



Parks and Recreation Commission

Wednesday, May 14, 2025

6:30 PM

Elk River City Hall

Regular Meeting

Agenda

- Regular meeting in Council Chambers

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1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
 3. CONSIDER AGENDA
 4. CONSIDER MINUTES
 - 4.1 Parks and Recreation Commission Minutes 04-09-2025
 5. OPEN FORUM

An opportunity to provide comments and feedback regarding items not on the agenda. Information provided in Open Forum will not be discussed at this meeting; rather, the information will be referred to staff and/or scheduled for discussion at a future meeting.
 6. PRESENTATIONS, AWARDS, AND RECOGNITION
 - 6.1 Archery Deer Hunt Steward
 7. ACTION ITEMS
 - 7.1 Villas at Fillmore 3rd Addition - Park Dedication
 8. DISCUSSION ITEMS
 - 8.1 Disc Golf Course - Burr Oak Park
 9. RECREATION MANAGER UPDATE
 - 9.1 Recreation Manager Update
 10. ANNOUNCEMENTS
 11. MOTION TO ADJOURN



**Meeting of the Elk River
Parks and Recreation Commission
Held at the Elk River City Hall
April 9, 2025**

Members Present: Chair Dave Anderson, Commissioners Mike Niziolek, Joy Goodwin, Greg Loidolt, Hal Stewart, Jill Varty, Melissa Fermoye

Members Absent:

Council Liaison: Councilmember Cory Grupa

Staff Present: Assistant City Administrator/Business Services Director Joe Stremcha, Parks and Recreation Manager Jeff Shelby, Senior Administrative Assistant Dawn Larson, Recreation Sports Coordinator Warren Ellingworth, Farmers Market and Special Events Coordinator Karen Wingard

1. Call Meeting to Order

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the meeting of the Elk River Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chair Anderson.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Consider Agenda

Moved by Commissioner Fermoye and seconded by Commissioner Varty to approve the April 9, 2025, agenda with the removal of agenda item Archery Deer Hunt Steward due to a scheduling conflict this evening. Motion carried 7-0.

4. Consider Minutes

4.1 Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes 3-12-2025

Moved by Commissioner Loidolt and seconded by Commissioner Fermoye to approve the March 12, 2025, Parks and Recreation Commission Minutes. Motion carried 7-0.

5. Open Forum

6. Presentations, Awards, and Recognition

6.1 Archery Deer Hunt Steward

Moved to May meeting agenda.

6.2 Student Presentation- Jonathan Vick

Mr. Shelby presented his report and introduced Mr. Vick who is a local student and a part-time employee of the City of Elk River Parks and Recreation department. Mr. Vick reviewed his slideshow

presentation about his proposal for an adaptive playground swing in a city park. This proposal is his senior capstone project for graduation at Spectrum High School. His project is called “Swinging into Inclusive Play.” Facebook comments showing disappointment regarding the lack of adaptive options on the new playground in the Trott Brook neighborhood prompted him to want to act. His cousin and her daughter with spina bifida inspired him as well. Mr. Shelby connected Mr. Vick with staff at Landscape Structures, a company that makes playground equipment to gather information on pricing. He held a fundraiser at the Trott Brook Barn in December offering refreshments and crafts to raise money for an adaptive swing. Over thirty people attended the fundraiser raising \$1,100 to go towards the swing. In March, the money was donated to the City by Mr. Vick.

7. Action Items

7.1 Farmers Market Coloring Contest Vote

Mrs. Wingard presented her report. She shared the history of the coloring contest for the Farmers Market bag design. The communications team narrowed down the entries to the three options presented to the Commissioners for voting. The bags will be handed out on Farmers Market opening day, June 12. The winning artwork will go on one side of the bag and the sponsors for the farmers market will go on the other side. Mrs. Wingard handed out the voting sheets and the commissioners chose option A as the winner.

Moved by Commissioner Goodwin and seconded by Commissioner Niziolek to approve option A provided by Gianna for the Farmers Market bag art. Motion carried 7-0.

7.2 Athletic Facilities Emergency Action Plan

Mr. Ellingworth presented his report. Commissioner Fermoye asked who would be educated on the plan once it is approved. Mr. Ellingworth said he will share it with his main contacts at each association beginning this Spring and the associations can share it during their trainings with coaches and volunteers.

There will also be a laminated copy at each complex in the concession area or by the scoreboard controllers. Mr. Ellingworth will review the plan with tournament organizers at the beginning of each tournament event as well.

