

# 2025

## ANNUAL REPORT

**Building community in our parks**



**Akron  
Parks**  
Collaborative  
Supporting Our Neighborhood Parks

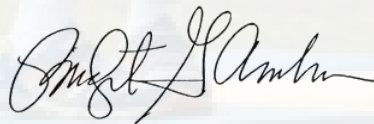


## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In 2025, we completed community led planning for Prentiss Park and Sherbondy Hill Park and began implementing improvements. We also selected two new Challenge parks; Waters Park and Karon Park. These groups worked throughout the summer, fall and winter to engage the rest of their neighborhood and determine priorities for their park. While they enter the planning phase, we begin the process over again to choose another park in 2026.

As we continue to work with more parks, we are delighted and inspired by the people who work with us and form their own park Friends Groups. We now support 18 Friends Groups. In a time when loneliness has been designated as a national epidemic, people are craving social connection and rebuilding community in their neighborhood parks. This is essential for the future of Akron; a focus on our neighborhoods where quality parks serve as community hubs for happier, healthier and more connected neighbors. Active parks are safer spaces with something to do and somewhere to go for all ages.

Thanks for your support!



Bridget G. Ambrisco  
Executive Director

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Bridget Ambrisco,  
Executive Director  
Dan Greco,  
Community Engagement Director  
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Project Manager

# FINANCIAL SUPPORTERS

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## **\$1,000-\$4,999**

Kate DeAngelis and Jessica Wasp  
Lehner Family Foundation  
Living Water Association  
New York Community Trust  
Ohio Ornithological Society  
Sisler McFawn Foundation  
VFW Post 1062  
Wild4Ever Foundation

## **\$5,000-\$9,999**

Akron Community Foundation  
ArtsNow Placemaking Grant  
Mary S. and David C. Corbin Foundation

