

March Parks and Recreation Department Updates from Staff

Recreation: Report provided by Afton Wacholz and Dani Bakken;

- Adult Fitness classes wrapped up on Wednesday March 11. We had 25 people participate in this program.
- Co-Ed volleyball wrapped up on March 11. We ended the season with 6 teams. The next volleyball season will be sand volleyball beginning in May.
- Rock on Ice was held on Friday March 6. We had DJ Abrego at the event and it was a glow theme. We had about 200 people attend.
- Summer jobs are still posted on the City's Website. The Recreation Department will be hiring for Rec assistants, Lifeguards, Play Park leaders, Pool Attendants, Pool Managers and Adult Volleyball Supervisors.
- We will hold our Easter Egg hunt on Saturday, April 4 at Jim Gustafson field beginning at 9 a.m. This event is free! Children are asked to bring their own basket or bag to collect their eggs.
- Easter Bunny Deliveries will be on Friday, April 3. We currently have 16 people signed up. Delivery times are 9-11:30 a.m. or 1-3 p.m. There is still time to register!
- Community dock and garden renewals are currently being accepted through March 31. Any renters who had spaces/plots last season have the right to renew again this year. Any unclaimed spaces/plots will go open to the public on April 1 at 8 a.m. for gardens and April 10 at 6 a.m. for docks.

Parks: Report provided by Ryan Hajek and Ben Bangert;

- Granicrete Minnesota will be adding an Epoxy based floor covering to men's and women's restrooms in the Splash Pad bathroom building to match the existing color scheme.
 - Sinks, stools, mirrors, etc. can all be installed when flooring is cured.
 - Bollards will be added on parking lot side to protect structure, and people using sidewalk.
- Preparations for ordering Wedgewood Park Playground are being estimated by Midwest Playscapes. This will be a complete rebuild of the playground for ages 5-12.
- Plans to remove large/overgrown group of trees from downtown landscape on the corner of Broadway Ave and William St.
 - Remove three elms, and dig out seven total stumps to replant with smaller variety of trees in grated vaults along Broadway Ave.
- Fountain Lake Dock will be delivered on March 16th to Humane Society Parking Lot for storage until launch date in spring.
- Christmas decoration refurbishment project continues. Seven Stockings, seven Candy Canes and two Christmas trees to complete this year.
- Continued spring clean-up, trimming, and trash pick-up throughout parks.

City Arena: Report provided by Afton Wacholz and Josh Heilman;

- Facility updates –
 - See Facilities Project Update below

- Events -
 - Albert Lea was host to the MCH Regional Hockey tournament Feb 20-22
 - Rock on Ice was held on March 6 7-9p. The turnout was great and it was fun to have a fun public skate again.
 - Albert Lea Figure Skating Club annual show will be March 28 at 7p and March 29 at 2p.
- Other events –
 - Weekday public skate and stick and puck calendar can be found on our website or Facebook page. Special skating schedule for during Spring Break will be available.
 - Ducks Unlimited Banquet April 11 on Colstrup rink floor

Aquatic Center: Report provided by Josh Heilman;

- New lockers are put together for the men’s and women’s main bathhouse. Staff is researching the best option for a locking policy during the season.
- Windows for the new admission building had to be re-ordered. Roofing color was finalized by staff. Work should start up again by early April for completion before the 2026 season.

Senior Center: Report provided by Dani Bakken;

- Trips -
 - Treasure Island Casino Day Trip will be held on March 24.
 - Birthday Candles Theater Day Trip will be April 22.
- Programs/Events –
 - Tech Tuesday will be held on March 24.
 - Forever Well expo will be held at the Albert Lea Family YMCA on March 26 from 10 a.m.- 1 p.m.

Marion Ross Theater: Report provided by Afton Wacholz;

- Facility Updates –
 - See Rec facilities update below.
- Upcoming events –
 - The Story Show was held on march 7 with eight local writers taking the stage for the annual storytelling event.
 - Auditions for My Fair Lady will be April 27th.

Other: Report provided by Cathy Malakowsky;

- The recent survey on the Songbird Trail showed strong support for building the trail with 89% of the 321 respondents supporting its development. See the enclosed report for more details.
- Blue Zones is planning a walking moai kickoff on Saturday, April 18, at 10 a.m. at the Marion Ross Theater followed by a walk and then lunch at First Lutheran Church. Join us!

Referendum Project Updates

City Arena

Lobby and office area

- Staff are continuing work on furniture for the skate office, new lobby and Rec office.
- New Skate Office work station desk arrived.
- New Rec window has been installed.

Refrigeration and Colstrup Arena

- Sealing the mechanical room to prepare for ammonia loading, approximately March 23.
- Mechanical room sprinklers have been completed.
- Dasher boards and updated glass are being installed on Colstrup
- Staff completed on-site and portal training for the solar system
- Estimated refrigeration system start-up is set for end of March/early April to test the Colstrup floor.
- Nystrom ice will stay on until Colstrup ice is ready. There is currently ice activities scheduled through mid-August already.

Aquatic Center

- Work will resume early April on the new ticket building as well as fencing, and finishing concrete work around the new building. Windows need to go in as well as roofing and counters.

Marion Ross Theater

- Final punch list items are being completed, including finishing paint in lobby, touch up areas around thermostats, replacement of lights around the front arched windows, etc.

**** 2026 Top 5 Project Updates:**

Developing the Songbird Trail –

Completing the Miracle Field –

Mini Golf Course –

City Beach marina –

Security Cameras for Parks and Facilities –