



ANCHORAGE PARK FOUNDATION



Tony Knowles
Coastal Trail

Inside

- 2 Letter From the Director
- 3 Community Challenge Grants
- 4 Anchorage Leads the Nation in Inclusive Play
- 5 Fostering the Next Generation of Community Leaders
- 6 Meet our New Team Members
- 7 Map of 2019 Projects

Folker Park – Anchorage’s First Health and Wellness Park Opens

Folker Park is a short walk from the classes at UAA and just across the street from the Providence Horizon House elder care home. It’s the perfect place for Anchorage’s first “health and wellness park”.

You might have missed the park before this summer. This U-Med neighborhood park was a wooded lot of spruce, cottonwood, and aspen. Only a sign and a few park benches were there to indicate that it was a public park.

Now, a new ADA accessible pathway weaves through the park in the shape of a Celtic healing knot. Modern fitness equipment provides an opportunity for people of all ages to work on their dexterity and balance while peaceful musical chimes and a new play area provide entertainment for neighborhood children.

Residents of Providence House were at the heart of creating a space of “intergenerational wellness” and worked closely with Senior Park Planner Maeve Nevins-Lavtar of the Municipality on the design and construction. While walking the newly paved trail this summer, Rosa Lee Osborne, a resident at Providence House, came up with a unique idea to celebrate the grand opening of the park this fall. She thought that since the new path was wide enough for two wheelchairs they should celebrate the park with a walker and wheelchair parade. Dozens of seniors decorated their walkers and celebrated the rejuvenation of the park this September.

Now neighbors have a park to connect with each other, a place for elders to spend precious time with grandchildren, and patients with the nearby hospital to take steps towards recovery.



Sirena McNeil





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The Anchorage Park Foundation builds healthy parks and healthy people by mobilizing public support and financial resources for Anchorage parks, trails, and recreation opportunities. Your support and involvement in Anchorage Park Foundation helps make new trails, inclusive playgrounds, and revitalized parks possible.

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Anchorage Park Foundation

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Letter from the Director



November marks our 15th year serving Anchorage by mobilizing support and financial resources for parks and trails. We bring together volunteers, neighbors, funders, and voters around the parks and trails they love. We seek to amplify neighborhood voices in connecting parks and schools and rec centers via pathways, sidewalks, trails, and bike lanes. We want to connect Anchorage to their daily destinations and to their community gatherings and celebrations. We want to connect our people with our wild and natural places. In this spirit APF is finding new ways to connect Anchorage.

This fall I am pleased to report that community enthusiasm for parks and trails is still strong. In 2019, we awarded 12 new challenge grants, we continue to lead the nation in inclusive playgrounds, Schools on Trails is gaining momentum, and Youth Employment in Parks trained young stewards in every corner of our city. Anchorage strongly identifies with parks and trails.

You are already a part of this movement to connect Anchorage. If you've given money, lifted a shovel to volunteer in a park, or just celebrated with us by cutting the ribbon on a new trail or playground, you're helping to connect and strengthen Anchorage. Thank you. We couldn't do this work without you and we hope you'll continue your support in 2020.

Sincerely,

Beth Nordlund
Executive Director



A special thank you to the Rasmuson Foundation for supporting parks and trails through the Anchorage Park Foundation.

Anchorage Park Foundation Awards over \$240,000 in Grants to Community Park Projects



In 2019, the Anchorage Park Foundation (APF) awarded more than \$240,000 to 16 community-driven park and trail improvement projects across Anchorage. Every two years, APF invites the community to submit their ideas for a park or trail improvement project in Anchorage. Successful ideas are awarded with a dollar-for-dollar matching grant for the energy volunteers put into their project through cash donations, volunteer labor, and in-kind materials or services.

Through the generous support of the Rasmuson Foundation, Challenge Grants offer a way to achieve community priorities to improve a park or trail that would not otherwise be funded through the Municipality of Anchorage. Ultimately, these projects increase the sense of community in neighborhoods by bringing a lasting capital investment into our park system. Projects are big and small, including fundraising for a new skate park at Taku and a program to build free little libraries in parks across Anchorage. Visit anchorageparkfoundation.org to find a park or trail improvement project.

2019 Community Challenge Grant Projects

- Little Free Libraries in Parks
- Far North Bicentennial Park Sled Dog Trail Safety Signage
- Chester Creek Singletrack Safety Improvements
- Girdwood Lower Iditarod National Historic Trail
- Spenard Beach Park Improvements
- Woodside (Eastchester) Park Improvements
- Chanshtnu Muldoon Park Community Food Forest & Community Garden
- Moen Park Adult Fitness Equipment
- Folker Park Reflexology Path
- Bonnie Cusack Memorial Rink Center Upgrade Project
- Rabbit Creek Park Trail Improvements
- Taku Lake Park Skatepark Renovation and Expansion



Britt Coon

Safer Trails For Sled Dogs in Far North Bicentennial Park

With so many trails in the Far North Bicentennial Park, there seems to be something for every kind of trail user out there. During the winter, some of these trails are groomed and maintained by the Alaska Sled Dog Racing Association (ASDRA) and are designated by the city for use by dog mushers only. Sled dog teams are fast and have difficulty stopping for anything in their way, so ensuring the trails are clear for mushers is crucial.

