



**AGENDA OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF
THE PARKS AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**CITY OF BIRCHWOOD VILLAGE
WASHINGTON COUNTY, MINNESOTA
JUNE 16, 2026
6:30 P.M.**

Committee Members

Zach Michalk, Chair
Alan Mitchell, Secretary
Amy Hulett, Member
Bridget Sperl, Council Liaison
Kathy Weier, Council Liaison
Margaret Ford, Member
Mary Sue Simmons, Member

CALL TO ORDER

APPROVE AGENDA

OPEN PUBLIC FORUM

APPROVE MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

A. May 19, 2026 Meeting Minutes* (pages 2-5)

COMMITTEE BUSINESS - MEETING AGENDA

A. New Agenda Items

A. Discussion of Elm Beach Clean Water Plan with Ashley Petel, Washington
Conservation District* (Page 6-9)

B. Picnic Tables at Tighe-Schmitz Pavilion

C. Discussion and planning of 2026 Action Plan

A. Table 1 - Action Plan* (pages 10-11)

B. Table 2 - Budget Summary* (pages 12-13)

C. Table 3 - Ongoing Projects* (page 14-15)

D. Bulletin board and social media posts

B. Confirm next month's meeting and identify agenda topics

ATTACHMENTS

ADJOURN

* denotes an attachment in the agenda packet

**PARKS AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE
MEETING MAY 19, 2026
MINUTES**

The May 19, 2026, meeting of the Parks and Natural Resources Committee was called to order in city hall at 6:32 p.m. by Secretary Alan Mitchell, presiding in the absence of Chair Zac Michalk

Attendees: Committee Members Mary Sue Simmons, Margaret Ford, Amy Hulett, and Alan Mitchell. Council Member Bridget Sperl. Resident Barton Winter.

Agenda. The draft agenda was approved unanimously.

Public Forum. Barton Winter stated that he was happy that the City Council had approved of his work installing some new boards at the hockey rink. He indicated that he would like the Parks Committee to look at the birch trees near the hockey rink because some may be interfering with the rink and have to be removed. He also said that he would like the Committee to consider possible improvements at the recreational skating rink. Winter said that he had not been able to gather data on the cost of paint for the hockey rink surface yet but that he would provide such figures at the Parks Committee meeting in June. He also added that he would like the City to purchase a new snow blower for the rink. Sperl asked whether it might be possible to just trim the trees near the hockey rink because the City would prefer to not remove healthy trees. Winter responded that it might be possible to trim some of the trees but the one closest to the rink should probably be removed. The Committee suggested that it would be a good idea to check on this with the arborist.

Minutes. The draft April 21 Minutes were approved unanimously with the addition of two names (Mayor Jennifer Arsenault and Rebecca Nestingen from the Washington Conservation District) to the list of attendees at the March 30 meeting at Elm Beach.

Elm Beach Clean Water Plan. Simmons provided a brief overview of a possible conceptual plan for addressing runoff at Elm Beach that had been prepared by Lori Tella of the Washington Conservation District. (A copy of the conceptual plan was part of the Committee's agenda packet for the meeting.) Simmons advised that any grant funding the City obtained for work at Elm Beach would likely cover 50% of the costs and that the City would have to cover the other 50%. She added that the

same cost sharing would apply to any work that was done on the property of the adjoining beach neighbors. Simmons stated that she had raised this cost sharing issue with the landowners and that the landowners were agreeable to pay half the costs of any work they agreed to have done on their property.

At this point, a phone call was placed to Lori Tella of the Washington Conservation District (WCS). Tella advised the Committee that she had been onsite for the March 30 meeting to look at the situation, including runoff and ice damage impacts, and to meet with the neighbors. Referring to the same conceptual plan drawing for Elm Beach that Simmons had mentioned, Tella described several options for reducing and controlling the runoff, including hillside stabilization, a shoreline buffer, some upland work, check dams, and installation of a device called an energy dissipator.