Commissioner Niziolek asked if there was anything in the plan regarding lightning. Mr. Ellingworth said after discussing with Fire Chief Dickenson lightning falls under the severe weather category. Mr. Ellingworth learned during the process of working with Chief Dickenson and Commissioner Stewart that less is more in the wording.

While doing research for the plan, one important thing he learned is to keep it simple when there needs to be an action plan initiated. He referenced on page 2 in big bold letters, it states to dial 911 in an emergency and to seek shelter during severe weather.

Commissioner Niziolek said that he would like them to explore adding lightning to the plan since it is very dangerous and does not fall under severe weather category and there are a significant number of



fatalities nationwide. Commissioner Niziolek said the Minnesota State High School league language on this is much different. He would highly encourage us to look at adding this language. Mr. Ellingworth said all the association plans include the rule that if a lightning strike happens there is a 30-minute clock that starts and if it strikes again the clock starts over. Commissioner Goodwin asked if that means that since it is in their plans it doesn't need to be in ours.

Commissioner Stewart shared that he has worked on many of these plans and the plan is meant to be informational, brief, and concise. People on the field need to know enough to get through the first 10 minutes of an emergency and then they can reach for additional documentation for support.

Commissioner Fermoye pointed out that the plan is misnumbered under bomb threat starting with 5, 6, 7, and 8. She also asked if it is the emergency responders that write up a follow up summary following an incident so staff can learn from it.

Mr. Ellingworth said that yes, on a case-by-case basis i.e., if the AED was used there would be follow-up with the association that used it. There would be follow-up of some sort in every situation based on what occurred. He would fill out reports after the event once he is contacted by those that were on site during the event.

Chair Anderson said that the plan is specific in areas such as heat, active shooter etc. so he thinks they should add lightning to the severe weather area. He said that when he used to work on the ball fields the most common and likely emergency would be lightning so he said he thinks that it should have its own set of rules.

Commissioner Loidolt said that the lightning rule of the 30 minutes is built into everyone's head. He said that all the coaches and kids are taught this from day one of learning the sport. He feels that everyone knows it.

Commissioner Niziolek reiterated that he does want a bullet point item of lightning under severe weather because it does not fall under severe weather definitions and some people do not always take it seriously. He said that he has run some very large events, and he did not have a very good response from people when he was warning them about lightning.

Mr. Shelby asked if they were able to add several sentences addressing the lightning within the context of the 30-minute clock that would be acceptable. Commissioner Niziolek agreed.

Mr. Stremcha asked if they should wait to act and bring the plan back in May. Chair Anderson said yes. Mr. Stremcha said they can approve the plan as is, approve with amendments, or not pass it and it can come back for review again in May. Commissioner Goodwin asked if not approving it tonight would have an impact and delay implementation. Mr. Ellingworth said that he would like to get it out to the associations as soon as possible but it is up to the Commission. Commissioner Goodwin asked if they could move to approve it with the request to add the part about lightning per the Minnesota High School League policy around lightning. Commissioner Niziolek said he would like it to be titled as a separate break out item. Mr. Ellingworth confirmed that they could do that.

Moved by Commissioner Goodwin and seconded by Commissioner Niziolek to approve the Emergency Action Plan for the Athletic Facilities upon the inclusion of language supporting



plans for lightning in a specific section based on the rules of the Minnesota State High School League guidelines and renumbering the items under bomb threat. Motion carried 7-0

7.3 Field Trip/Large Group Park Rental Reservation

Mr. Shelby presented his report.

Moved by Commissioner Loidolt and seconded by Commissioner Goodwin to approve the revisions to the existing Organization/Business Large Group Policy as presented, including changing the title of the policy to Field Trip/Large Group Park Rental Reservation. Motion carried 7-0

7.4 Parks and Recreation Commission By-Laws

Mr. Shelby presented his report. Commissioner Fermoye pointed out five grammatical errors such as spacing and misspelling. Secretary Larson made note of the errors to correct in the document.

Commissioner Niziolek said with the recent park dedication issues they have had over the past couple of months he said that he thinks they should add some verbiage about what should and shouldn't be done for park dedication. From what he saw happening with the Specht property recently he thinks that the park dedication policies are very gray and are hard to understand. He said that the details are unclear to him about what land/cash can be accepted as park dedication. He said he isn't sure if that should go in the bylaws or if there needs to be some additional training on the subject. Chair Anderson and Mr. Stremcha said that should go under ordinances instead of bylaws.

