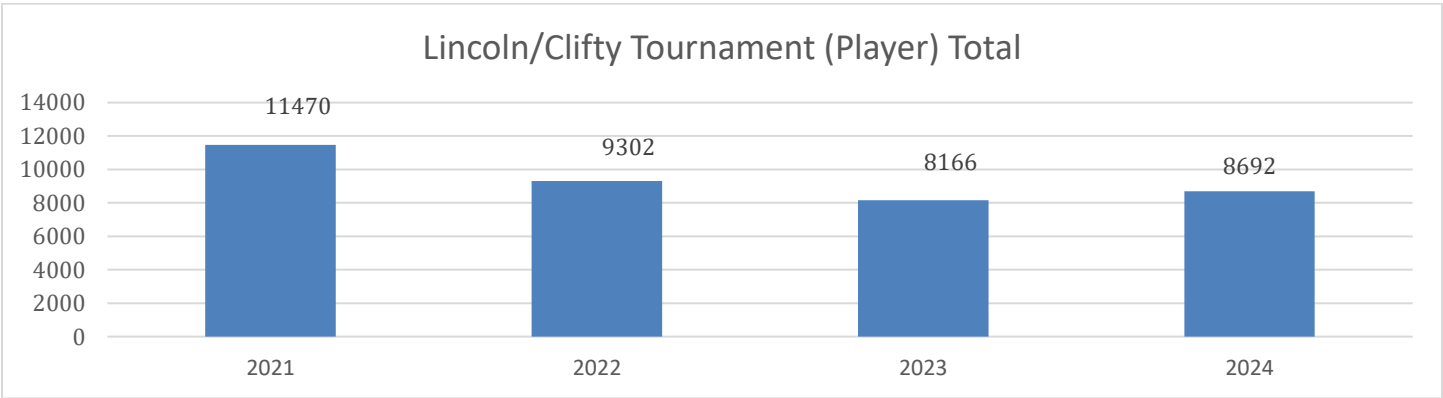
Sports



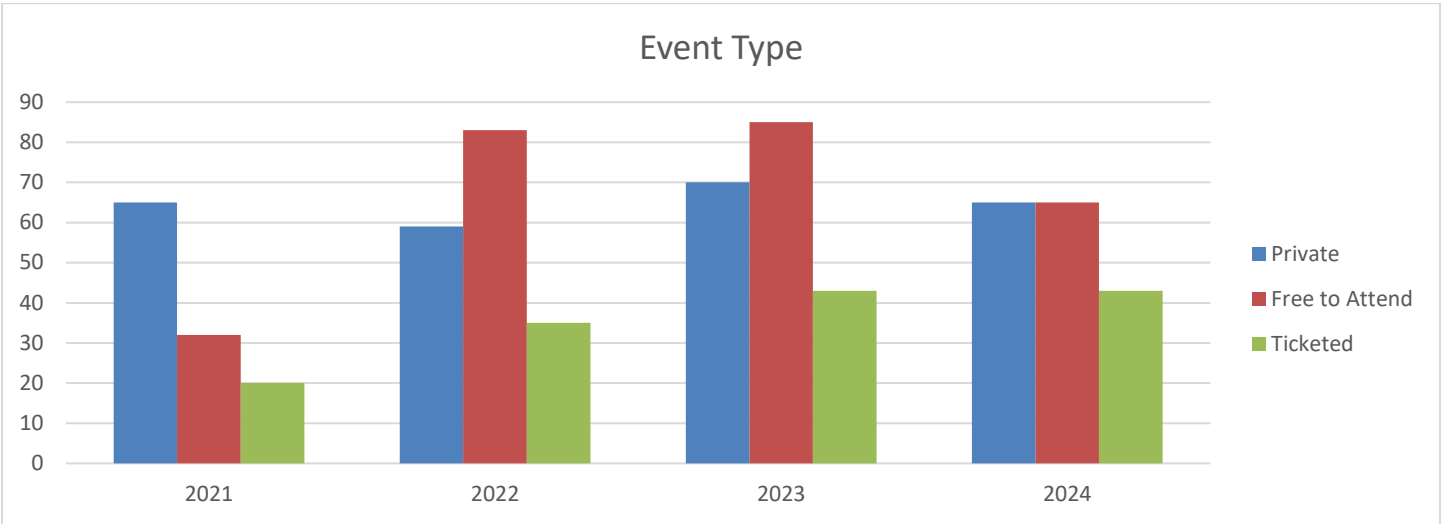
Adult and youth sports programs offered through the department.



External organizations who utilize our facilities.



Baseball and softball tournaments held at Clifty Park and Lincoln Park.



Includes all events sorted by type of event.