



City of North St. Paul
Parks & Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting Agenda

January 28, 2026
6:30 PM

The Park and Recreation Commission Meeting will be conducted on **January 28, 2026** at 6:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers of City Hall, located at 2400 Margaret St., North St. Paul.

You can watch the meeting on our YouTube channel here: [tinyurl.com/NSPYouTube](https://www.youtube.com/NSPYouTube)

I. Call to Order

II. Roll Call

Laura Greenlee-Karp, Chair
Sarah Zahradka, Vice Chair
Lloyd Grachek
David Andren
Ingrid Koller
Rachel Lucas
William Kealy
Cassidy Schweer, Council Liaison

STAFF

Sara Lang-Noyola

III. Adopt Agenda

IV. Approval of Minutes

A. Approval of meeting minutes from November 19th, 2025.

V. Meeting Open to Public

This Open Forum is an opportunity for persons to address the Parks and Recreation Commission on items not on the agenda. A completed public comment form should be presented to the staff liaison prior to the meeting. Comments will be limited to 3 minutes per person. While the Commission may ask clarifying questions of the speaker, no formal action by the Commission or discussion will be held on these items.

VI. Commission Business, Action Items & Recommendations

- A. Election of Officers
- B. Park Representatives 2026
- C. Grant Opportunity for Casey Lake Hockey Rink

VII. Reports from Staff

VIII. Reports from Commissioners & Park Liaisons

IX. Adjournment

The next regularly scheduled Parks & Recreation Commission meeting is February 25th, 2026.



To	Date
Parks & Recreation Commissioners	January 28, 2026

Agenda Placement # IV.A

Approval of Minutes

Subject

Approval of meeting minutes from November 19th, 2025.

Background/Facts

Recommended Action

Attachments

1. PRC Minutes 11.19.25

Respectfully submitted,
Sara Lang-Noyola, Community Development Administrative Assistant



**Park and Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
November 19, 2025
6:30 PM**

North St. Paul City Hall – Council Chambers
2400 Margaret Street

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Greenlee-Karp called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

II. ROLL CALL

COMMISSION

Laura Greenlee-Karp, Chair
Sarah Zahradka, Vice-Chair
David Andren, Commissioner, excused
Lloyd Grachek, Commissioner
Ben Hansen, Commissioner, excused
Ingrid Koller, Commissioner
Rachel Lucas, Commissioner, excused

STAFF/LIAISONS

Cassidy Schweer, City Council Liaison
Sara Lang-Noyola, Staff Liaison
Ken Roberts, Community Development Director

III. ADOPT AGENDA

Chair Greenlee-Karp called for a motion to adopt the November 19, 2025 meeting agenda.
M/Grachek, S/Zahradka
Motion carried 4-0.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. Approval of Minutes from October 22, 2025 PRC Meeting

Chair Greenlee-Karp called for a motion to approve the October 22, 2025 meeting minutes.
M/Koller, S/Grachek
Motion carried 4-0.

V. MEETING OPEN TO PUBLIC

No members of the public were in attendance.

VI. COMMISSION BUSINESS, ACTION ITEMS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. 2025 Event Recap and 2026 Proposed Events



Ava Griemert, the City's Communications and Events Coordinator, presented on a recap of the events in 2025 as well as proposed events in 2026.

For 2025, events included Fire and Ice, parks clean-up, workout events in the park, music in the park events, movie in the park events, cleaning the food shelf and the upcoming Holly Jolly Night. The Silver Lake Beach Party, workout in the parks and the kid's movie night were the largest successes. Using multiple parks, leaning into event themes and trying new ideas worked well for these events. Areas to improve include the Fire and Ice event with more promotion, pre-making luminaries and moving hot chocolate by the ice rink and the other event to improve is the parks clean-up day by creating a subcommittee to help plan the day. Commissioner Koller volunteered to be on the subcommittee. Chair Greenlee-Karp noted that getting more student involvement would be beneficial.

