

August Parks and Recreation Department Updates from Staff

Recreation: Report provided by Dani Bakken;

- Participated in the last Wind Down Wednesday on Wednesday, August 12. We offered a craft and yard games.
- Neighborhood parks closed on July 30. Our final numbers for total visits were:
 - Academy: 177
 - Lakeview: 494
 - Sondergaard: 355
 - Valley: 475
- The last movie in the park will be held on Friday, August 14. We will be showing the movie “Zootopia 2”. This event has been moved inside to the City Arena due to weather.
- Adult sand volleyball end of the year tournament will be held on Monday, August 18
- Fall Fun Guides have been mailed out. They are also available at the Recreation Office.
- Registration opened on Monday, August 10 for:
 - Learn to Skate
 - Young Athletes
 - This program is an extension of Special Olympics and designed to introduce participants to basic sport skills. This program is open to children ages 4-6.
 - Learn Through Movement
 - This is a pre-school based class that blends music, dance and SMART obstacle course with engaging storytime and movement based literacy activities. This program is open to children ages 4-5.
 - Adult women’s and co-ed fall volleyball
 - Weight Training with Annie workout class
- Recreation will be hosting Safety Day on Tuesday, September 15 from 4-6 p.m.
- Recreation will be providing kids activities at the Viva La Independencia on Friday, Sept. 18.

Parks: Report provided by Ryan Hajek and Mike Veldman;

- Lakeview Park playground has been removed and staff will begin constructing the new one
- Continued tree work around town
- Snyder and Hayek are both done with games for the year, so yearly maintenance to the fields are starting
- Playground for Wedgewood is ordered and on its way.
- Frank Hall Park bike shelter is making great progress – Electrical is 85% finished. Waiting on plexiglass for kiosks and letters for the signage. The Park Dept. will be pouring the concrete walkways connecting the trail to the shelter at some point. Also a little dirt work is needed on the site after concrete.

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

- Facility updates –
 - See Facilities Project Update below

- Events -
 - Summer hockey and figure skating ice will wrap up this week. Fall ice is already starting this week as well with some private rentals.
 - Waldorf University will begin practices the week of August 17. D1 will practice for a one week until they transition to Mason City for the season. Only the D2 team will practice and play all of their games in Albert Lea this season
 - The Hockey Association will begin fall training on Sept 13.
 - The Albert Lea Figure Skating Club will begin their season on Sept 14.
- Other events –
 - Weekday public skate and stick and puck calendar can be found on our website or Facebook page.

Aquatic Center: Report provided by staff;

- Session 3 of swim lessons end on July 31. We had 72 participants. With all 3 sessions we had a total of 404 children participate.
- The Aquatic Center closed for the season on Sunday, August 9. We had 13,950 total visits throughout the season.
- Josh, Emma and the pool managers are working on getting everything cleaned and winterized for the season.

Senior Center: Report provided by Afton Wacholz;

- Trips -
 - Paradise Destiny Lake Minnetonka Cruise Friday, Sept 18th. Registration deadline is Sept 3.
- Programs/Events –
 - End of summer BBQ for members will be Aug 28 at the Senior Center.
 - Coffee with a cop – Sept 2 at 9:30 a.m.

Marion Ross Theater: Report provided by Afton Wacholz;

- Upcoming events –
 - ACT's 61st season tickets are now on sale!
 - Auditions for Marriage Can Be Hazardous To Your Health were held on August 9 and 10. The production will run from October 1-10, 2026.
 - ACT Annual Meeting will be held on August 18 at 6 pm at the Marion Ross Theater.

Other: Report provided by Cathy Malakowsky;

- **Recreation Manager:** The interviewing continues for the Recreation Manager position after the top candidate declined the City's job offer.
- **Songbird Trail:** The preconstruction meeting for the first 2 segments is set for August 19. The 2 segments are from Fountain Street to Shoff Park on the east side of Highway 13 and from Sunset Street to I-90 on the west side of the highway, along with rehabbing 4 railroad bridges for pedestrian use. For future segments, Freeborn County has applied to the Greater Minnesota

Regional Parks and Trails Commission for a \$1.97M grant to build 3.2 miles of the trail from 220th Street to 240th Street.

- **Senior Center:** The City, Jim and Dude's, Senior Center Board, Albert Lea YMCA and Wold Architects continue to work on the proposal for a new Senior Center location. The earliest a proposal would go to the City Council for approval would be Sept. 28.

Referendum Project Updates

Please see the slideshow from Cathy's City Council presentation included in the agenda packet.

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

Developing the Songbird Trail – see update by Cathy Malakowsky

Completing the Miracle Field – no update

Mini Golf Course – no update

City Beach marina – no update

Security Cameras for Parks and Facilities – no update