Tella emphasized that this was just one possible approach. She said the cost figures were only estimates and that the actual costs would depend on the quality and extent of the work undertaken and that these estimates could be low. She stated that labor on a project like this can be costly. Tella added that hard rains, like 5 or 6 inch rains, result in a torrent of water running down Elm Beach and into the lake. She added that the more work that is done to control the runoff, the better the result will be. In response to an inquiry, Tella cautioned that the City would need to get a grant award first, before any expenditures were incurred, or the City would forfeit the ability to get grant funding for the work completed. Tella advised the Committee that while she has been involved in this project up to this point, different WCS staff people (Ashley Petel and Rebecca Nestingen) would be the primary contact persons going forward.

Tella was asked what the Parks Committee should do to keep this project moving. She responded that the City should undertake a survey of Elm Beach to help with creation of a more specific concept plan. She thought that such a plan could become available in June and then a meeting should be held with the neighbors to solicit their responses and participation. Tella said she would put together a schedule of steps that need to be undertaken and email that to us. The steps would generally include the following:

- Confirm that it is a Water Quality Project. Tella said that the Rice Creek Watershed District has already determined that the project qualifies as such a project and is grant eligible.

- Develop Conceptual Plan. This would be more detailed than the one Tella provided for this meeting and would more specifically identify the steps to be implemented.
- Submit Grant Application. This needs to be completed before any work is done or any expenses are incurred.
- Select Contractor. Tella said this could be a firm that has experience maintaining rain gardens. It could be the same firm that has been selected to do the work at Tighe-Schmitz Park.

Tella said that there still is grant money available for this year. She reminded the Committee that for a project of this type, the maximum grant is \$10,000. She added that larger grants are available for different and larger projects such as installing curb and gutters or for City Comprehensive Plan projects if the City was interested in pursuing such larger projects.

The Committee discussed that there is a pre-construction meeting tomorrow (May 20) with the contractor for the Tighe-Schmitz Project. The Committee thought that it would be a good idea to ask the contractor about putting up a sign at Tighe-Schmitz Park describing what is going on during the construction period.

The Committee indicated its intention to remain in contact with the Washington Conservation staff assigned to this project and to continue to move it forward. The Committee also discussed that it would be good to keep the Birchwood Dock Association advised of progress on Elm Beach.

2026 Action Plan The Committee went through the projects on the Action Plan (entitled Table 1 in the agenda packet). Nothing further was discussed regarding the Tighe-Schmitz Water Management Projects or the Elm Beach Erosion Control project. Ford advised she would have a report about Ash Beach at the June meeting. Mitchell stated that Music in the Park starts on June 7 and would run through August. Sperl remarked that with regard to dead tree removal in the community, the City had identified 32 trees that need to be taken down, not including the dedicated tree that the Committee had selected for removal as part of a program to allow residents to nominate a tree for removal. She added that the City is seeking bids for the tree removal and that the City would not be able to remove all the trees this year, but the dedicated tree would be one that is taken down.

Budget Summary. The Committee then turned to Table 2, the budget summary. Mitchell advised that he had inquired of city staff about how much money has been spent out of the Special Revenue Fund and learned that no expenditures were identified. The Committee discussed that the cost estimate for the Elm Beach project projected more grant funding than is going to be available, but decided it would hold off revising the figure until more details were developed. Sperl reported on developments with the Lake Links Bike Trail work. She said the City is in the process of ordering street signs and electric speed signs, a fountain, a bike repair station, four benches, and other amenities. She added that the City is talking to contractors about installing concrete pads for the various equipment. Sperl indicated that the City was hopeful the Lake Links work would be completed by the end of August.

Ongoing Projects. Table 3 contains a list of regular maintenance-type projects. Ford said that she will provide information at the next meeting about the best method for cleaning tennis courts.