For 2026, similar events to 2025 are planned however there is an addition of a time capsule event, which includes working with the Historical Society and Scout Museum, to open the time capsule and have music and food for attendees. Commissioner Koller suggested finding residents that remember the capsule being buried to invite them to the ceremony. Chair Greenlee-Karp asked if a street dance is possible at the capsule event. An additional workout in the park will be added as yoga in the morning at Silver Lake Park. Expectations were laid out to the Commissioners asking them to volunteer for at least 2 events throughout the year. An email will go out to the Commissioners a month before the event asking for help.

Vice-Chair Zahradka commended Ava Griemert on the hard work for creating the events and thanked her for the planning. It was asked how events can be promoted above what is currently done. An idea was discussed of adding a list of events to the website and sending out magnets to residents with the events listed or a mailer in the utility bills.

B. McKnight Next Steps

Staff Liaison Lang-Noyola introduced the subject by acknowledging the interest by the Parks and Recreation Commission to move forward with improving the McKnight Athletic Complex. Staff has since discussed the path forward and has developed a list of questions and considerations that Staff and the Commission will need to consider if the project moves forward.

Staff Liaison Lang-Noyola noted that staff are waiting on the Housing and Urban Development department to provide additional documentation regarding the land usage requirements for the area. Once the land usage requirements are clearly defined, the Parks and Recreation Commission has the option to present their recommendations to the City Council. At that time, City Council can decide if the McKnight Athletic Complex is a project they would like to move forward with in the near future.

Ken Roberts, the North St. Paul Community Development Director, described the conversation at the City Council workshop on 11/18/25 in regard to future spending and direction of the McKnight Athletic Complex. The City Council listed their priorities for future City spending and noted the importance of maintaining current infrastructure and facilities as well as reviewing the current and future tax levy. The City Council rated their spending priorities which included maintaining infrastructure, streets and utilities at the top and parks tied for the bottom. If the PRC feels strongly about the McKnight Athletic Complex, all of the available park's funding would need to be repurposed to that, however no other parks projects would have funding.

Chair Greenlee-Karp asked what Ken's understanding of the Park and Open Space Master Plan is and the history of the Commission. It was noted that City Council asked the Commission not to spend any money until a complete plan is developed. Chair Greenlee-Karp noted that the Commission has completed everything that the City Council has asked. Chair Greenlee-Karp added that the City Council



Workshop presentation last night was leading the Council and they couldn't come to fair conclusion. It was further noted that the McKnight project was used as an example of a project that is too expensive to prioritize at this time. Chair Greenlee-Karp noted that the Finance Director stated that the Council will need to dip into Parks Fund for projects that the City would like to complete. Chair Greenlee-Karp noted her understanding of public funding and that the School District, for example, has intentional funding accounts to avoid dipping into other accounts.

Vice-Chair Zahradka asked what the plans for City Council voting based on the workshop. Community Development Director Roberts noted the Council meeting on December 2nd will include Truth and Taxation levy hearing and the December 16th Council meeting will be when the Council adopts the final budget and updated CIP. Vice-Chair Zahradka asked how she should proceed with concerns and it was noted that she should attend the next City Council meeting.

Commissioner Grachek asked what the City Councils thoughts are on the McKnight Athletic Complex and it was noted that Staff are not sure at this time.

Commissioner Koller asked when the HUD agreement came up and to clarify what it is. Staff Liaison Lang-Noyola noted that Staff has been aware of an agreement however still are unsure about the details but will share as soon as they can. Preliminary details on the HUD agreement came up when the title work was completed during the certificate of survey process.

Council member Schweer added that the City annual budget can be adjusted at any time and to consider that three Council Members were in attendance at the workshop. It was also noted that no Council Member wants the levy to go up, however, Council Members will change in a year and encouraged the Commission to stay open minded.

The Commission agreed that the CIP for 2026 should be updated to budget for engineered plans of the McKnight Athletic Complex. Commissioner Grachek considered if the Commission should spend that much money without spending on current parks. Vice-Chair Zahradka advocated budgeting for the plans and that waiting any longer will cost even more money. Commissioner Koller noted it is more efficient to include the entire McKnight Athletic Complex in the engineered plan and that the Commission has been talking about updates there for over a decade and stressed the importance of the visibility of the site.

Commissioner Grachek commended patience of the Commission.