This year APF awarded a Community Challenge Grant to ASDRA to provide new signage in Far North Bicentennial to clearly delineate which trails are designated for mushers only. Once there is enough snow to groom, ASDRA volunteers will install the new signage, making this a safer winter for both sled dogs and all trail users.



Anchorage Leads the Nation in Inclusive Play



The 30-foot net climber at Chanshtnu-Muldoon Park is wildly popular among children and adults alike!

Gabe Tegoseak

In Anchorage, kids in wheelchairs are wheeling to the center of our playgrounds and participating in physical, sensory, and social play. Kids with autism are using the cozy nooks to regulate anxiety and kids on big swings are developing motor skills. Play is challenging, fun, and essential for health and early childhood brain development. Play is good for everyone, and inclusive play includes kids and care givers of all abilities in play.



We are proud to say that Anchorage leads the nation in inclusive play and our goal is to continue building inclusive playgrounds all over town. We work in partnership with Municipality of Anchorage and disability services leaders in play advocacy and design. To learn more about inclusive play and to find an inclusive playground near you, check out our new Inclusive Play Map. Visit anchorageparkfoundation.org to see our playground map or a copy of State of Play in Anchorage. Contact us to get involved with inclusive play leaders and bring inclusive play to every Anchorage neighborhood!

Coming Soon: Fairview Indoor Playground

Fairview Recreation Center will open the first indoor inclusive playground in Anchorage this winter! It will be free for kids, and fun for everyone. Look for a save-the-date for a grand opening in your email.



Inspiring the Next Generation of Community Leaders

The Anchorage Park Foundation and Anchorage Parks and Recreation share a commitment to connecting children and youth to the natural world through neighborhood parks, trails, and natural areas.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN PARKS

Every summer, Youth Employment in the Parks puts local teens to work on crews that improve parks and trails. Crews develop job skills while constructing trails, rehabilitating streams and wildlife habitat, and landscaping. This summer a diverse group of teens spent 10 weeks improving parks and trails across Anchorage. For some participants, this was their first meaningful job experience and will provide a career path in the natural resources field. For many, the program has been a life-changing experience. Susan Bick originally started YEP as a Crew Member. This year she returned to the program as a Crew Leader and now works her summers between her new job as P.E. Teacher at Chugiak High School.

Projects Completed by YEP in summer 2019

- Castle Heights Trail
- Government Hill Trail
- Campbell Park Streambank Restoration & Tree Planting
- Far North Bicentennial Park Streambank Restoration
- Ruth Arcand Connector Trail
- Chester Creek Single Track

SCHOOLS ON TRAILS

Most Anchorage schools are within walking distance to trails, parks, streams, or natural areas that offer powerful experiential learning opportunities for students. Our Schools on Trails program offers teachers outdoor classroom programs that utilize these community assets and give students the opportunity to learn about nature. This school year, more than 1,000 students from the Anchorage School District will visit nearby parks, walk trail systems that connect to their school, map their school grounds, and most importantly, play outside. This fall, 34 preschoolers from Mt. View and Williwaw Elementary schools took kids outdoors one day a week, for all their learning in a program called Forest Days.

For more information contact Meredith, Youth Engagement Coordinator at Meredith@AnchorageParkFoundation.org

“Outside everyone has space to be themselves”

– Elizabeth Babylon Mt. View Elementary Preschool Teacher.





Welcome New APF Team Members



Michelle LeBeau

Director of Philanthropy

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Michelle is a nonprofit professional with 18 years of experience strengthening organizations to advance environmental and social causes. She has roots in California where she developed a nonprofit coalition to advocate for eco-friendly landscaping practices. She later spent time teaching nonprofit leaders in Alaska, California, and Central America how to grow their fundraising programs, build an active board of directors, develop strategic plans, and increase efficiencies to encourage organizational growth. In Alaska, she served as Deputy Director of the Alaska state office of the National Audubon Society.



Diana Rhoades

Director of Community Engagement

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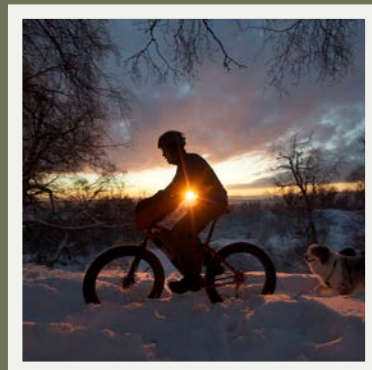
Biking, hiking and advocating for parks and trails as a path to health and happiness has been a lifelong passion for Diana Rhoades. Diana's career has taken her to capital cities and city halls from Juneau, AK to Washington, DC and from Tucson, Arizona back home to Anchorage. She has worked on issues as diverse as downtown revitalization, active transportation, forest bathing, organic farming and wrestling a 58-pound King Salmon from the world-famous Kenai River. She is excited to focus on improving and growing Anchorage's park and trail system and providing more opportunities for diversity and inclusion.

