



CITY OF MENDOTA HEIGHTS

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION WORK SESSION MEETING AGENDA

February 10, 2026 at 6:30 PM
Mendota Heights City Hall, 1101 Victoria Curve, Mendota Heights

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Discussion**
 - a. Review 2026-2030 Master Plan Implementation-Phase 1
 - b. DNR-Outdoor Recreation Grant Update
- 3. Adjourn**

Next Meeting
March 10, 2026 at 6:30 P.M.

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Parks and Recreation Work Session Memo

MEETING DATE: February 10, 2026
TO: Chair Blanks and Commissioners
FROM: Meredith Lawrence, Parks and Recreation/Assistant Public Works Director
SUBJECT: Review 2026-2030 Master Plan Implementation-Phase 1

ACTION REQUEST:

Staff will present the 2026-2030 Master Plan Implementation-Phase 1 document that our team has prepared utilizing the City Council accepted Park System Master Plan document from July, 2025. The Commissioners will be able to discuss the plan, goals, tactics, and timelines for achievement.

BACKGROUND:

Throughout 2024 and Q1 and Q2 of 2025, staff worked with consultants from PROS Consulting and Confluence to develop the City's first Park System Master Plan. In July, 2025 the City Council accepted the 173-page document, which provides a road map for parks and recreation in Mendota Heights over the next 15 years.

The plan is comprehensive, but can be overwhelming to process based on its depth and detail. In order to provide clear expectations for the community, Commissioners and City Council-- staff has developed a five-year implementation plan that tackles the first of three phases of the plan.

The tactics and deliverables included in this plan have been woven into individual staff work plans and staff will provide periodic updates on milestones and progress.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Implementation Plan 2026-2030



2026-2030 MASTER PLAN

IMPLEMENTATION *PHASE 1*

Goal 1: Upgrade parks and trails to meet community needs and expectations with purposeful park design and amenities that support Mendota Heights' high quality of life.

Tactic 1 – Capital Improvement Plan

Develop an approved Capital Improvement Plan that utilizes the equity analysis and asset management condition index to provide a vision for future park projects. The plan will balance maintaining existing amenities and updating parks with unique, new amenities that align with national trends and standards, community needs, and park amenity gaps. This plan will incorporate a prioritization ranking for projects and will coincide with the financial forecast and direction provided by the City Council.

- **Staff Responsible:** Parks and Recreation Director
- **Timeline:** 2026

Tactic 2 – ADA Transition Plan

Implement the ADA Transition Plan recommendations through phased projects, measurable benchmarks, and dedicated funding to improve accessibility across the park system to achieve equitable access to park facilities, programs, and outdoor experiences.

- **Staff Responsible:** Parks and Recreation Director/Public Works Superintendent/Park Maintenance Lead/Assistant City Engineer
- **Timeline:** 2026-2030

Tactic 3 – Branding Framework

Develop and implement a consistent branding framework that is applied department-wide, including park signage, facilities, marketing materials, digital platforms, uniforms and program communications. A unified brand will enhance the visitor experience, build community pride, and ensure all parks and services are clearly identifiable as part of one connected park system.

- **Staff Responsible:** Parks and Recreation Director/Communications Coordinator/Recreation Program Coordinator
- **Timeline:** 2029



2026-2030 MASTER PLAN

IMPLEMENTATION *PHASE 1*

Goal 2: Meet the desired unmet program needs outlined in the citizen survey as priorities for the parks and recreation system to build on in the future.

Tactic 1 – Improved Indoor Programming

Identify gaps in indoor Parks and Recreation programming capacity and implement short-term and long-term solutions to meet resident needs through partnerships, temporary facilities, and future capital investment.

- **Staff Responsible:** Parks and Recreation Director/Recreation Program Coordinator/Recreation Facilities Coordinator
- **Timeline:** 2028

Tactic 2 – Cost Recovery Policy

Develop and implement a comprehensive Cost Recovery Policy that provides clear staff direction on pricing programs, services, and facility rentals. The policy will establish consistent pricing principles aligned with community values, financial sustainability, and accessibility, while ensuring transparency and equity in cost recovery decisions.