Chair Greenlee-Karp called for a motion to recommend amending the 2026 CIP to include the addition of \$300,000 for an engineered plan for the McKnight Athletic Complex.

M/Greenlee-Karp, S/Grachek

Motion carried 4-0.

VII. REPORTS FROM STAFF

Staff Liaison Lang-Noyola noted that the playground at Polar Park is scheduled to be replaced in the first week of December. Pickleball and volleyball nets came down earlier this week.

Ken appreciates the conversation and questions; going to be a process, council on board.

VIII. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS & PARK LIAISONS

Commissioner Grachek had no updates.



Vice-Chair Zahradka asked if there is an update on adding woodchips to the Urban Ecology Center. Staff Liaison Lang-Noyola said Public Works is looking into it.

Commissioner Koller had no updates.

Chair Greenlee-Karp had no updates.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Greenlee-Karp asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:56 PM.

M/Grachek, S/Zahradka

Motion carried 4-0.

The next regularly scheduled Park and Recreation Commission Meeting will be January, 2026.



To	Date
Parks & Recreation Commissioners	January 28, 2026

Agenda Placement # VI.A

Commission Business, Action Items & Recommendations

Subject

Election of Officers

Background/Facts

Per Chapter 32, Section 32.08 Organization. At the first regular meeting of the calendar year, the Commission shall elect a Chairperson and a Vice-Chair person from among its appointed members, each for a term of one (1) year. No person shall serve more than three (3) consecutive one-year terms as Chairperson of a particular Commission, unless a challenge is not present, then the existing Chairperson may remain for an additional term.

Recommended Action

Staff recommends that the Park and Recreation Commission conduct the annual election of Chair and Vice-Chair.

Attachments

None

Respectfully submitted,
Sara Lang-Noyola, Community Development Administrative Assistant



To	Date
Parks & Recreation Commissioners	January 28, 2026

Agenda Placement # VI.B

Commission Business, Action Items & Recommendations

Subject

Park Representatives 2026

Background/Facts

Each Parks and Recreation Commissioner represents at least one park in the community.

Recommended Action

Assign new Commissioner William Kealy to at least one park.

Attachments

- 1. nsp park liason map 2026

Respectfully submitted,
Sara Lang-Noyola, Community Development Administrative Assistant

