



**Billings**

**PARKS  
AND RECREATION**

# Work Session 2: Department Overview and Funding Issue

July 18, 2022

# Parks, Recreation and Trails Funding Issues

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## Presentation Schedule

1. **First work session**: presentation overview & multi-generation recreation center programming, estimated project cost, and cost recovery.
  2. **Second work session**: department overview and funding issue.
  3. **Third work session**: park operations and development tools.
  4. **Fourth work session**: park development and funding recommendations
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# Department Overview and Funding issues

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## Purpose of Parks and Recreation

- Most cities can successfully provide services like trash collection and street maintenance. There are two public entities that differentiate cities from each other. They also have an outsized impact on where families choose to live and businesses choose to relocate. These are public schools, and parks and recreation departments. Parks and recreation services make healthy vibrant communities.
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# Department Overview and Funding issues



Mission: To provide accessible, safe and quality parks, facilities, open spaces and recreational opportunities for all.

91%

Of Billings households believe parks and recreation is an essential service

-2017 parks, recreation and public lands comprehensive master plan

86%

Of Billings households have used a city park during the past 12 months. (National benchmark is 79%)

-2017 parks, recreation and public lands comprehensive master plan

# Department Overview and Funding issues

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## Benefits of Parks & Recreation

- The Billings Parks and Recreation Department provides myriad of essential services and benefits to the citizens of Billings. These services will be described in more detail further in this presentation.
- No other public space in Billings has brought together that many citizens in one location. Parks and recreation has the power to strengthen communities.



# Department Overview and Funding issues

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## Benefits of Parks and Recreation, cont.

- Park and recreation services have an outsized influence on the quality of life for Billings' citizens. We provide safe places for people to gather and play. We also run programs that help people come together and grow. We are where the fun happens.

# Department Overview and Funding issue

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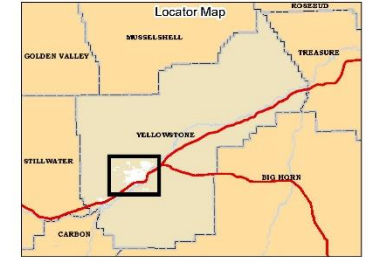
## Problem Statement Review

1. Current funding levels are below a typical parks and recreation agency in the United States identified by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA).
  - The difference between the national median level of operating expenditure (\$7,826) per acre of parkland and Billings' operating expenditure (\$3,112) per acre of parkland are the number and types of park amenities provided.
  - The following 9 community parks have not been completed:
    - Poly Vista Park
    - Coulson Park
    - Centennial Park
    - Castle Rock Park
    - Central Park
    - High Sierra Park
    - Optimist Park
    - Sacajawea Park
    - Veterans Park



# City of Billings

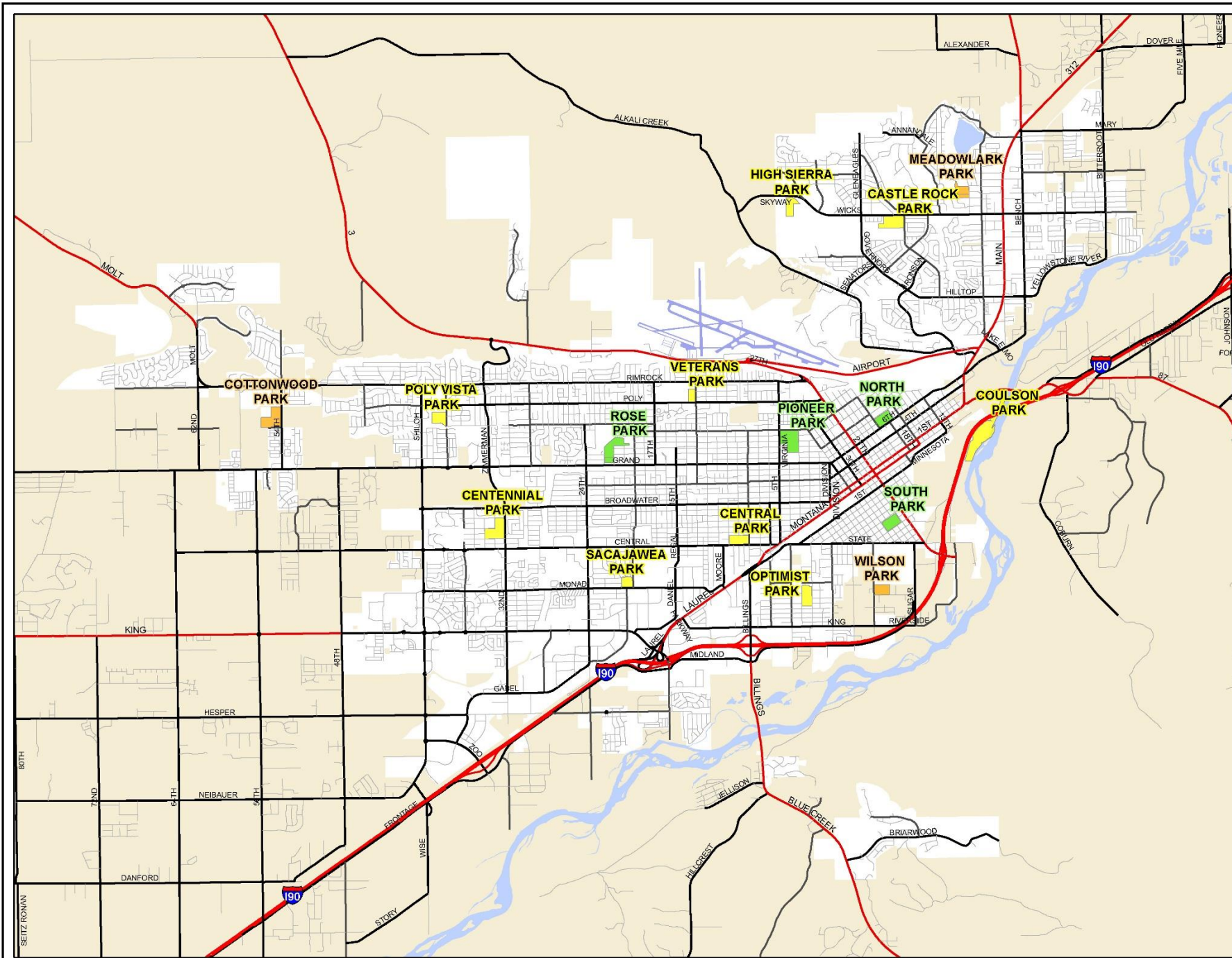
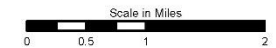
## Community Parks Overview