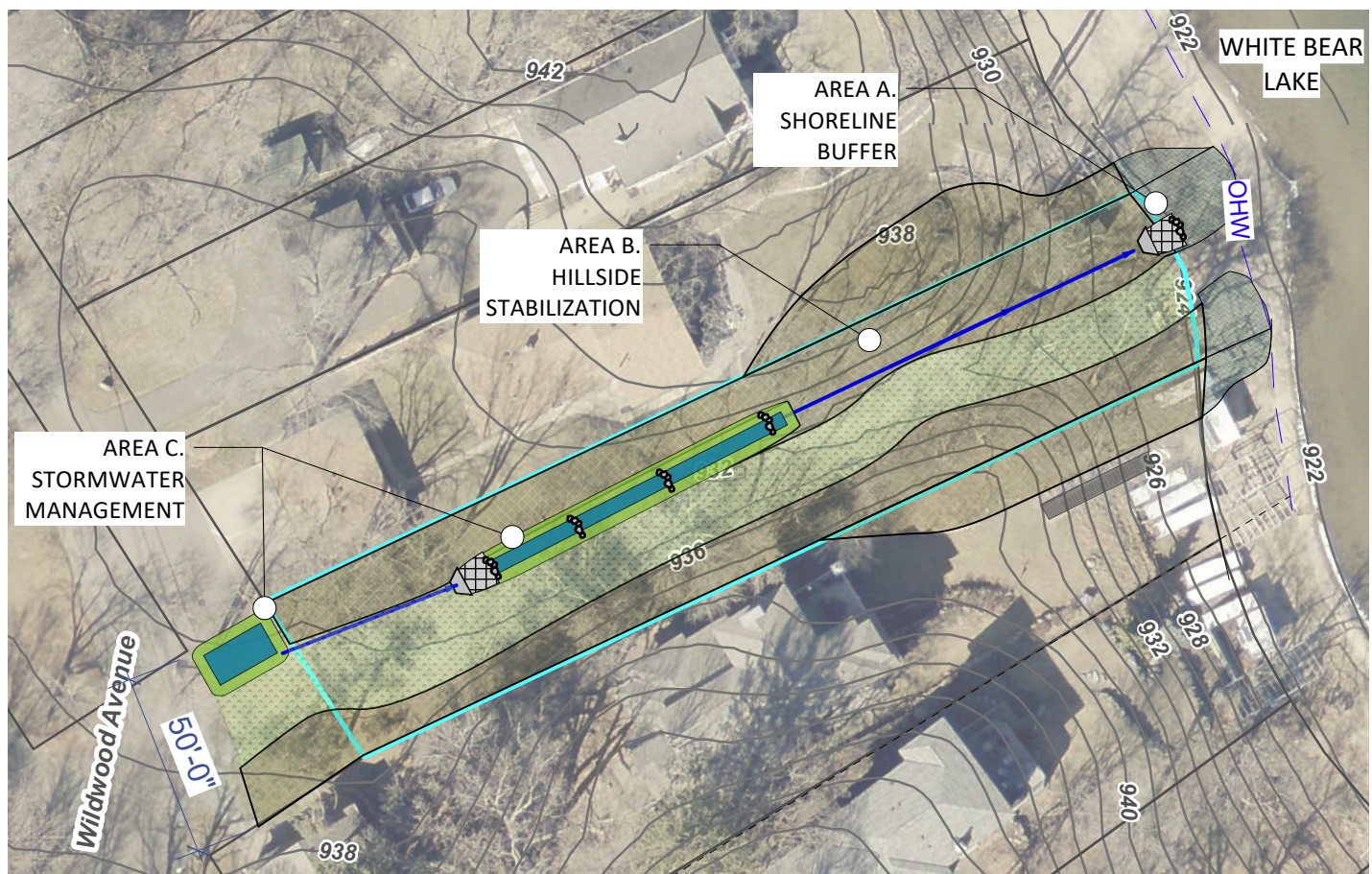
Bulletin Board and Social Media Posts. The Committee was reminded that if the Committee wanted to post anything on the city bulletin board or on social media, that Councilwoman Sperl should be contacted to do that. Sperl also reported that ferns had sprouted in the garden outside city hall and that if residents had ferns or other native plants to donate, they are welcome to just plant them in the area. She also announced that the brown trees in the garden area were going to be replaced.