You Can Make a Difference

Our parks, trails, and urban wilderness make Anchorage an incredible place to live. As a supporter of Anchorage Park Foundation, you have been a crucial part of maintaining our northern outdoor lifestyle – and we can't thank you enough.

Please consider supporting the Anchorage Park Foundation with a donation this giving season. Every donation is matched dollar for dollar by the Rasmuson Foundation, doubling your impact. Thank you for helping make a difference!

Make a gift today and receive a complimentary trail map. Happy Trails!

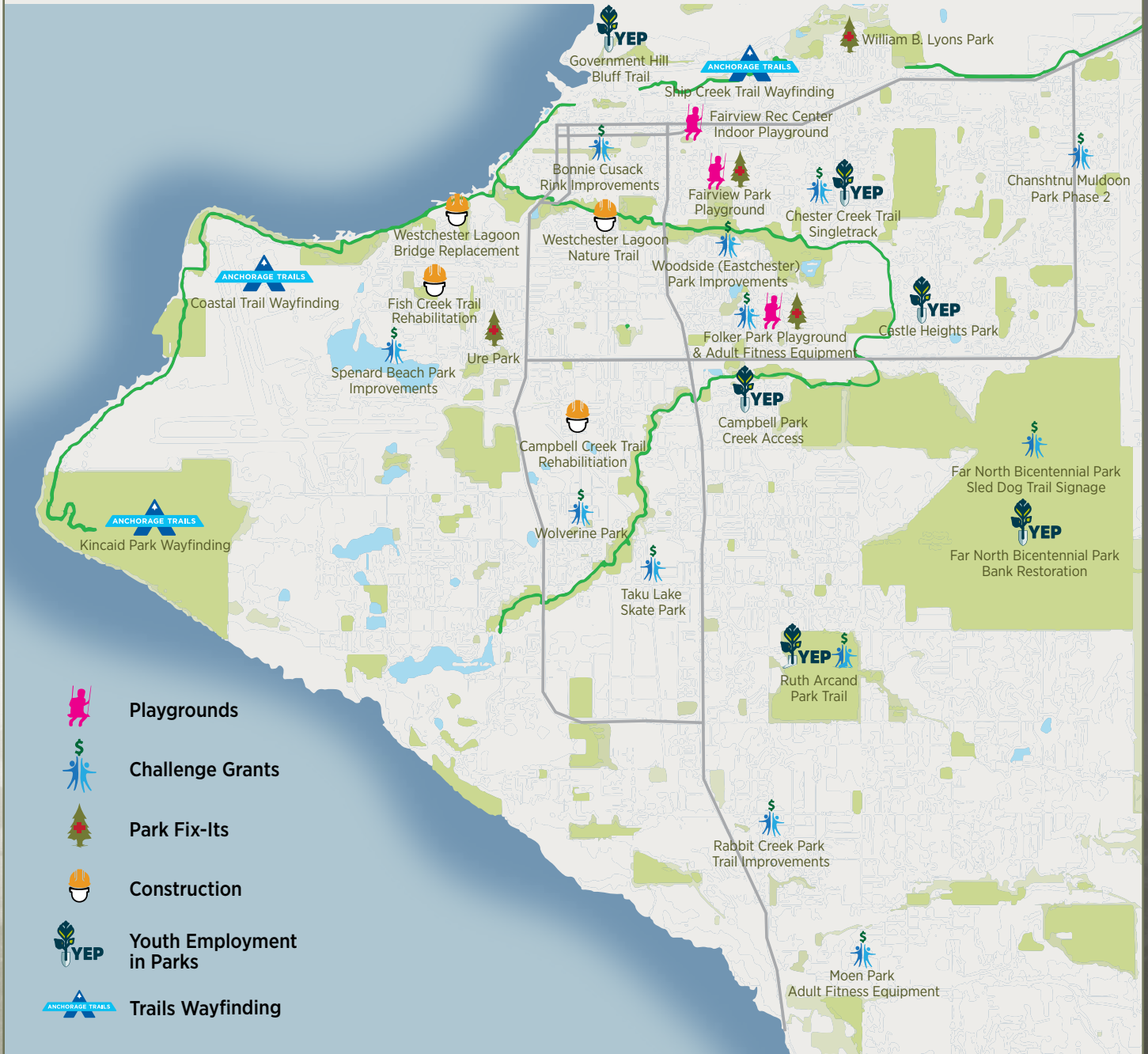


2019

Park Rehabilitation & Construction Projects



Public-Private Partnership in Action: MoA Parks & Recreation Department + the Anchorage Park Foundation





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INDIGENOUS PLACE NAME

The name that the Dena'ina use for the area around Earthquake Park is Nen Ghilgedi, meaning 'Rotten Land.'

– Shem Pete's Alaska – The Territory of the Upper Cook Inlet Dena'ina, 1987

Earthquake Park