

2000 – 2009 CHANGE BEGINS

2000

- K-9 Field of Dreams Dog Park opens at Riverbend Recreation Area.
- HPD celebrates 30 years of parks and recreation countywide.
- March, voters approve a 0.8 mill replacement levy for eight years.

2001

- Brugeman Bridge, located on the Blanchard River Greenway, was dedicated in honor of HPD director Tim Brugeman as part of the new Greenway Trail project.
- Final stages of Riverbend improvements begin, including The Lodge development.

2002

- Bicentennial Barn at Litzenberg is constructed for programming use in 2003.
- 18-hole Disc Golf Course opens at Riverbend.
- HPD Headquarters is relocated to 1424 East Main Cross overlooking the Blanchard River; "old" Courthouse is given back to the Hancock County Commissioners.
- The Lodge at Riverbend opens with a large dedication in December.

2003

- "Tree House" playground is installed at Riverbend Lodge development.
- Over 200 acres of natural areas along the Upper Blanchard River Watershed Blanchard River are acquired through land acquisition or conservation easements with \$650,000 in funds from Ohio Environmental Protection Agency Water Resource Restoration Sponsor Program.

2004

- Heritage Trail Center development opens southwest of Litzenberg Memorial Woods for hikers and horseback riders.
- Outdoor Visitor Center at HPD Headquarters is completed to provide 24/7 assistance.
- New Riverview Walk from Riverside Dam is developed.

2005

- HPD continues growth with conservation areas added to Riverbend and Oakwoods thanks to private landowners and state grants bringing totaling acreage to over 1,753 acres, 522 owned and 1230 managed, and over 47 miles in trails.
- "Parks, Recreation & Open Space" plan is completed with survey information from over 1,000 participating visitors.

2006

- HPD Board implements major re-organization of staff to adapt to management plan and in preparation of projected funding cutbacks.
- Park ranger department was eliminated and law enforcement was turned over the Hancock County Sheriff's office and Findlay Police Department.
- Conservation projects flourished with the creation of new wetlands near Riverbend.
- Old Mill Stream Scenic Byway, 52-mile stretch through Putnam and Hancock Counties, receives state designation as Ohio's newest scenic byway by the Ohio Department of Transportation.

2007

- HPD parks system is hit with a "100 Year Flood" devastating many areas. Clean-up and repairs throughout flooded areas continued for an extended amount of time.

2008

- Voters approve a 0.8 mills replacement, eight year levy for continued HPD park maintenance and capital improvements in March.
- An additional 60 acres is acquired through funds from the Clean Ohio Fund, expanding Oakwoods Nature Preserve.
- HPD Director Tim Brugeman retires after 35 years with HPD. The Lodge at Riverbend is renamed Brugeman Lodge at Riverbend in honor of Mr. Brugeman's dedicated service to HPD.

2009

- Riverside park Waterfront boat house is updated with financial help from The Community Foundation, Zonta and Hancock Parks Foundation; renamed "Zonta Landing". Waterfalls Pavilion renovation also completed by garden clubs and HPD, now called "Nature's Housekeepers Pavilion".
- 60 acres is acquired for Oakwoods Nature Preserve through Clean Ohio Funds.
- New Master Plan for Oakwoods and Discovery Center improvements approved after public input, grants from The Community Foundation.
- Forest G. Hall Fairgrounds Mini-park management is returned to the Hancock County Agricultural Society as a Memorial Park.
- 1895 Historic Marion Township Road 241 Iron Bridge removed to Riverbend for preservation and use with trail project; new wooden covered bridge construction in its place.
- Options for expanding the Blanchard River Greenway Trail from Findlay to Riverbend were unveiled along with possible "green" flooding solutions that could be implemented as part of the Northwest Ohio Flood Mitigation Partnership and Army Corps of Engineers project.