Next Meeting. June 16, 2026 Our new contact person at the Washington Conservation District (Ashley Petel) will be invited to attend.

Adjourn. 7:49

Respectfully submitted,

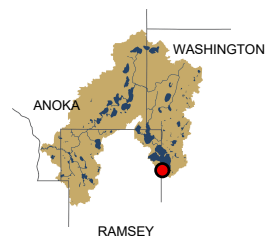
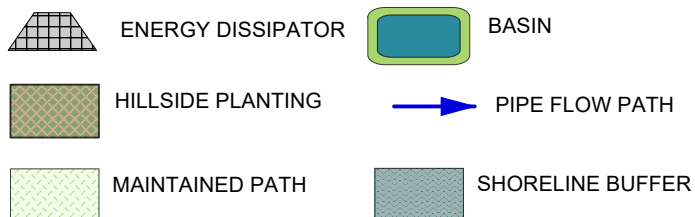
Alan Mitchell
Secretary



0 12.5 25 50 75 100 Feet
SCALE: 1"=50'

#	PROJECT COMPONENT	SIZE	ESTIMATE	POTENTIAL AWARD*	LANDOWNER/ MATCH
1	HILLSIDE STABILIZATION	8,000 SF	\$5,000	\$2,500 (50%)	\$2,500 (50%)
2	SHORELINE BUFFER	1,000 SF	\$5,000	\$2,500 (50%)	\$2,500 (50%)
3	VEGETATED SWALE W/ CHECK DAMS	100 LF	\$5,000	\$2,500 (50%)	\$2,500 (50%)
4	UPLAND STORMWATER BASIN	350 SF	\$4,000	\$2,000 (50%)	\$2,000 (50%)
5	ENERGY DISSIPATOR [CONCRETE BLOCK]	100 SF	\$1,000	\$500 (50%)	\$500 (50%)
6	NORTH BUFFER (KRAFT RESIDENCE)	1,500 SF	\$5,000	\$2,500 (50%)	\$2,500 (50%)
7	SOUTH BUFFER (PRATT RESIDENCE)	1,500 SF	\$5,000	\$2,500 (50%)	\$2,500 (50%)
			\$30,000	\$15,000 *	\$15,000 *
NOTE: *10,000 Max from RCWD per application, requires 50% match					

LEGEND



PROJECT LOCATION WITHIN WATERSHED:

CONCEPTUAL DRAWING FOR REFERENCE USE ONLY

* DISCLAIMERS:

1. COST SHARE FUNDING UP TO 75%, CAPPED AT \$10,000 PER PROJECT
2. COSTS AND PERCENTAGES ARE ESTIMATES. FUNDING IS DEPENDENT ON APPROVAL BY THE RCWD BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



CLEAN WATER PLAN

ADDRESS: Elm Beach Access Wildwood Avenue, Birchwood Village, MN 55110

PROPERTY OWNERS:
267 (Kraft Residence), 285B (Birchwood Village), 301 (Pratt Residence)

DATE: 05/26/26

CLEAN WATER PLAN PROVIDED BY:
RICE CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT [RCWD] & WASHINGTON CONSERVATION DISTRICT [WCD]



www.mnwc.org

WATER QUALITY GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES AND POLICIES

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Rice Creek Watershed District actively engages and funds private water quality improvement projects through the Water Quality Grant Program. This program provides multiple benefits that reduce or reuse stormwater runoff, prevent erosion, and/or filter pollutants.