- **Staff Responsible:** Parks and Recreation Director/Recreation Program Coordinator/Recreation Facilities Coordinator
- **Timeline:** 2026

Tactic 3 – Asset Management Software

Implementation of the asset management software platform to centrally track parks and recreation facilities, infrastructure, and equipment. The initiative will standardize data collection related to asset condition, lifecycle, maintenance activities, and associated costs. By improving the accuracy and availability of facility data, the department will enable data-driven decision-making for maintenance planning, capital improvement prioritization, budgeting, and long-term sustainability of parks and facilities.

- **Staff Responsible:** Parks and Recreation Director/Assistant City Engineer/Public Works Superintendent/City Mechanic/Park Maintenance Lead
- **Timeline:** 2026-2030



2026-2030 MASTER PLAN

IMPLEMENTATION *PHASE 1*

Tactic 4 – Par 3 Business Plan

Develop a comprehensive, data-driven business plan for the Mendota Heights Par 3 Community Golf Course that evaluates current operations, financial performance, and market positioning; identifies opportunities to improve efficiency, diversify and stabilize revenue, and manage costs; and establishes a clear strategic direction that supports long-term financial sustainability, high-quality customer experiences, and broad community access.

- **Staff Responsible:** Recreation Facilities Coordinator
- **Timeline:** 2027

Goal 3: Provide high quality recreation programs and amenities that are desired and developed to build a strong user base.

Tactic 1 – New Core Programs and Events

Develop and implement one new core program or event each year that directly reflects the interests, needs, and goals of the Mendota Heights community. This initiative will leverage demographic data, community engagement insights, and feedback from residents to ensure offerings are relevant and inclusive. The goal is to enhance participation, strengthen community connections, and promote health, wellness, and recreation opportunities for all age groups.

- **Staff Responsible:** Recreation Program Coordinator/Recreation Facilities Coordinator
- **Timeline:** 2027-2030

Tactic 2 – Program Review Framework

Develop a systematic program review framework to assess all Parks and Recreation programs and events, enabling data-driven decisions on whether to continue, discontinue, or retool offerings. The framework will use established criteria, such as participation rates, community impact, alignment with departmental goals, financial sustainability, and resident feedback, to ensure that resources are allocated effectively and programs remain relevant, engaging, and equitable.

- **Staff Responsible:** Recreation Program Coordinator
- **Timeline:** 2028

2026-2030 MASTER PLAN

IMPLEMENTATION *PHASE 1*

Tactic 3 – Standardized Proposal Process

Develop a standardized program and event proposal process that ensures all new Parks and Recreation offerings are strategically aligned, financially viable, and responsive to community needs. Each proposal will define financial objectives, demonstrate alignment with the department’s strategic plan, and provide evidence of community interest and demand.

- **Staff Responsible:** Recreation Program Coordinator
- **Timeline:** 2028

Tactic 4 – Fee-Setting Process

Implement a structured process for setting fees for parks and recreation programs and facilities that aligns with the City Council approved Cost Recovery Policy. Fees will be informed from the City’s asset management software, comparison data from neighboring cities, and direct costs to the city—ensuring fees reflect actual costs, support financial sustainability, and remain equitable and accessible to the community.

- **Staff Responsible:** Parks and Recreation Director/Recreation Program Coordinator/Recreation Facilities Coordinator
- **Timeline:** 2028

Goal 4: Develop long-term capital investment plan outlined in the Master Plan for creating parks and future indoor program space over the next ten-year period.

Tactic 1 – Funding Strategy and Financial Plan

Develop and implement a long-term funding strategy and financial plan designed to ensure the department’s programs, facilities, and community initiatives are adequately resourced over the next ten years. This initiative will include identifying diverse revenue streams, prioritizing investments in maintenance and capital projects, forecasting future financial needs, and creating sustainable funding mechanisms to support both current operations and future growth.