N. St Paul Parks by Commissioner – 2026

1. Casey Lake

- Rachel

2. Colby Hills

- Sarah

3. Country Club

- Laura

4. Dorothy

- Ingrid

5. Hause

- Laura

6. McKnight

- Dave, Lloyd

7. Northwood

- Laura, Rachel

8. Polar

- Laura

9. Silver Lake

- Ingrid

10. Southwood

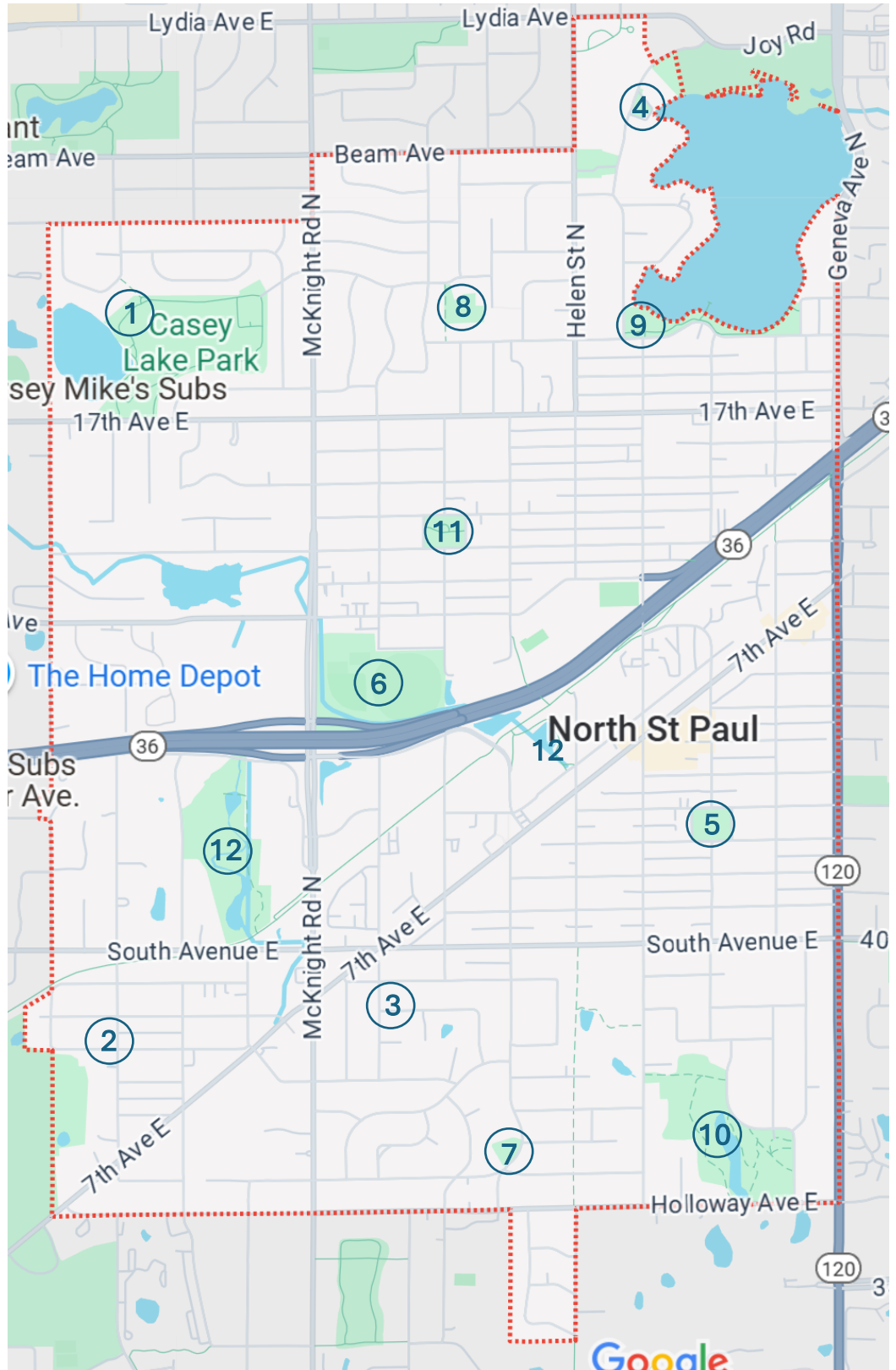
- Dave, Lloyd

11. Tower

- Rachel

12. Urban Eco Center

- Sarah



Outdoor Recreation Grant Program (MN DNR)

Program Purpose: To increase and enhance outdoor recreation facilities in local and community parks throughout the state.

How it Works: The 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. Grants are reimbursed based 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).

Grant Awards: 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. All work must be completed by June 30, 2028.

Grant Application Timeline: The completed application is **due by 11:59 p.m. on March 31, 2026**. If you would like feedback on your application, please submit it by February 28, 2026.