Water quality projects that may be eligible for this grant program include: wetland restorations; rain gardens; shoreline or streambank restorations; replacing impervious surfaces with pervious pavers; pet waste management stations; infiltration basins; green roofs; and critical area stabilizations. Projects to improve the function of an existing BMP (like installing a pre-treatment chamber) may be considered. Agricultural water quality projects may also be eligible upon review.

FUNDING AVAILABILITY

The 2026 Water Quality Grant Program has \$175,000 available for eligible projects within RCWD boundaries. Projects may be approved for funding of 25%, 50%, or 75% of the total eligible materials and contracted labor costs up to \$10,000. Funding levels are based on RCWD evaluated criteria including pollutant load reductions and the overall project benefit to water resources.

GETTING STARTED

The RCWD partners with the Anoka (ACD) and Washington Conservation Districts (WCD) and the Ramsey County Parks and Recreation, Soil and Water Conservation Division (Ramsey SWCD) and their conservation specialists to determine if potential projects are eligible for this program. The conservation specialists also provide technical assistance, site visits, and assistance completing the application for RCWD landowners (residents, businesses, cities, etc).

The first step in the Water Quality Grant application process is to schedule a site visit with your respective county conservation specialist. At the visit, the specialist will discuss and evaluate potential projects for program eligibility using the RCWD's screening form. Scoring is based on a project's proximity to priority and/or impaired water bodies; estimated water quality improvement; surface water rate and volume control; erosion and sediment control. Potential applicants that are not eligible for the Water Quality Grant program will be informed of eligibility for other RCWD grant programs.

Request a free site visit by contacting your county's conservation specialist:

Anoka County

Breanna Keith

Breanna.Keith@AnokaSWCD.org

Ramsey County

Brian Olsen

brian.olsen@co.ramsey.mn.us

Washington County

Urban Areas: Lori Tella

ltella@mnwcd.org

Rural Areas: Angela Defenbaugh
adefenbaugh@mnwcd.org

WATER QUALITY GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES AND POLICIES

DEADLINES

The RCWD reviews proposals on a monthly basis.. Applications are presented to the RCWD Board of Managers for approval at the first meeting of the month (2nd Wednesday of every month). **Do not start a project before receiving Board approval or the project will no longer be eligible.** Applicants should supply information to the county conservation specialist well in advance of these dates to allow for adequate application review and processing.

GRANT PROGRAM AGREEMENT, AMENDMENTS, AND OPERATION & MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT

The grant application form will also serve as the Grant Program Contract. It must be completed and signed by the landowner and the conservation specialist. The document will be signed by the RCWD after Board approval; the agreement term lasts for 18 months. **Changes to the project or amendments to the agreement may not be made without approval by RCWD.**

Project maintenance is the responsibility of the landowner (applicant). All landowners will be required to sign an Operation and Maintenance Agreement that provides details on expectations and time commitment. RCWD staff or the conservation specialist have the authority to inspect any projects during the agreement period.

GRANT COMPLETION AND PAYMENT

The assigned conservation specialist must inspect and certify that the project was completed according to the approved grant agreement, design standards, specifications, and pollution reduction values. All claimed expenses will be reviewed by RCWD staff. The RCWD Board reserves the right to adjust the costs submitted for reimbursement based on this review. Grant payment will be made after project completion and once RCWD has received all required documentation.

CONFORMANCE TO GUIDELINES

The District reserves the right to withdraw funding for any project not completed in accordance with these guidelines or the terms of its executed Grant Program Contract. It is the applicant's sole responsibility to acquire any/all required permits and approvals prior to commencement of their project. Any submitted information, including but not limited to applications, conceptual designs, contractor bids, cost estimates, final designs and specifications, copies of permits and proof of expenditures becomes part of the public record.

INFORMATIVE RESOURCES

For more information regarding RCWD's Water Quality Grant Program and a step-by-step breakdown of the application process, please visit <https://www.ricecreek.org/grants/water-quality-grants/> OR contact RCWD Outreach and Grants Technician, Molly Nelson at mnelson@ricecreek.org

RCWD Water Quality Grant Project Timeline

Application

Review

The application will be presented to the RCWD Citizen Advisory Committee to receive recommendation for approval by the RCWD Board of Managers.