The parcel data mapped herein does not constitute a legal survey. Inaccuracies exist with both the mapped data and the Montana Department of Revenue CAMIA data, when seeking the definitive description of real property, consult the deed recorded at the Yellowstone County court house.

### Legend

- Interstate Highway
- Interstate Ramp
- US / State Route
- Arterial Street
- Collector Street
- Residential Street
- Completed
- Incomplete/Underdeveloped
- Undeveloped
- Billings International
- Billings City Limits
- Yellowstone County



# Department Overview and Funding issue

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## Problem Statement Review

2. There is no adequate funding mechanism for new parkland, trail and recreation facility development.
  - Until the completion of the first phase of Centennial Park in 2021 the last community park that was built was Castle Rock Park in the early 1980s when the population of Billings was approximately 68,000 and it has never been completed.
3. Park District #1 is set to expire the end of calendar year 2024 and will result in a \$3,275,400 (FY2023) reduction to the department's annual budget representing approximately 29% (FY2023) of the total budget.

# Department Overview and Funding issue

## Community Park

- Meets the recreational needs of several neighborhoods
  - Allows for larger group and recreational opportunities
  - Offers both active and passive recreational activities
- Size: 20 to 50 Acres
- Recommended service level of 3.5 acres per 1,000 people
- Amenities:
  - **Active:** Large playground, Informal ball fields (multi-use open space), game courts, Tennis/pickleball, volley ball, shuffleboard, horseshoe, ice skating, swimming pool, disc golf, restrooms.
  - **Passive:** internal loop trails, individual picnic sites and group picnic shelters, general open space, unique landscapes/features, natural areas, gardens, cultural activities (amphitheater), parking, security lighting.