- **Staff Responsible:** Parks and Recreation Director/Finance Director/City Administrator
- **Timeline:** 2029



2026-2030 MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION *PHASE 1*

Tactic 2 – Grant Opportunities

Develop a comprehensive list of potential grant opportunities and evaluate their alignment with the department’s Master Plan and the broader needs of the City. This initiative will focus on identifying funding sources that support priority projects, programs, and capital improvements, ensuring that external funding opportunities are strategically leveraged to advance the department’s long-term goals. By aligning grant opportunities with community needs and planning objectives, the department can enhance resource acquisition, maximize impact, and strengthen partnerships with public and private stakeholders.

- **Staff Responsible:** Parks and Recreation Director/Recreation Program Coordinator/Recreation Facilities Coordinator/Administrative Special Projects Coordinator
- **Timeline:** 2027

Tactic 3 – Park Maintenance Plan

Create a long-term park maintenance plan to ensure all parks, facilities, and recreational assets are safe, functional, and aesthetically appealing for the community. This initiative will include the development of standardized maintenance schedules, assessment of current infrastructure conditions, prioritization of repairs and improvements, and allocation of resources for ongoing upkeep. By proactively managing park maintenance, the department will extend the life of assets, enhance user experiences, and support the City’s goals for sustainability, safety, and community engagement.

- **Staff Responsible:** Parks and Recreation Director/Public Works Superintendent/Park Maintenance Lead
- **Timeline:** 2030

Tactic 4 – Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Establish a comprehensive set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure and track progress toward departmental goals, program effectiveness, and community outcomes. This involves identifying meaningful metrics across operations, program participation, facility usage, maintenance, and community satisfaction—as well as implementing a system for regular monitoring, reporting and analysis. By tracking KPIs, the department can make data-driven decisions, optimize resources, demonstrate accountability, and continuously improve services to meet the needs of the community.

- **Staff Responsible:** Parks and Recreation Director/Assistant City Administrator
- **Timeline:** 2026

2026-2030 MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION *PHASE 1*

Tactic Timeline





Parks and Recreation Work Session Memo

MEETING DATE: February 10, 2026
TO: Chair Blanks and Commissioners
FROM: Meredith Lawrence, Parks and Recreation/Assistant Public Works Director
SUBJECT: DNR-Outdoor Recreation Grant Update

ACTION REQUEST:

Staff will provide an update to the Parks and Recreation Commission on the DNR grant process and timeline.

BACKGROUND:

As part of the 2026 budget process, the Parks and Recreation Commission recommended the renovation of the picnic shelter and the replacement of the playground at Valley Park. In discussions surrounding the two projects with both the Commission and City Council-staff recommended applying for a DNR-Outdoor Recreation Grant. Dakota County has a contract with a Landscape Architect consultant who is assisting staff in submitting the grant application at no cost to the City of Mendota Heights.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Outdoor Recreation Grant Program provides matching grants to local units of government for up to 50% of the cost of acquisition, development, and/or redevelopment of local parks and recreation areas. Project proposals must have a total project cost of at least \$100,000. Grants are reimbursed based on up to 50 percent of the total eligible costs. The maximum grant award is \$500,000 (for a total project cost of at least \$1,000,000). The local match can consist of cash, the value of materials, labor and equipment usage by the local sponsor; donations; or any combination thereof.

The Department of Natural Resources will review and rank applications during the spring of 2026. Preliminary grant awards will be announced in the summer of 2026. The application deadline is March 31, 2026.

The review and selection process will focus on guidelines outlined in the 2026-2030 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). Additional review components will assess the design of the proposed project and existing park facilities. Project design should be compatible with the physical characteristics of the site, consistent with generally accepted engineering and architectural design standards, in accordance with accessibility standards, and minimize risk to the health and safety of users.

Staff will provide the Commissioners with an update on the recommended scope of the project and grant application to ensure that it is competitive. The City Council will be asked to approve a resolution of support for the grant at their February 17 meeting.

ATTACHMENTS:

None