Meeting Occurance: 1st Wednesday of each month
(No meetings in January and July)

Start Work on Project

Upon approval, the Program Manager will send an approval letter and O&M Agreement to the applicant.

The applicant can begin work at this time.

Final Documentation

The applicant will submit an invoice for the project. The program manager will send a voucher form to be filled out and returned by the applicant.

Getting Started

Complete a free site visit and determine eligibility of project for cost-share opportunity.

Submit Application

Your county conservation representative will help you complete an application, project design, and cost estimate.

Deadline: The 20th of each month

Board Approval

The application will be presented for approval by the RCWD Board of Managers at the first Board meeting of each month.

Meeting Occurance: 2nd Wednesday of each month

Project Completion

Once work for the project is complete, contact county conservation representative to conduct a closure inspection.

Payment

A check for applicant reimbursement or direct payment to the contractor will be sent in the mail.

Checks will deliver in 4-6 weeks.

Table 1: 2026 Parks Committee Action Plan

Item	Project	Description	Status (Last Updated April 2026)	Contact Person
Tier 1 – Priority Projects				
1.01	Tighe-Schmitz Water Management Projects	Various water control projects in and around Tighe-Schmitz Park	Construction scheduled to begin summer 2026.	City Staff
1.02	Elm Beach Erosion Control	Improve discharge area into White Bear Lake at Elm Beach	Planning in progress. Stakeholder meeting occurred in March 2026 to begin project and grant planning.	Mary Sue Simmons
1.03	Ash Beach Access and Safety	Improve the access area to Ash Beach	Scope to be developed.	Margaret Ford
1.04	Music in the Park	Summer concert series at hockey rink	Twelve Sunday evenings June – August.	Alan Mitchell
1.05	Birch Beach Rain Garden	Contractor required for proper cleanup of rain garden	Scheduled for this year.	City Staff
Tier 2 – Secondary Projects				
2.01	Improvements to Curt Feistner Memorial Preserve	Considering options at both the lake site and elsewhere in the city	No grant funding identified.	Amy Hulett
2.02	Hockey Rink Painting	Center portion of the rink requires painting	Barton Winter to develop cost proposal for committee to consider.	TBD
2.03	Lake Links Trail Amenities	Benches and exercise equipment along Lake Links bike trail, along with other non-park work on the bike trail	Committee input on specific locations for benches and other equipment may be requested.	Bridget Sperl
2.04	Landscaping at Lift Station	Plantings around the lift station on Wildwood Avenue – perhaps painting of facility	Kathy to see interest from local boy and girl scout troops.	Kathy Weier

Item	Project	Description	Status (Last Updated April 2026)	Contact Person
2.05	Village Hall Landscaping	Planting around Village Hall to improve aesthetics	Ongoing project.	Bridget Sperl
2.06	Swim Buoy at Kay Beach	Additional swim buoy for safety purposes	Spring/summer 2026.	Zach Michalk
2.07	Improvements at Tighe-Schmitz Pavilion	Replace grill and look into other pavilion upgrades	Replace grill in spring/summer 2026.	Zach Michalk
2.08	Upgrade playground equipment at Tighe-Schmitz Park and Bloomquist Park	Annual maintenance (Table 3) and possibility of acquiring new equipment	Ongoing every year. Mayor Arsenault and city staff are reviewing grant options.	City Staff
2.09	Additional rain gardens around playground at Tighe-Schmitz Park	More water control to minimize discharges to lake	Planning in progress.	Mary Sue Simmons
Tier 3 – Projects on Hold				
3.01	Polly's Park Runoff	Runoff from uphill flows into the park during rain storms.	On hold due to issues with grant.	TBD
3.02	Polly's Park – Large Tree Removal	Dead or diseased trees in the park need removal	On hold due to issues with grant.	TBD
3.03	Polly's Park – Small Tree Removal	Invasive and other species need removal	On hold due to issues with grant.	TBD