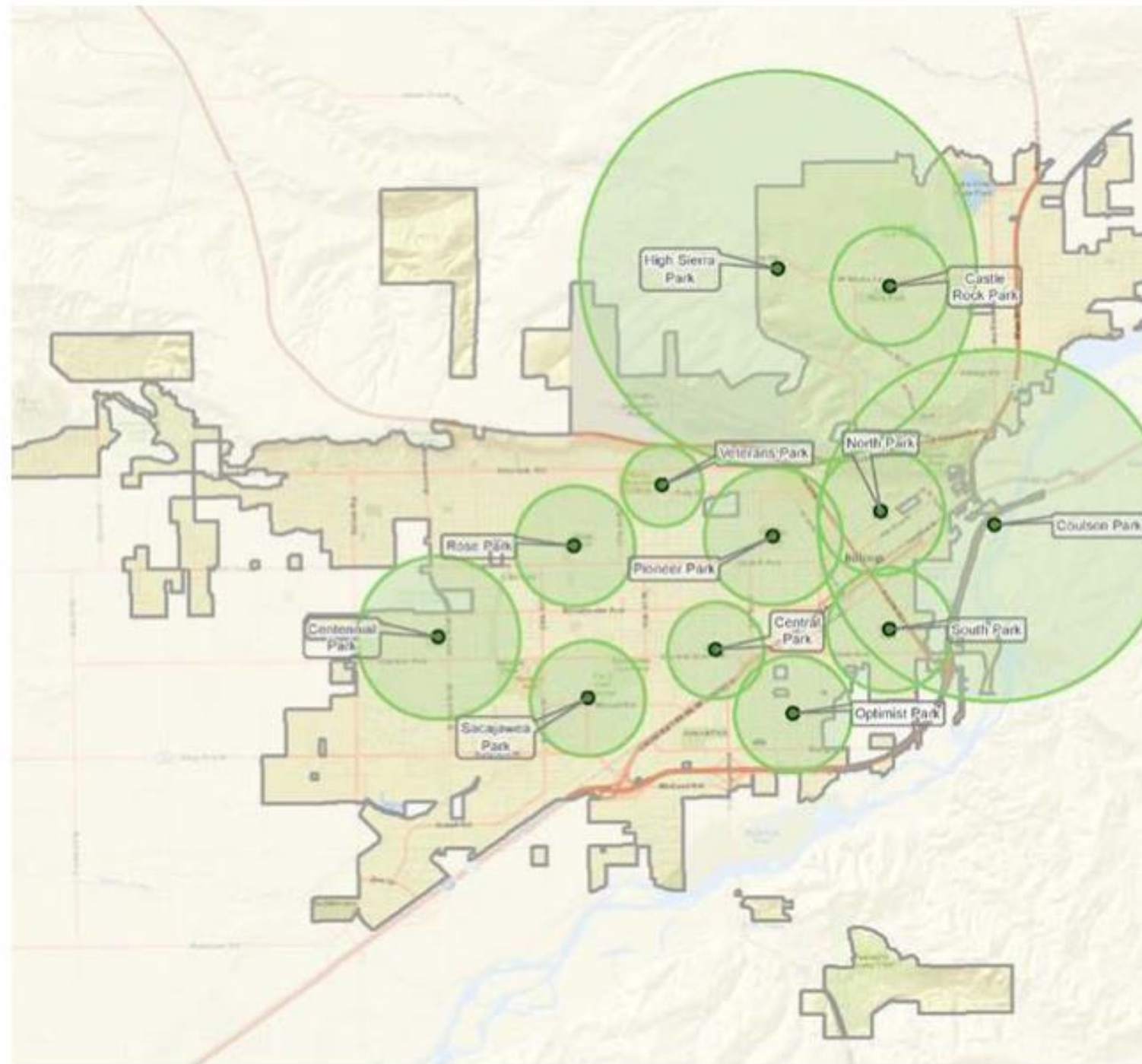


# Community Parks

- Veterans
- Coulson
- Centennial
- Castle Rock
- High Sierra
- South
- North
- Sacajawea
- Central
- Rose
- Optimist
- Pioneer

Note: map does not include:

- Undeveloped community parks: Wilson, Cottonwood & Meadowlark
- Recently developed park: Poly Vista



# Department Overview and Funding issue

## Neighborhood Park

- Basic unit park and meets the recreational and social needs of a neighborhood.
  - Geared specifically for wide variety of users in the service area
  - Offers both active and passive un-programmed recreational opportunities
- Size: 5 to 10 acres
- Amenities:
  - Active: Court games, informal play field/open space, tennis/pickleball, volleyball, shuffleboard, horseshoe, ice skating, splash pad, activity room
  - Passive: Internal loop trails, picnic shelter, general open space, small on/off street parking, security lighting.



# Department Overview and Funding issue

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## Open Space/Natural Park

- Enhance livability and character of a community by preservation and conservation of significant natural resources, open space and visual aesthetics/buffering.
- Amenities:
  - **Passive:** Nature viewing and study, hiking/walking/jogging, bicycling, cross-country skiing, horseback riding, canoeing, fishing, linkage to other parks



# Department Overview and Funding issue

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## Sports Complex Park

- Consolidates heavily programmed athletic fields, reduces impacts (noise, traffic, parking, domination of facilities) to neighborhood and community parks.
- Service Area: City wide
- Size: 40 to 150 Acres
- Amenities: Programmed multi-use venues (baseball/softball fields, soccer, football), outdoor/indoor tennis, pickleball, hardcourts (racquetball/handball), volleyball, internal access trails, spectator areas, group picnic/shelters, multi-purpose buildings, restrooms, common space, playground, parking, security and field lighting.



# Department Overview and Funding issue

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Approximately \$9,921,399 in capital projects has been completed by Park District #1 over the past 11 years.

# Department Overview and Funding issue

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What has been accomplished with Park District #1 Over the Past 11 years?

- 8 Playgrounds replaced- \$1,830,000
  - South Park - \$260,000
  - Pioneer Park - \$280,000
  - Hawthorne Park - \$170,000
  - Primrose Park – \$180,000
  - Ponderosa Park – \$200,000
  - Rose Park – \$372,221
  - Terry Park – \$280,000
  - Lillis Park – \$240,000



# Department Overview and Funding issue

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What has been accomplished with Park District #1 over the past 11 years?

- 22 playgrounds were made safer by upgrading the fall protection under the equipment - \$420,000

- |                   |                    |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Veterans Park  | 12. Ponderosa Park |
| 2. Sacajawea Park | 13. Primrose Park  |
| 3. Pioneer Park   | 14. Gorham Park    |
| 4. Rose Park      | 15. Boulder Park   |
| 5. Stewart Park   | 16. Lillis Park    |
| 6. Hawthorne Park | 17. Terry Park     |
| 7. Walsh Park     | 18. Highland Park  |
| 8. Edgerton Park  | 19. Burg Park      |
| 9. South Park     | 20. Westwood Park  |
| 10. North Park    | 21. Evergreen Park |
| 11. Optimist Park | 22. Millie Park    |



# Department Overview and Funding issue

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What has been accomplished with Park District #1 over the past 11 years?

- 6 park restrooms remodeled - \$520,000

- Stewart Park
- North Park
- Veterans Park
- Optimist Park
- Pioneer Park
- Gorham Park



Veterans Park

# Department Overview and Funding issue

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What has been accomplished with Park District #1 Over the Past 11 Years?

- 3 new modular restrooms installed - \$170,000

- Central Park
- Sacajawea Park
- Mountview Cemetery



Central Park

# Department Overview and Funding issue

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What has been accomplished with Park District #1 Over the Past 11 Years?