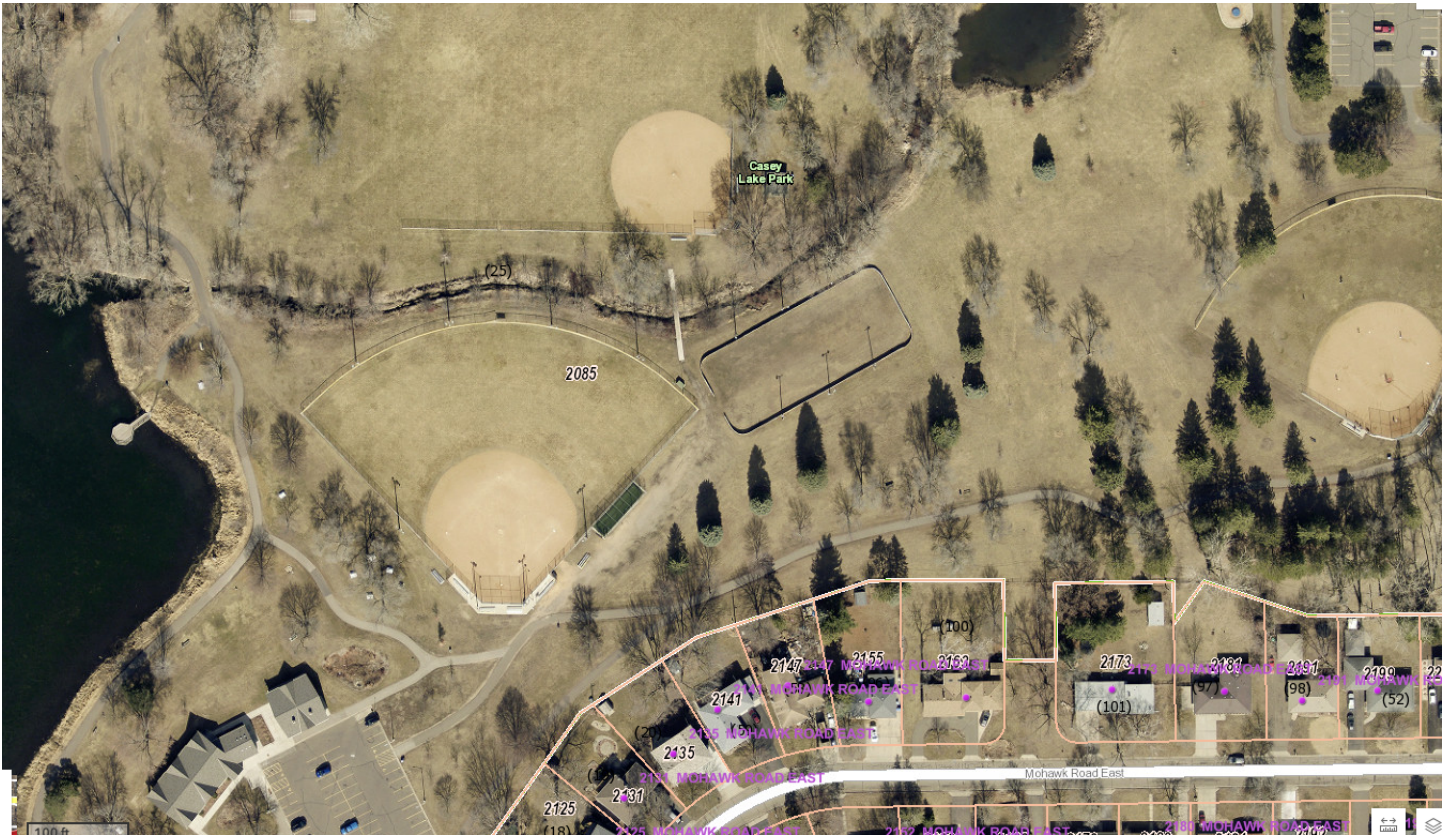
Staff Proposal/Information

Current life of the facility: 30+ years

Problem areas: uneven ground spots, boards are worn and are individually replaced when needed, lighting system is old, etc.

Proposed upgrade would include new surface, new boards, new lighting, potential new service road to the rink, etc.

Current:





Examples:





2026 through 2035 Capital Improvement Plan North St. Paul, MN Projects & Funding Sources By Department