Table 2: 2026 Parks Committee Budget Summary

Item	Project	Total Estimated Cost	Special Revenue Fund	Grant Funding	City Funding	Contact Person
Tier 1 – Priority Projects						
1.01	Tighe-Schmitz Water Management Projects	\$82,500	\$7,500	\$75,000		City Staff
1.02	Elm Beach Erosion Control	\$8,000	\$800	\$7,200		Mary Sue Simmons
1.03	Ash Beach Access and Safety	\$3,000	\$300	\$2,700		Margaret Ford
1.04	Music in the Park	\$4,320	\$3,600		\$720	Alan Mitchell
1.05	Birch Beach Rain Garden	\$1,000			\$1,000	City Staff
1.06	Removal of Nominated Dead Tree	\$2,500	\$2,500			Zach Michalk
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$101,320</i>	<i>\$14,700</i>	<i>\$84,900</i>	<i>\$1,720</i>	
Tier 2 – Secondary Projects						
2.01	Improvements to Curt Feistner Memorial Preserve	\$1,000		\$1,000		Amy Hulett
2.02	Hockey Rink Painting	\$2,000	\$2,000			TBD
2.03	Lake Links Trail Amenities	\$2,000		\$2,000		Bridget Sperl
2.04	Landscaping at Lift Station	\$250			\$250	Kathy Weier
2.05	Village Hall Landscaping	\$0				Bridget Sperl
2.06	Swim Buoy at Kay Beach	\$250	\$250			Zach Michalk
2.07	Improvements at Tighe-Schmitz Pavilion	\$1,000	\$1,000			Zach Michalk
2.08	Upgrade playground equipment at Tighe-Schmitz Park and Bloomquist Park	\$500		\$500		City Staff

Item	Project	Total Estimated Cost	Special Revenue Fund	Grant Funding	City Funding	Contact Person
2.09	Additional rain gardens around playground at Tighe-Schmitz Park	\$2,000	\$2,000			Mary Sue Simmons
<i>Subtotal</i>		<i>\$9,000</i>	<i>\$5,250</i>	<i>\$3,500</i>	<i>\$250</i>	
Tier 3 – Projects on Hold						
3.01	Polly's Park Runoff	\$0				TBD
3.02	Polly's Park – Large Tree Removal	\$0				TBD
3.03	Polly's Park – Small Tree Removal	\$0				TBD
<i>Subtotal</i>		<i>\$0</i>				
Total		\$110,320	\$19,950	\$88,400	\$1,970	

Table 3: Parks Committee Ongoing Projects

Item	Project	Description	Status (as of April 2026)
Playground at Tighe-Schmitz Park			
1	Replace plastic around the steps of the jungle gym	Plastic showing signs of tearing with sharp edges	Not yet completed
2	Remove balance beam		Not yet completed
3	Replace rotten landscape timbers behind the swing set		Not yet completed
4	New chains and s-hooks for swing set	One swing should be lowered for smaller children	Not yet completed
5	New seat on digger toy		Not yet completed
6	Refill sand next to slide		Not yet completed
7	Sand and paint picnic tables	Evaluate all city picnic tables for sanding and painting	Not yet completed
8	Fill crack in concrete under pavilion		Not yet completed
9	Remove wood pile behind the pavilion		Completed
Other City Parks and Open Spaces			
1	Remove wood pile at Dellwood Beach		Not yet completed
2	Remove wood pile at Elm Beach		Not yet completed
3	Remove buckthorn and treat stumps at Elm Beach		Not yet completed
4	Remove buckthorn and treat stumps at Birch Beach		Not yet completed

Item	Project	Description	Status (as of April 2026)
5	Remove buckthorn pile at Jay Path		Completed