## **\$10,000-\$24,999**

GAR Foundation  
Summit County Public Health

## **\$25,000+**

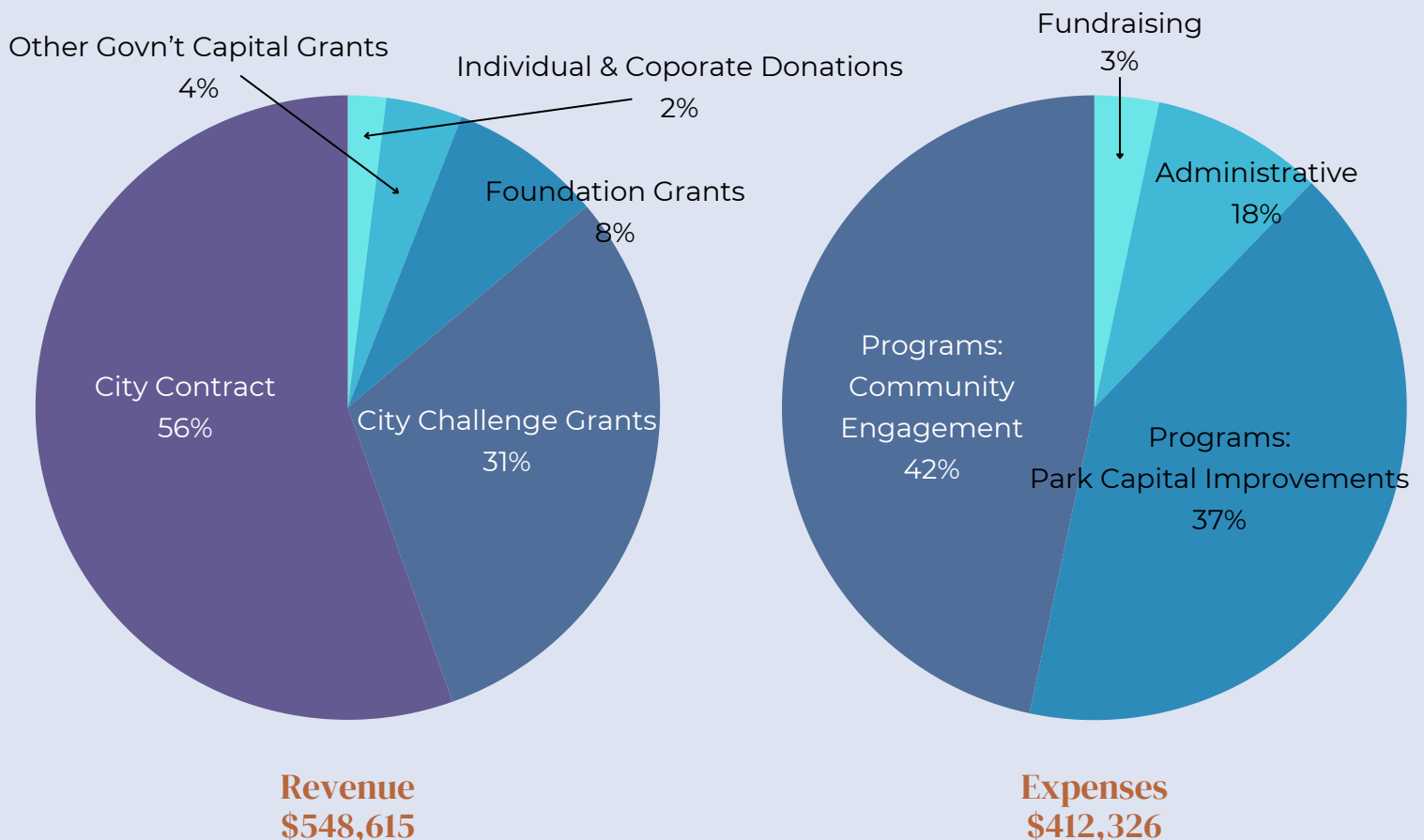
City of Akron

# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Since 2018, we have worked with the City and many partners to invest a total of \$4,168,668 into our city parks in programs, community engagement and capital improvement.

The City investment in our work to engage residents, secure funding partners and support Friends groups, resulted in a near 1:1 match in private funds for improvements and activation of our parks.

## 2025 REVENUE & EXPENSE SUMMARY



# 2025: A YEAR OF GROWTH AND PLANNING

## 2024 Akron Parks Challenge Recipients

### Sherbondy Hill Park

#### *Engaged*

70 adults and 100 children

#### *Progress*

Playground installed; new parking lot

#### *2026 Projects*

Pavilion, bleachers, fence, and tree trimming

#### *Funding*

\$150,000 Akron Parks Challenge

\$12,000 Summit County Public Health grant

### Prentiss Park

#### *Engaged*

500 people

#### *Progress*

Swings installed; decommissioned baseball field removed, pavilion roof repaired with South Street Ministries volunteers

#### *2026 Projects*

Plaza area, seating, improved football bleachers, basketball court, skatepark, walking trail, bathrooms, improved lighting

#### *Funding*

- \$150,000 Akron Parks Challenge
- \$50,000 Kenmore Improvement Fund
- \$15,000 Cargill Cares
- \$10,000 Neighborhood Partnership Program
- \$4,000 Akron Community Foundation, Changemaker Challenge
- In kind: Apollo, South Street Ministries, First Glance
- City capital budget: Basketball courts, bathroom upgrades, lighting

# 2025 Akron Parks Challenge Recipients

## Karona Park

Beginning in July, the core team met 8 times with on average 5-6 people at each meeting.

Number of people who completed the survey: 75

## Waters Park

Beginning in July, the core team met 5 times with on average 4 people at each meeting.

Number of people who completed the survey: 65

## Community Impact

**17 Friends groups (increased by 7)**

Employed Youth Corps working in Jewett, Marcy, Morgan, and Boss Parks, almost 100 hours

29 volunteer work days in the parks with over 180 volunteers

**95 community meetings with 468 individual sign ins**



In 2025, we launched Nature in Our Neighborhoods in partnership with the City of Akron. The purpose of the program is to improve city efficiencies while benefiting the environment and park experiences with beautiful city meadows. We initiated a prototype at Hardesty Park, hosting 2 community meetings in the park, 1 coalition building meeting and 1 coalition building field trip to McBride Arboretum. Volunteers planted plugs at Hardesty and seeds will be spread in 2026. We plan to expand the program into new parks in 2026.