

2026 Parks Re-Imagined Urban Parks Tour, Columbus Ohio

Lou Berliner Sports Park: Staff, Dustin Ware. Lou Berliner Sports Park is a 228.587-acre regional park in the Southwest community and is currently the nation's largest ball diamond complex. The facility proudly offers 31 permanently fenced, turf-infield baseball and softball diamonds. Columbus' softball community is passionate and active, and Columbus Recreation and Parks Department hosts leagues and tournaments throughout the season. In addition, the facility hosts a variety of regional and national tournaments. The facility is estimated to bring in more than \$70 million in economic benefit to the city through travel and tourism.

Scotts Miracle-Gro Field: Home to the Columbus Crew, the stadium sits on a 12-acre site and opened in July 2021. The state-of-the-art facility is designed as a multipurpose event venue and features a natural grass field. The stadium has an official capacity of 20,139 for soccer matches, including 3,362 safe-standing seats in the passionate Nordecke supporter section. It features first-class suites and premium spaces, available year-round for business conferences, weddings, proms, fundraising events, and more. The Chase Plaza is an outdoor space located at the southeast corner of the building that is a destination for concerts, community events, and other engagements. It is adjacent to The Pub, where Crew and soccer fans enjoy the club's 96-minute happy hours and watch parties during the world's top soccer tournaments. The Columbus Crew is a dedicated partner with Columbus Recreation and Parks Department and makes major league soccer accessible to youth through a variety of programs and events.

Kilborne Run Sports Park: Staff, Dustin Ware. Kilbourne Run Sports Park is a new premier soccer facility. It stretches over 62 acres, which includes 35 acres dedicated to soccer fields. Currently, the park provides 16 fields of various sizes, gravel parking lots, an open-air shelter and a connector trail that leads to the Alum Creek Greenway. With over 38,000 participants per year, this sports park has become one of Columbus' busiest soccer facilities. With the ability to host local, regional and national tournaments, the park is expected to bring in significant economic benefit.

Champion Golf Course: Staff, Mark Williams, Golf Administrator. One of Columbus Recreation and Parks' six municipal golf courses, Champions Golf Course is considered one of Central Ohio's most challenging public courses because of its rolling fairways, mature trees, demanding doglegs, undulating greens and hilly terrain. Formerly the Winding Hollow Country Club, Champions first opened in 1923 as a 9-hole course designed by Herbert Strong. In 1954 Robert Trent Jones designed the current 18-hole course as played today. Low fees and quality facilities make Columbus Recreation and Parks makes the game of golf accessible to residents. The team works to engage youth in the sport through programs such as Youth on Course and partnerships to establish golf teams at Columbus City Schools high schools.

Staff: Antonio Combs and Lyric Easley. Youth from the APPS Job Readiness program will join the group for lunch to share their experience. The award-winning APPS Job Readiness Program (AJRP) is an empowering workforce development initiative designed for youth ages 14-23. The program is dedicated to equipping participants with the tools and experiences needed to confidently move toward future pursuits. Throughout the program, participants embark on a comprehensive experience that includes skill development, real-world exposure, mentorship, networking, confidence building and career planning. Participants gain real-world, paid work experience with City departments and local businesses. Work experiences may include supporting youth in summer camps, helping to maintain parks, supporting golf course operations and more. Youth development leaders provide linkage to support services and mentorship to ensure participants' success.

Warehouse: Staff, Mike Musser, Assistant Director / Danny Coleman, Warehouse Manager
Learn how we maximize our efficiency by operating more than a 60,000 square foot three (3) building facility. The warehouse consists of inventory items such as art, building equipment, playground, office supplies, tables, and chairs which are managed by a computerized software system.

Forestry & Woodshop: Staff, Mike Musser, Assistant Director and Chad Karg, Building Maintenance. This area refurbishes trees and builds tables, bollards, and park benches. All wood is sustainable for furniture which reduces expenditure for the department with a unique quantity of furniture. We will learn about the different types of trees, drying, kiln operation and preparation of making park furniture. This section is solely and legally responsible for all public trees in Columbus that grow along streets, in public parks and on all city properties. The Forestry section has knowledgeable and skilled staff with

industry-recognized qualifications and certifications, including International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Certified Arborists, ISA Certified Tree Workers and Tree Risk Assessment Qualified staff. Our Forestry staff plants, prunes and removes trees and grinds stumps on public properties.