Commissioner Goodwin suggested that it could be under member training or a yearly refresher from staff. Commissioner Fermoye said that from a training perspective reviewing something annually about the park dedication ordinances would be appreciated.

Commissioner Niziolek asked if they could utilize park dedication ordinances when needed. Mr. Stremcha said he thinks it is already incorporated into the training area in the bylaws and implied as one of the core functions that would necessitate training. Chair Anderson said for example like the master trail plan etc. Chair Anderson said that he has discussed with staff about having more trainings but that it adds to the meetings already expected to attend. Mr. Stremcha said it could be done offline not necessarily at a meeting. Commissioner Goodwin said that she thinks there should be more time dedicated to staff training.

Chair Anderson asked if there were any other questions.

Moved by Commissioner Niziolek and seconded by Commissioner Fermoye to approve the April 2025 revision of the Parks and Recreation By-Laws with the noted changes that were outlined by Commissioner Fermoye. Motion carried 7-0

8. Parks and Recreation Manager Update



8.1 Parks and Recreation Manager Update

Mr. Shelby presented his report. Commissioner Niziolek requested staff to come up with a presentation to review the park dedication ordinance and related topics. He shared that he felt uncomfortable about how things went with the Specht property, and he was unsure of what he should be doing as a park commissioner regarding park dedication. Chair Anderson confirmed that the subject should be brought back to a future meeting as a discussion item.

Commissioner Niziolek said he noticed that someone was doing soil borings under Cty Rd 32. He said he is assuming that it is for some sort of project being that the road is immediately adjacent to Woodland Trails Regional Park, and he would like staff to find out that is for, so the commission can pursue a trail along Cty Rd 32. Chair Anderson said they are doing the same thing along Cty Rd 30 and so he would like an answer from staff on that as well.

9. Announcements.

10. Adjourn Meeting

Moved by Commissioner Loidolt and seconded by Commissioner Fermoye to adjourn the regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission at 7:30pm. Motion carried 7-0.

Minutes prepared by Dawn Larson.

Dave Anderson, Chair

Tina Allard, City Clerk



Request for Action

To
Parks and Recreation Commission

Item Number
6.1

Meeting Date
May 14, 2025

Prepared By
Jeff Shelby, Recreation Manager

Item Description
Archery Deer Hunt Steward

Reviewed by
Jeff Shelby
Joe Stremcha

Action Requested

The commission will recognize Wayne Becklin for his volunteer efforts with the annual archery deer hunt in the City of Elk River's parks.

Background/Discussion

Wayne Becklin has been named the official Archery Deer Hunt Steward for the annual deer herd management archery hunt that takes place in the city's parks.

The City of Elk River started the deer herd management archery hunt in 2016. The hunt is currently conducted in six city parks: Woodland Trails Regional Park (split into six zones), Hillside Park (split into two zones), Sedge Meadow Park, Birch Meadow Park, Alba Ridge Park, and Harris Island/Camp Cozy. Prospective hunters apply for the hunt starting in late July and then two hunters are selected for each zone/park by random drawing in the third week of August. The hunt then runs for the entire archery season.

In 2024, 24 hunters were selected from 64 applicants. 19 of the 24 were successful in harvesting at least one deer during the season. A total of 33 deer were harvested, including eight bucks and 25 antlerless deer. Hunters reported sightings of 1,072 deer during the hunt and the hunters hunted a total of 607 times.

In 2025, the hunt will run from September 13 through December 31.

Mr. Becklin has served as the unofficial steward for this park activity for the last few years and the City appreciates his continued efforts in coordinating the hunting activities with city staff.

Financial Impact

None.

Mission/Policy/Goal

Opportunity to live, work, and play. Work with citizens to achieve goals.

Attachments

None

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Request for Action

To
Parks and Recreation Commission

Item Number
7.1

Meeting Date
May 14, 2025

Prepared By
Jeff Shelby, Recreation Manager

Item Description
Villas at Fillmore 3rd Addition - Park Dedication

Reviewed by
Jeff Shelby
Joe Stremcha

Action Requested

Recommend, by motion, park dedication for The Villas at Fillmore Third Addition be paid in cash, at the applicable rate at the time of recording, for six single-family parcels.

Background/Discussion

The property is zone Planned Unit Development (PUD). The applicant is requesting approval of the third and final plat for this development. The 7.95-acre Outlot is proposed to be subdivided into six parcels, with access from Fillmore Street via a private street. All six parcels qualify for park dedication, as the existing lot is designated as an Outlot. Additionally, a trail along Fillmore Street was installed as part of the previous plat.