- Replaced operations/bathhouse building and 2 waterslides at Rose Pool - \$2,320,000



# Department Overview and Funding issue

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What has been accomplished with Park District #1 over the past 11 years?

- Replaced pitching machines at the Stewart Park batting cages - \$50,000



# Department Overview and Funding issue

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What has been accomplished with Park District #1 Over the Past 11 Years?

- Rebuilt 7 tennis courts - \$700,000
  
- 3 tennis courts at Pioneer Park - \$300,000
- 4 tennis courts at Castle Rock Park - \$400,000



# Department Overview and Funding issue

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What has been accomplished with Park District #1 Over the Past 11 Years?

- Replaced two 50+ year-old irrigation systems - \$874,314

- Veterans Park - \$380,000

- North Park - \$494,314.92



# Department Overview and Funding issue

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What has been accomplished with Park District #1 Over the Past 11 Years?

- Replaced wading pool at South Park with a sprayground - \$1,100,000

Before



Afterwards



# Department Overview and Funding issue

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What has been accomplished with Park District #1 Over the Past 11 Years?

Paved the road and  
parking lots in  
Riverfront Park  
\$697,881



# Department Overview and Funding issue

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What has been accomplished with Park District #1 Over the Past 11 Years?

Paved the parking lot at Centennial Park - \$176,204



# Department Overview and Funding issue

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## What has been accomplished with Park District #1?

- Repurposed 2 tennis courts at Lillis Park into 6 dedicated pickleball courts - \$45,339

Before



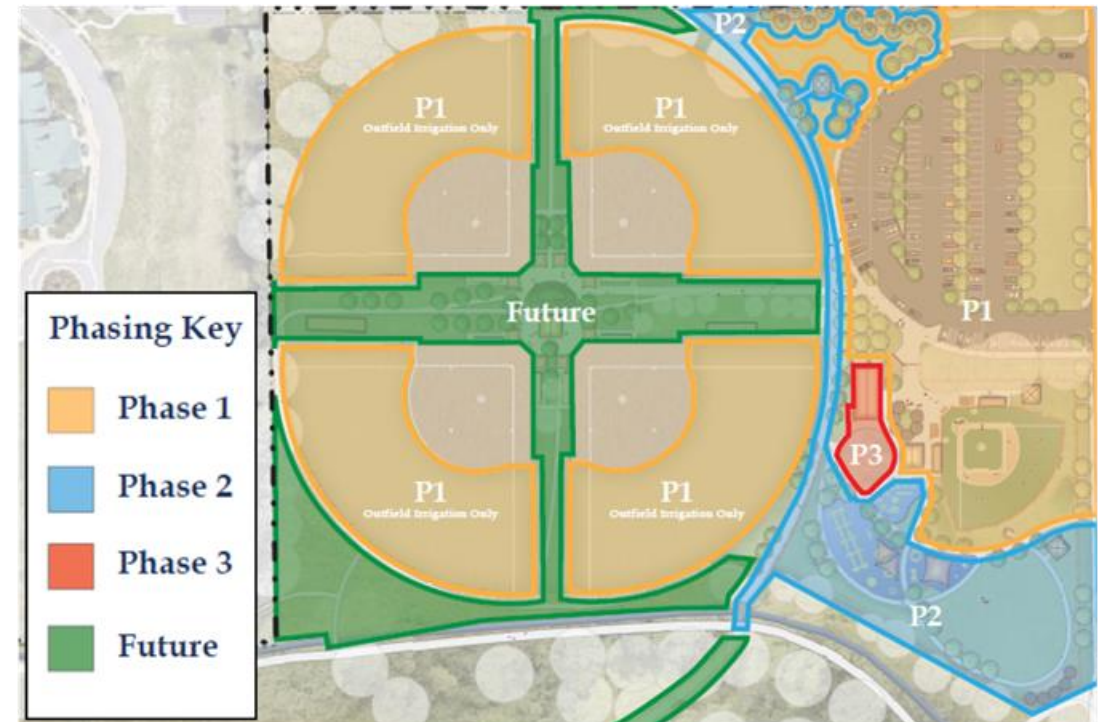
Afterwards



# Department Overview and Funding issue

## What has been accomplished with Park District #1?

- Completed Poly Vista Park Phase 1 - \$1,017,661
- Park Infrastructure
- Mass Grading
- Parking Lot and Sidewalks
- Replacement of Irrigation System



# Department Overview and Funding issue

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## Park District #1 Leveraged \$505,040 in Grants

- South Park Playground \$75,000
- Hawthorne Park Playground \$125,000
- Rose Park Playground \$150,000
- Central Park Tennis Courts \$155,040

# Department Overview and Funding issue

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\$2,141,040 in Park District #1 Capital  
Projects are Underway

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# Department Overview and Funding Issue

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## Park District #1 projects that are Funded and are Underway

### Projects and Budget

- Central Park Tennis Courts Replacement- \$655,040 (\$155,049 LWCF grant)
- Rose Pool Liner Replacement - \$150,000
- North Park Playground Replacement - \$400,000
- Arrowhead Park Playground Replacement - \$200,000
- Ponderosa Park Irrigation Replacement - \$215,000
- Castle Rock Park Playground - \$521,000 (\$121,000 cash-in-lieu)



