

SUMMIT METRO PARKS

2025 Annual Report to the Community

Better Parks for All

We focused on accessibility upgrades, including motorized wheelchairs, parking lot and kitchen updates at Goodyear Heights Lodge, new



doors with openers for our headquarters and Summit Lake Nature Center as well as kitchen and restroom improvements at Brushwood Lodge. Staff replaced decking

on Redwing Trail at Firestone Metro Park and handrails at Coventry Oaks Lodge. We stabilized the popular Jogging Trail in Sand Run Metro Park with new retaining walls and connected the Freedom Trail in Tallmadge to the Portage Hike & Bike Trail.

Connecting Communities

Our shift toward a “Greener Future” energized the community with encouraging sustainability messages. We refreshed nature center exhibits quarterly, following themes of water, trees and green energy. This focus carried through outreach efforts: programs, social media, events and free public transit via a partnership with Metro RTA as well as partnerships with Akron National Center for Choreography and South



Street Ministries. Visitors can now enjoy a sensory-inclusive experience at several Kulture City certified locations.

Digging the Past / Growing the Future

We secured Wild Back Yards partnerships with two municipalities, completed eight park-wide natural resources inventories, managed invasive species that threaten biodiversity



and planted more than 1,000 trees. Together with CVNP, we banded more than 1,000 birds for research. Our team uncovered two precontact Indigenous earth ovens

during the field school with The University of Akron, worked with local media to highlight hidden history and excavated a site related to the Great Migration. ●

Conserving A GREENER FUTURE

2025 was a year of exciting achievements toward a healthier future for Summit County and beyond. Decades in the making, the next step in the effort to “Free the Falls” happened when a US EPA contractor began dredging the Cuyahoga River in *Gorge Metro Park* as a necessary step before removing the Gorge Dam for a free-flowing, healthy river. We delivered another long-awaited milestone when the park district acquired the historic *Boughton Farm property*, which will eventually become *Twin Creeks Metro Park* in Copley.



We remained committed to partnerships as we celebrated the City of Akron’s bicentennial with an appearance in its signature parade and several special events. We helped complete a critical development in paddling and recreation by working with Cuyahoga Valley National Park to create the Northampton Point river access in Cuyahoga Falls.



To guide our next five years, we completed a strategic plan that includes six meaningful goals based on community feedback to advance our mission and deliver best-in-class park experiences. *Find the strategic plan and more at summitmetroparks.org.*

Thanks to your support, we look forward to more conservation, sustainability and community connection in 2026. 

AWARDS & Recognition

- OPRA 2nd Place – Management Innovation: Summit Metro Parks is an Age-Friendly Park District
- Akron-Summit Convention & Visitors Bureau Zenith Awards – Pinnacle Partnership: Summit Metro Parks and HiHO Brewing Co.
- National Association for Interpretation (NAI) – Outstanding Part-Time/Seasonal Interpreter Award: Naturalist Joe Malmisur

Summit Metro Parks®

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

Herb Newman *Chair*
 Joel D. Bailey
 S. Theresa Carter
 Jill M. Stritch
 Rev. Dr. Curtis T. Walker Sr.
 Lisa M. King *Executive Director*

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

975 Treaty Line Rd., Akron, OH 44313
 330-867-5511

By the Numbers –

- Approx. **5 MILLION** total visits
- 83,381** nature center visits
- 17,727** visitors assisted by customer service
- 32,680** visitors assisted by park police
- 33,566** participants in **1,086** natural-ist-led programs
- 18,409** service hours contributed by volunteers
- five** park district projects funded by the SMP Foundation



summitmetroparks.org

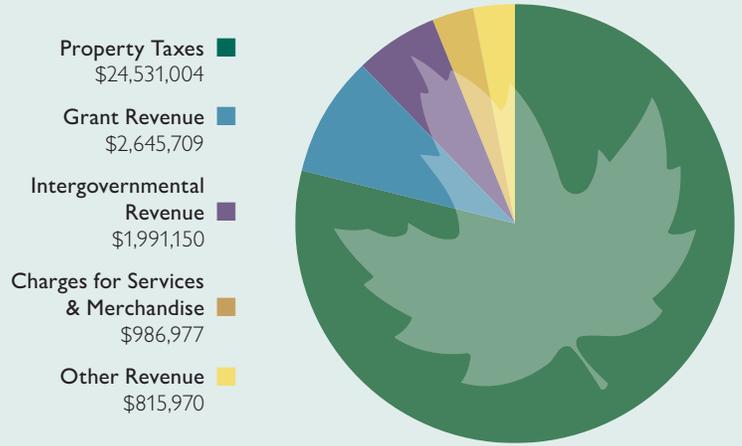
Ohio's Second Oldest Metropolitan Park District

Established in 1921, Summit Metro Parks has been Your Back Yard for more than 100 years. The park district manages more than 16,000 acres throughout 16 parks, two nature centers, one visitors center and over 150 miles of trails, including 22 miles of the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail. Learn more at summitmetroparks.org.

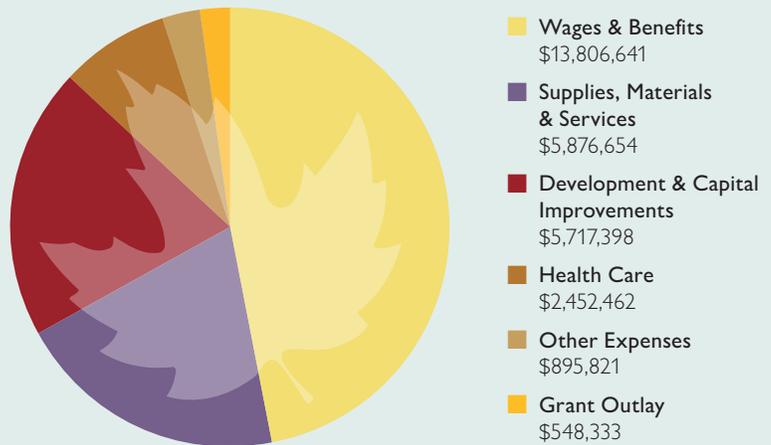
2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Financial Summary

2025 RESOURCES \$30,979,810



TOTAL EXPENDITURES \$29,297,309



Grant outlay may exceed grants received in any given year as reimbursement periods vary.

*Summit Metro Parks | Grant Support

- Akron / Summit Convention and Visitors Bureau • AMATS – Transportation Set-Aside Grants • Clean Ohio Conservation Fund • Clean Ohio Trails Fund • Great Lakes Commission • State of Ohio Capital Grant • Ohio EPA – Water Resource Restoration Sponsorship Program • Ohio & Erie Canalway Association Fund • Summit County Community Grant

Summit Metro Parks Foundation | Grant Support

- Akron Community Foundation, William C. and Betty J. Zekan Fund and John A. McAlonan Fund • The Allstate Foundation • The Andrea Rose Teodosio Memorial Foundation • Bridgestone Americas Trust Fund • Synthomer Foundation

Summit Metro Parks & Summit Metro Parks Foundation | Sponsorships

- Akron Canton Builds • Akron Children's Hospital • Albrecht Family Foundation & Acme Fresh Market • Buckingham • Cavanaugh Building Corporation • Cleveland Clinic Akron General & Cleveland Clinic Children's • Country Maid Ice Cream & Orchard • Davey Tree Expert Co. • EnviroScience, Inc. • Good Nature Organic Lawn Care • House of Plants, Inc. • Leppo Rents • Roetzel & Andress • Rubber City Reuse • The Nightlight • Vertical Runner • Wayside Furniture • YellowLite