In March, the commission recommended that park dedication be paid in cash. The applicant has since resubmitted a revised plat, modifying the layout to reduce the installation costs of the in-ground infrastructure. From a park dedication standpoint, however, there are no changes from what the commission previously reviewed.

Financial Impact

Cash to be paid into the Park Dedication Fund.

Mission/Policy/Goal

Opportunity to live, work, and play.

Attachments

1. P 25-10&11 Location Map
2. Prelim Plat
3. Trail Master Plan (3)

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Project Location Map

Riverside Development

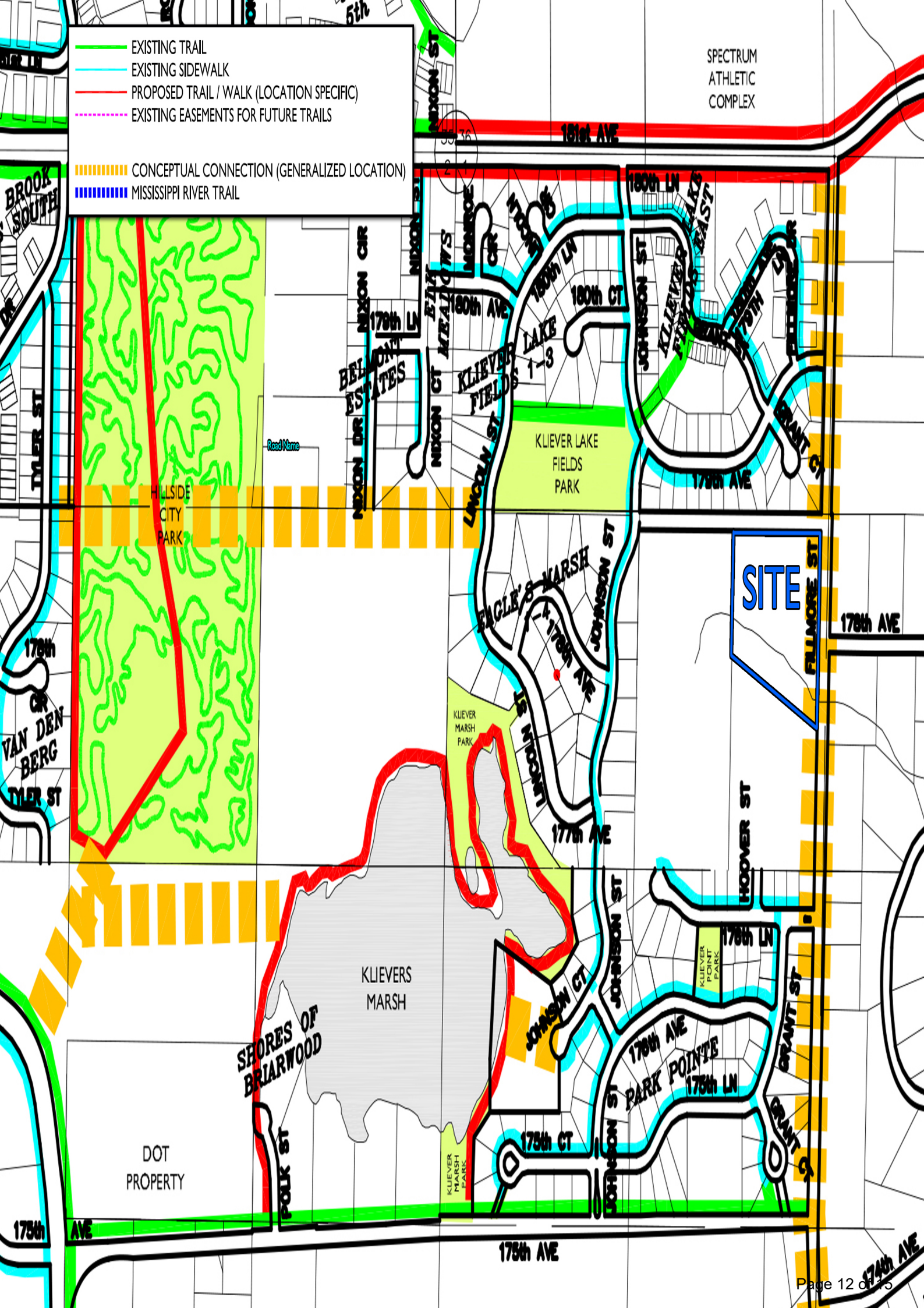
Preliminary Plat (P 25-10)