# Department Overview and Funding issues

## FY23 – FY27 Park and Recreation Capital Improvement Plan

### PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

#### PARK PROJECTS

Project Name	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	Total
Castle Rock Park North Parking Lot & Restroom	100,000	900,000				1,000,000
Cottonwood Park Master Plan	125,000					125,000
Dehler Park Ball Field Replacement		412,000				412,000
Multiple Parks Irrigation Automation	924,750					924,750
Hawthorne Park Wading Pool Replacement				180,000	1,480,360	1,660,360
Highland Park Playground Replacement	206,000					206,000
Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan Update					150,000	150,000
Aquatics Facilities Evaluation		82,400				82,400
Pioneer Wading Pool Replacement			180,000	1,480,360		1,660,360
<b>Total Park Projects</b>	<b>1,355,750</b>	<b>1,394,400</b>	<b>180,000</b>	<b>1,660,360</b>	<b>1,630,360</b>	<b>6,220,870</b>

#### RECREATION PROJECTS

Project Name	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	Total
Multi-Generational Community Recreation Center	3,000,000	35,000,000	28,000,000			66,000,000
Rose Pool Spray Feature Upgrade	103,000					103,000
South Park Pool Renovation		103,000	2,060,000			2,163,000
<b>Total Recreation Projects</b>	<b>3,103,000</b>	<b>35,103,000</b>	<b>30,060,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>68,266,000</b>

<b>PARKS AND RECREATION DEPT TOTAL</b>	<b>4,458,750</b>	<b>36,497,400</b>	<b>30,240,000</b>	<b>1,660,360</b>	<b>1,630,360</b>	<b>74,486,870</b>
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# Department Overview and Funding issues

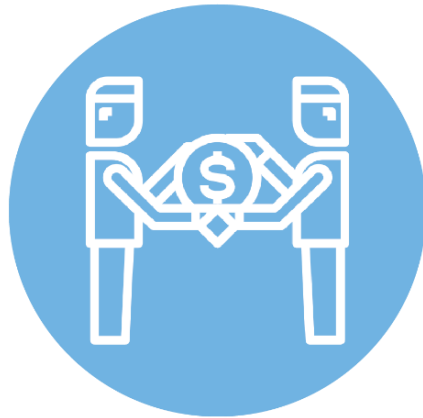
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## Capital Improvement Projects (lifecycle replacement) years 6 through 10

- Replace 10 playgrounds (2 per year)
- Rebuild 4 sports courts at South Park
- Rebuild 6 tennis courts at Pioneer Park
- Resurface parking lots in parks
- Replace Terry Park sprayground
- Replace Edgerton and South restrooms
- Replace North Park sprayground
- North Park sports courts
- Replace Zimmerman Center
- Remodel North Park Center
- Rebuild 4 tennis courts at Rose Park
- Rebuild 6 pickleball courts at Lillis Park
- Pave the road to Yellowstone Kelly's grave

# Department Overview and Funding issues

## Comparison of National Parks and Recreation Agencies How do we stack up?



Operating Expenditures Per Capita  
**National \$93.01**  
**Billings \$71.85**



Revenue to Operating Expenditures  
**National 23.6%**  
**Billings 18.7%**



Median level of operating expenditure per acre of Parkland  
**National \$7,826**  
**Billings \$3,112**

Source: 2022 NRPA Agency Performance Review

# HOW DO WE COMPARE?

## Peer Cities

City	Population*	Park Budget**	Per Capita	Rank
Bismarck, ND	72,865	\$22,468,575	308.36	1
Fort Collins, CO	165,080	\$43,500,389****	\$263.51	2
Boise, ID	226,570	\$42,192,938	186.22	3
Casper, WY	57,814	\$9,592,806	\$165.93	4
Missoula, MT	73,340	\$11,277,571	\$153.77	5
Bozeman, MT	46,596	\$6,963,448	\$149.44	6
Cheyenne, WY	63,624	\$9,348,560***	\$146.93	7
Rapid City, SD	74,421	\$9,206,762	\$123.71	8
Great Falls, MT	59,876	\$5,776,706	\$98.12	9
Billings, MT	109,642	\$9,350,328	\$85.25	10

\* 2017 Estimated

\*\* Fiscal Year 2019 Adopted Budget unless indicated otherwise

\*\*\* 2017

\*\*\*\* 2018

Based on the figures available from each city's website.

# Department Overview and Funding issues

## Why fund Parks and Recreation?



### Economic Impact

Parks and Recreation Departments contribute **\$166 Billion** in economic impact nationwide



### Health and Wellness

**20 to 30 minutes** outside reduces stress levels. Parks and Recreation agencies are the primary provider of outdoor spaces and activities.



### Quality of Life

**3 in 4** U.S. Adults want public walking, hiking, and biking trails close to home



### Positive Childhood Experiences

**93%** of U.S. adults say they fondly remember childhood summer activities provided by Parks and Recreation



### Mental Health

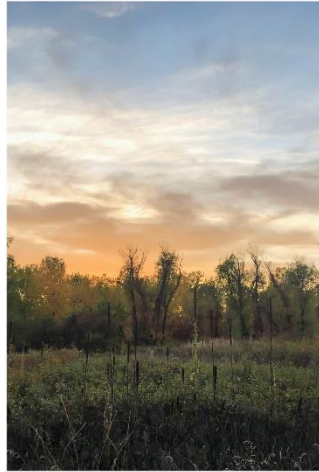
**Nearly all (93%)** of U.S. Adults say that activities offered by Parks and Recreation agencies are beneficial to their mental health



