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City of Middleton Public Lands, Recreation & Forestry Announced as Finalist for the 2016 National Gold Medal Awards in Parks and Recreation

Middleton Public Lands, Recreation & Forestry to compete for prestigious honor in the park and recreation industry

Middleton, WI, May 10, 2016 – The [American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration](#) (AAPRA), in partnership with the [National Recreation and Park Association](#) (NRPA), is pleased to announce Middleton Public Lands, Recreation & Forestry as a finalist for the 2016 National Gold Medal Awards for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management. Musco Lighting LLC has been a proud sponsor of the Gold Medal Awards program for over 10 years.

Founded in 1965, the Gold Medal Awards program honors communities in the U.S. that demonstrate excellence in parks and recreation through long-range planning, resource management, volunteerism, environmental stewardship, program development, professional development and agency recognition. Applications are separated into seven classes, with five classes based on population, one class for armed forces recreation and one class for state park systems awarded on odd numbered years.

The Middleton Public Lands, Recreation & Forestry Department is a finalist in the Class V (population less than 30,000) category. Once again the City of Middleton Public Lands, Recreation and Forestry Department has demonstrated their ability to serve as catalyst in the development, initiation, coordination and the support for a variety of leisure time activities and facilities for residents of all ages while adhering to NRPA's 3 pillars of conservation, health & wellness, and social equity. Through a wide variety of programs and services including urban forestry activities, trail days and conservation efforts, the city focuses on advocating environmental stewardship and sustainable growth. The Department offers numerous programs including sports and fitness classes to facilitate health & wellness, as well as partners with a variety of organizations for their use of department facilities, trails and parks for an array of endurance events such as runs, bike rides and triathlons. Over the past couple of years, the Department has increased its social equity efforts trying to make parks and recreation services equally accessible and available to all people regardless of income level, ethnicity, gender, ability, or age. Updated city ordinances, scholarships, and a unique partnership with the Middleton Cross Plains Area School District to revitalize the Middleton Youth Center are just a few of those efforts.

Agencies are judged on their ability to address the needs of those they serve through the collective energies of citizens, staff and elected officials. Middleton Public Lands, Recreation & Forestry joins three other finalists in their class that will compete for grand honors this year.

Middleton Department of Public Lands, Recreation & Forestry Director Penni Klein stated, "It's an incredible honor for us to be named one of four finalists in the small city category. Our staff and partners have demonstrated excellence and successfully completed many environmentally sustainable projects in the areas of long-range planning, resource management, environmental stewardship, program and professional

development, along with agency recognition on the state and national levels. We are very excited to be selected to compete in the NRPA Gold Medal Award finals and are honored to have been chosen among so many qualified agencies.”

A panel of five park and recreation professionals reviews and judges all application materials. Judges are chosen for their considerable experience and knowledge in parks and recreation on both the local and national levels.

This year’s finalists will compete for Grand Plaque Award honors this summer, and the six Grand Plaque recipients will be announced live during the NRPA General Session at the 2016 NRPA Annual Conference in St. Louis, MO, Oct 5-8, 2016.

For more information on the Gold Medal Awards, visit www.nrpa.org/goldmedal or www.aapra.org.

The American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration is a non-profit organization founded to advance knowledge related to the administration of recreation and parks; to encourage scholarly efforts by both practitioners and educators that would enhance the practice of park and recreation administration; to promote broader public understanding of the importance of parks and recreation to the public good; and, to conduct research, publish scholarly papers and sponsor seminars related to the advancement of park and recreation administration. For more information, visit www.aapra.org.

The National Recreation and Park Association is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing park, recreation and conservation efforts that enhance quality of life for all people. Through its network of 50,000 recreation and park professionals and citizens, NRPA encourages the promotion of healthy and active lifestyles, conservation initiatives and equitable access to parks and public space. For more information, visit www.nrpa.org. For digital access to NRPA’s flagship publication, *Parks & Recreation*, visit www.parksandrecreation.org.

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