Final Plat (P 25-11)



SPECTRUM
ATHLETIC
COMPLEX

- EXISTING TRAIL
- EXISTING SIDEWALK
- PROPOSED TRAIL / WALK (LOCATION SPECIFIC)
- EXISTING EASEMENTS FOR FUTURE TRAILS
- CONCEPTUAL CONNECTION (GENERALIZED LOCATION)
- MISSISSIPPI RIVER TRAIL





Request for Action

To
Parks and Recreation Commission

Item Number
8.1

Meeting Date
May 14, 2025

Prepared By
Jeff Shelby, Recreation Manager

Item Description
Disc Golf Course - Burr Oak Park

Reviewed by
Jeff Shelby
Joe Stremcha

Action Requested
Discuss Burr Oak Park as a potential site for a disc golf course.

Background/Discussion

Last year, the commission and community members interested in disc golf toured both Meadowvale Heights Park and Burr Oak Park as potential sites for a disc golf course. At that time, neither site was determined to be a viable option for such an amenity. The commission determined that the lack of parking at Meadowvale presented a significant obstacle in developing a course at that park. With regard to Burr Oak, there were concerns regarding the rural location of the park, the current lack of parking, as well as the proliferation of sand burrs and buckthorn in the park that could require significant maintenance.

Since that time, staff has received more feedback and inquiries from the community about the viability of Burr Oak Park. The city has determined that the site at Lion John Weicht Park is not suitable for further improvements due to peat soil conditions and limits any future expansion. Leaders in the disc golf community ask that the commission reconsider the viability of Burr Oak and some are expected to be in attendance to share their thoughts.

Financial Impact
Variable based on project size and scope.

Mission/Policy/Goal
Work with citizens to achieve goals. Opportunity to live, work, and play.

Attachments
None

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Memorandum

To: Parks and Recreation Commission

From: Jeff Shelby, Parks and Recreation Manager

Date: May 14, 2025

Subject: Parks and Recreation Staff Report

Community Garden

The garden opens for use on May 15. Sherburne County Master Gardeners will host two events for planting tips: Sunday May 18 at 1pm for cold weather plants such as carrots, beets, peas, and herbs and Saturday May 31 at 10am for warm weather plants such as tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, and squash. The events are open to everyone.

City Wide Garage Sale

City-Wide Garage Sale that will take place May 15-17. There are over 80 homes registered as of May 6.

Indoor Farmers Market

The indoor market season wrapped up on May 1. The collaboration with the YMCA has been great and the indoor season will continue at the YMCA starting in November after the outdoor market. The outdoor market season begins June 12.

Senior Activity Center

We are continuing to sell 2025 memberships, as most snowbirds have now returned. To date, we have sold **513** memberships. In May so far, our average daily attendance is 83, and we are seeing steady growth in daily check-ins as participation in senior programs continues to increase. Earlier this month, we hosted a music event followed by a catered lunch from the Overlook Café. The event was well attended, and we received numerous positive comments from participants. Our trips continue to fill up quickly, as do our special presentations, reflecting the strong interest and engagement of our members. Staff continue to remind members the Senior Activity Center is for those 55+ able bodied seniors.

Rivers Edge Commons Construction and Events

Sod will be laid the week of May 12 weather permitting and we expect the work to be substantially complete on May 17. The community will be able to enjoy this exciting improvement just in time for the Memorial Day service on May 26 and the Riverfront Concert Series that begins on June 12 featuring Free and Easy Band.

Sports

Men's softball started April 22 and is off to a great start. We ended up with 14 teams registered for the summer season.

Breakaway Youth Hockey League just concluded the Spring season. We had 254 kids registered for this past season which was a decrease of 32 kids from the 286 participants last year.

Youth Baseball's Icebreaker and Youth Softball's Swing into Spring tournaments kicked off the main season without any issues. Both tournaments were very successful, and the weather was near perfect!

All backstops at the PT Complex (fields 1-6) will be replaced. The product is expected to arrive May 16-20 and will be installed soon after. This will be a fantastic safety upgrade as the current backstops are curled and passed balls can get under them and into the crowd.

Intern

Our summer intern, Taylor Ryan started on May 12. Taylor is attending the University of Minnesota- Crookston and is on her way to earning her Bachelor of Science degree in Recreation and Sports Management. Taylor will be overseeing our summer youth camps and programs, assisting with special events, and occasionally assisting with the senior center events.