Source: National Parks and Recreation Association

# Department Overview and Funding issues

Parkland,  
Recreation  
Programs, &  
Facilities  
Provided by  
the Parks &  
Recreation  
Department



**2,704**  
acres of parkland



**40**  
playgrounds



**16**  
park shelters



**7**  
neighborhood centers



**24**  
tennis courts



**21**  
basketball courts



**188**  
recreation programs



**2**  
outdoor pools



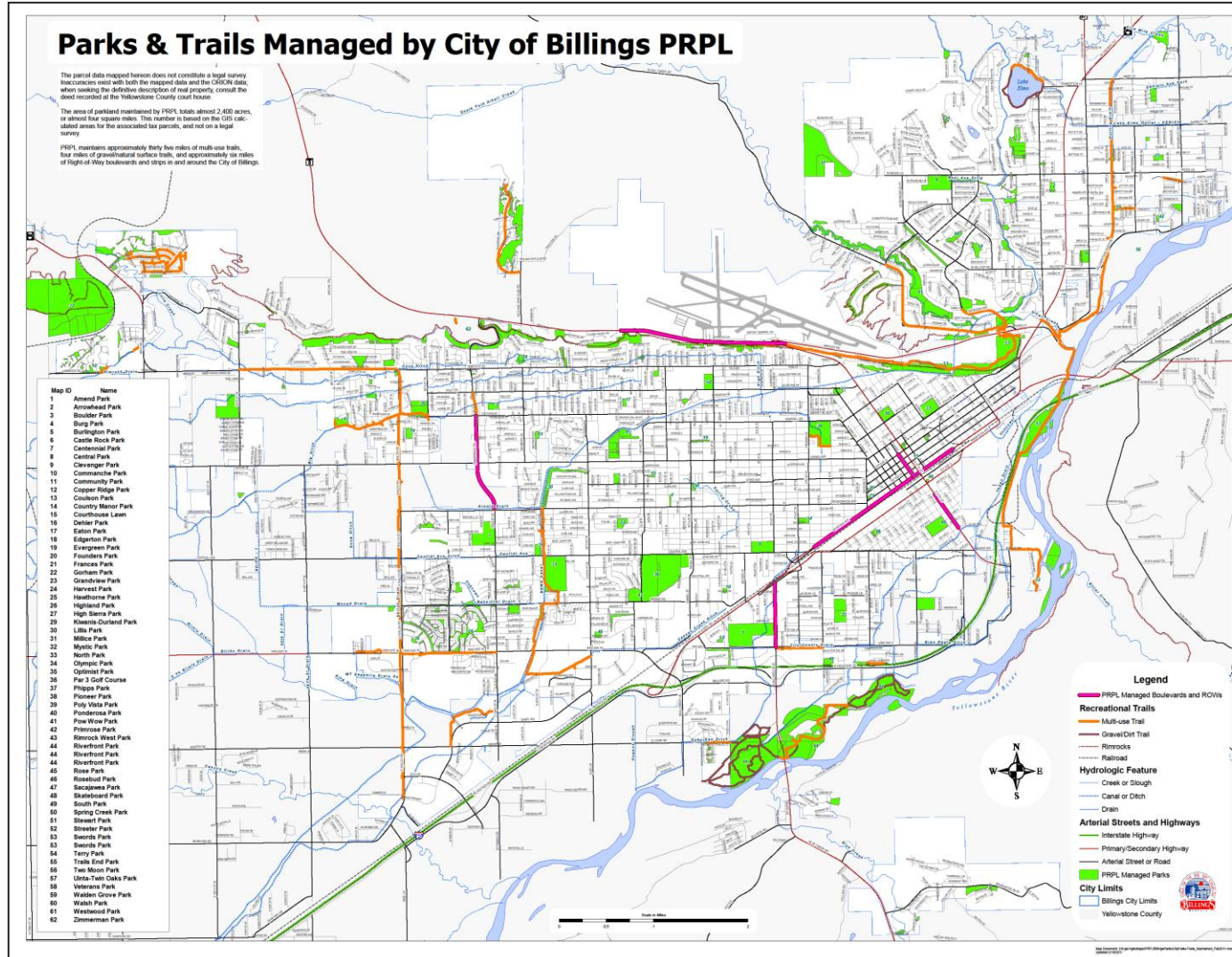
**2**  
wading pools



**5**  
spraygrounds

# Department Overview and Funding issues

## Our Parks and Trails

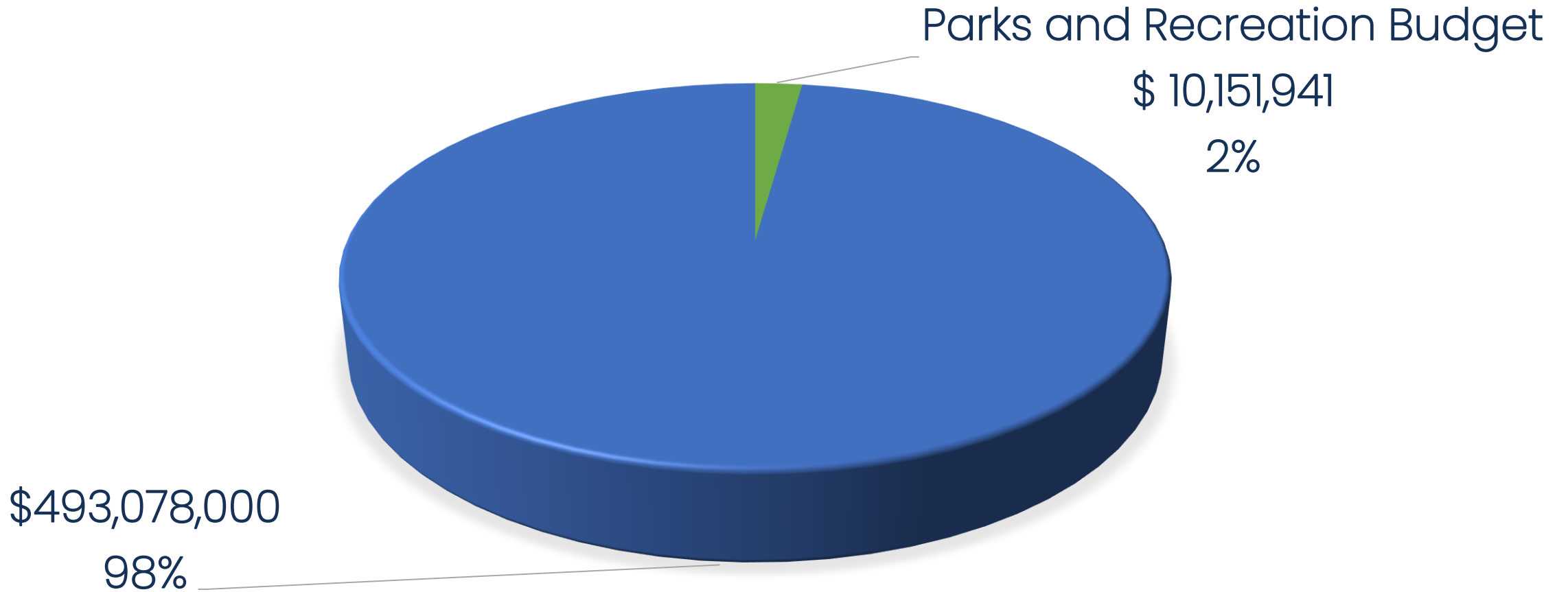


- 1,223 Acres of Developed Parks
- 1,213 Acres of Natural Area Parks
- 43 Miles Paved Multi-use Trails



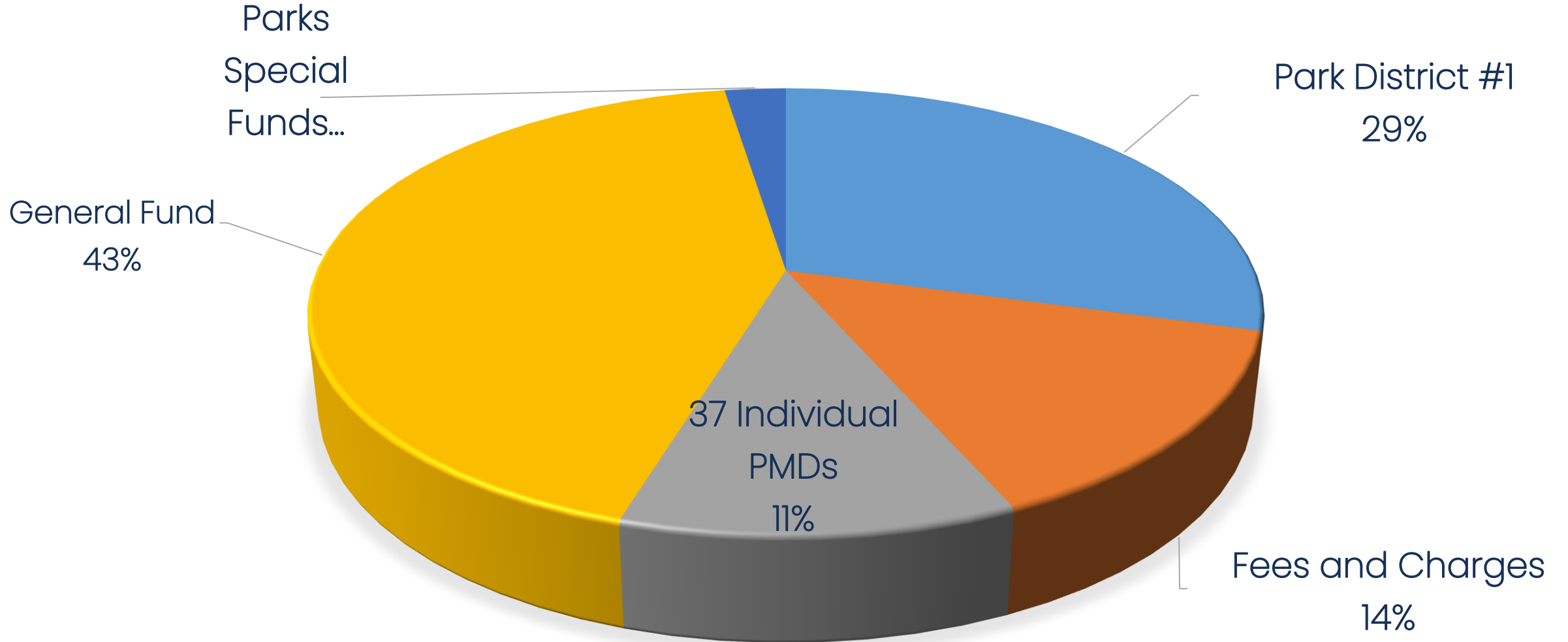
# Department Overview and Funding Issues

