

For Immediate Release

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PRESS RELEASE

Stacy Park Receives Urban Dark Sky Place Certification

OLIVETTE, MO, USA -- On October 3, 2021, Stacy Park, located in the City of Olivette, received certification as an Urban Night Sky Place by the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA).

"We are pleased to announce Stacy Park as the world's fourth UNSP," stated Ruskin Hartley, Executive Director of the IDA. "This certification serves as an example of balancing effective lighting design with maintaining a connection with the night sky, which can be accomplished in areas where we work, live, and play."

"Stacy Park is beloved by Olivette residents and the larger region. It has a wide range of features from a tallgrass prairie and woodland trails to ballfields and playgrounds. Achieving the Urban Night Sky Place designation adds another dimension to the City's goal of increasing biodiversity in all its parks. Preserving the night improves the overall health of the plants, animals and insects in the park. It also provides an excellent way for residents and park visitors to learn about the night sky," shared Beverly Tucker Knight, Olivette's Parks and Recreation Director.

The City of Olivette adopted a Parks Vision | Master Plan in 2018 to guide improvements and restoration of the City's parks, trails and open spaces. Along with renovating park infrastructure and improving amenities, the plan outlines specifics for invasive species removal, habitat restoration, and improving maintenance and sustainability. Adopting responsible outdoor lighting standards and providing educational opportunities about light pollution and best practices have grown out of the plan's implementation.

Previous night sky programs offered by Olivette Parks and Recreation Department in partnership with the Challenger Learning Center have been popular with all ages. The Department is looking forward to expanding program offerings and guided night sky viewing opportunities with Dark Sky Missouri and the St Louis Audubon Society.

Don Ficken, President of the Missouri Chapter of International Dark Sky, shares in the enthusiasm, stating, "This is great news for Missouri! Olivette is Missouri's first designated Urban Dark Sky Place. We hope this honor will encourage other cities to certify their parks and spread the word about the importance of reducing light pollution."

An IDA Urban Night Sky Place is a municipal park, open space, observing site, or other similar property near or surrounded by large urban environs whose planning and design actively promote an authentic nighttime experience while surrounded by significant artificial light. By virtue of their characteristics, these sites do not qualify for designation within any other International Dark Sky Places category. However, they are worthy of recognition for their efforts to educate the public on the benefits of proper outdoor lighting that ensures public safety while minimizing potential harm to the natural nighttime environment.

For more information, please email Beverly Tucker Knight, Parks and Recreation Director, at btuckerknight@olivettemo.com.

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