King Arts Complex: Staff, Sheri-Lynn Wynn / Onsite contact, Jevon Collins, COO. Opened in March 1987, The King Arts Complex is located on the near East side of Columbus, Ohio, in one of the oldest areas of African American life in the city. Serving as a major anchor for development in the King-Lincoln District, The King Arts Complex is an oasis for cultural and educational activities as well as community facility for special events.

Lincoln Arts Theater: Staff, Sheri-Lynn Wynn Onsite contact, Susan Bradford, Director. First opened in 1928, the Lincoln Theatre is a landmark in African-American and jazz history. Developed, designed, constructed and managed entirely by African-Americans, it quickly became the place to see and be seen. In the 1930s and 1940s, Columbus' Near East Side was home to a thriving African-American business and entertainment district known as Bronzeville, now the King-Lincoln District. During segregation, African-American residents were largely limited to patronizing businesses within their own community. In response, a vibrant, self-sustaining neighborhood emerged, filled with Black-owned businesses, cultural institutions and entertainment venues — with the Lincoln Theatre at the center of it all. Today, the theater is owned by the City of Columbus under the auspices of the Lincoln Theatre Association and operated by CAPA. The surrounding King-Lincoln Bronzeville neighborhood remains one of Columbus' most historically significant African-American communities and continues to be a focal point for cultural heritage and revitalization.

Long Street Cultural Wall: Staff, Malik Willoughby. The Long Street cultural wall is collaboration by two local artists: Kojo Kamau and Larry Winston Collins. Together, their combination of photography and block prints provides an informative walk through the history of the Near East Side of Columbus, celebrating notable people and places from the past and present that have made the neighborhood what it is today. (We are proud that our own Malik Willoughby, a zone manager with our department, is featured on the cultural wall.) On July 10, 2014, the newly reconstructed Long Street bridge was unveiled as part of the Ohio Department of Transportation's I 70/71 Columbus Crossroads Project. This complete street design created a unique opportunity to connect the historic King-Lincoln District and the Near East side to downtown Columbus.

Fran Ryan Center: Staff, Holly Wetmore-Kemeter. A creative arts and wellness hub offering dynamic, hands-on programming for all ages. Explore woodworking, ceramics, digital arts, stained glass, fabric arts, painting, lapidary and more, or take advantage of our wellness programs, which include a fitness center, group exercise classes and nutrition workshops. Don't miss the Golden Hobby Shop, featuring over 200 consignors and over 2,000 handcrafted art pieces—perfect for birthdays, holidays or special occasions.

Bicentennial Park: Bicentennial Park is a 7.36-acre regional park that has become a downtown destination. It features a one-of-a-kind fountain and an eye-catching performance pavilion. The stunning fountain spans 15,000 square feet and holds 35,000 gallons of water in an underground reservoir, and three stainless steel halo structures with 300 fog nozzles and a cutting-edge speaker system that creates a surround sound atmosphere. Since its opening in 2011, the iconic fountain has grown to be a Downtown staple serving 240,000 visitors every year. In addition to serving as an oasis in an urban environment, the park hosts a variety of free concerts and festivals throughout the year. Jazz & Rib Fest, the headlining festival, offers residents an opportunity to see Grammy Award-winning artists as well as local and regional acts at no cost. In its 44th year, the festival attracts more than 200,000 people each year.

Priscilla R. Tyson Cultural Arts Center: Staff, Todd Camp. The Priscilla R. Tyson Cultural Arts Center is a combination art gallery and teaching space, primarily for visual artists and crafters, in downtown Columbus. The site was originally a state penitentiary, in 1814. It was demolished and rebuilt in 1861 as it exists today by prisoner labor as the Ohio State Arsenal. This brick Italianate arsenal building housed weapons and horses during the American Civil War. Historical artifacts on site include an eagle-and-shield from the battleship USS Ohio and a bell from the missile cruiser the USS Columbus. A proposed flag of Ohio briefly flew over the arsenal. The arsenal building was added to the National Register of Historic Places on July 18, 1974. The Cultural Arts Center is also featured on many of Columbus's historical tours.