FY2023 Proposed City-Wide Budget: \$503,229,941



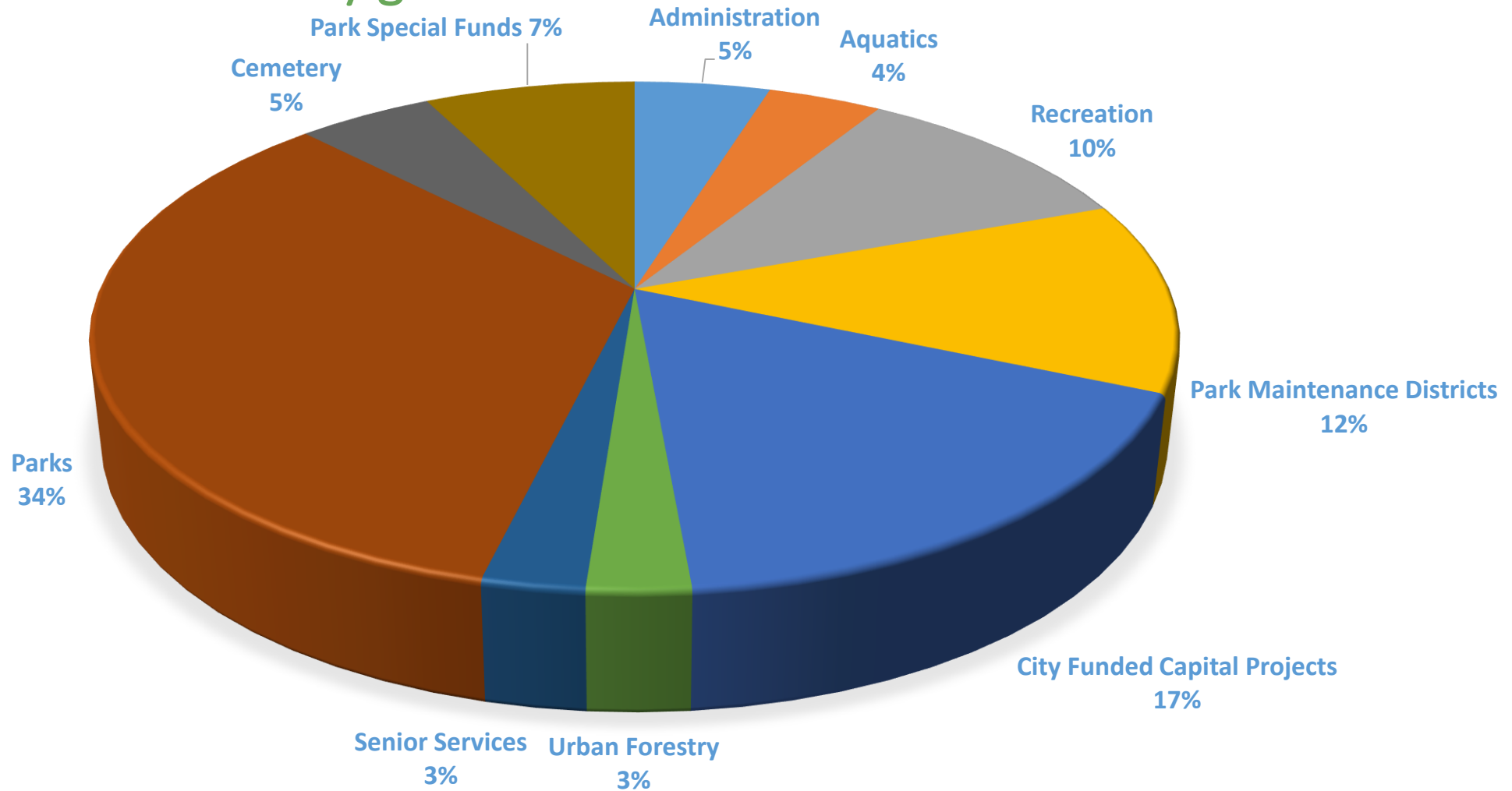
# Department Overview and Funding Issues

Where does the money come from?



# Department Overview and Funding Issues

Where does the money go?



# Department Overview and Funding Issues

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## What Happens When PD#1 Goes Away?

With the sunseting of Park District #1 in December 2024 there will be a \$3,275,400 (FY2023) shortfall in the FY2025 budget that will cause a very large decrease in services if there is not another way to fill the budget shortfall. The sunseting of Park District #1 will end all lifecycle replacement in the parks and recreation system. The department currently spends approximately \$1.3 million annually on lifecycle replacement in the parks.

# Parks, Recreation and Trails Funding Issues

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## Presentation Schedule

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4. **Fourth work session**: park development and funding recommendations

\* Goal: Public vote summer of 2023

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# Department Overview and Funding issues

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**In Conclusion,** the City of Billings is in a unique position to maintain and grow our award winning parks and recreation system and address the challenges described. Just like Billings' founders had incredible foresight to build iconic parks like Pioneer, North and South, I believe we can find a pathway forward to meet the current and future needs that will benefit generations to come.

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# Department Overview and Funding Issues

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Questions?

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