Department	Project #	Priority	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	Total
Parks and Recreation													
Park Fencing at McKnight	<i>PARK-23-012</i>	2	0	60,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	60,000
063 Park Fund				60,000									60,000
Replace the fencing around the four softball fields at McKnight softball complex.													
McKnight Dugouts - Four Total	<i>PARK-23-013</i>	2	0	60,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	60,000
063 Park Fund				60,000									60,000
Replace dugouts at the softball fields.													
Casey Lake Fishing Dock	<i>PARK-23-023</i>	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	32,900	0	0	32,900
063 Park Fund										32,900			32,900
Plan for the replacement of the fishing dock at Casey Lake by 2040.													
Silver Lake Park Playground	<i>PARK-25-002</i>	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	500,000	0	0	0	500,000
063 Park Fund									500,000				500,000
The Silver Lake Park playground equipment will need to be replaced in the next 8-10 years. Currently the 2022 Park Improvement Plan calls for approximately \$941,000 in park improvements. Likely the playground replacement will cost less than that amount.													
Southwood Park Bridge/ Observation Deck Replacement	<i>PARK-25-003</i>	2	0	0	0	0	45,000	0	0	0	0	0	45,000
063 Park Fund							45,000						45,000
The metal bridge over the existing creek should be replaced in the next 5-10 years. Additionally, the observation deck needs to be replaced in the next 5-10 years due to weathering issues.													
Northwood Park Overhaul	<i>PARK-25-004</i>	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,430,000	0	0	1,430,000
063 Park Fund										1,430,000			1,430,000
The recommendation is for a complete overhaul of the entire Northwood Park area. Remove the underutilized hockey rink. Replace the aging playground equipment. New park building and other various play structures.													
Casey Lake Park Active Playground	<i>PARK-25-007</i>	2	0	0	500,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	500,000
063 Park Fund					500,000								500,000
Recommendation to construct a new ninja course or other "active" playground area on the east side of the park. Repair existing hockey rink and create a service road for vehicles to access. Also include a new ADA accessible path in the park.													
Colby Hills Sport Field	<i>PARK-25-009</i>	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	25,000	0	0	0	25,000
063 Park Fund									25,000				25,000
Create a new sport field at Colby Hills Park.													
Tower Park 2025 Update	<i>PARK-26-006</i>	3	0	0	0	2,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,000
063 Park Fund						2,000							2,000

Department	Project #	Priority	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	Total
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1 moveable gaga ball pit w/ swinging ADA door. (Rachael Lucas) RECOMMENDATION IS TO MOVE TO 2029 AFTER THE CITY COMPLETES A NEW WATER TOWER INSTALLATION.

3rd Street Concept Design	<i>PARK-26-007</i>	3	0	0	0	0	1,120,000	0	0	0	0	0	1,120,000
063 Park Fund							1,120,000						1,120,000

Given the site's proximity to numerous homes, the proposed program is designed to serve both families and individuals. Community engagement highlighted strong interest in walking trails, nature play areas, and a community garden. These elements align with the City's initial concept of a low-impact design that preserves the forest character and respects neighboring residences. The walking trails and nature play areas are located in the northern forested section. Existing clearings are utilized for play areas to minimize environmental impact. The site's gentle slopes allow for accessible paths linking internal spaces with a new sidewalk along the road, providing multiple access points. Selective vegetation removal and general cleanup will create space for pathways, improve visibility from the west side, and enhance safety. (Dave Andren)

Downtown Open Space	<i>PARK-26-009</i>	3	0	0	785,867	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	785,867
063 Park Fund					785,867								785,867

This site would be organized into three distinct zones: buffer planting, a flexible plaza, and lawn areas. At the heart of this design is the flexible plaza, which serves as the "front porch." This space is highlighted by a series of brightly colored bench swings, offering playful interaction and drawing attention from passersby. The plaza also features picnic tables for gatherings and a decorative surface finish with a light texture that encourages lingering and slows foot traffic, inviting people to relax and enjoy the space. New pathways connect the central plaza to surrounding sidewalks. Alongside these paths are stacked stone blocks, which frame the space, subtly separate active areas from the street, provide additional seating, and serve as playful climbing features for children. At the park's eastern corner, the primary entry point is marked by a small area of decorative paving located behind the sidewalk. This entry space accommodates park signage and doubles as a performance area for small events, oriented either toward the park or the street. (David Andren)

Flex Field at McKnight	<i>PARK-26-012</i>	3	0	894,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	894,000
034 Park Dedication Fund				450,000									450,000
063 Park Fund				444,000									444,000

Flexible field in place of current t-ball field off of McKnight St. This would be part of the greater McKnight fields redesign and expansion. This flexible field would allow for baseball, mini soccer and other turf sports. This would be an artificial turf with drainage and proper surround detailed out in the HGA Design plan. (Sarah Zahradka)

Playground at McKnight	<i>PARK-26-013</i>	3	0	300,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	300,000
063 Park Fund				300,000									300,000

New playground at McKnight fields complex. Estimate is provided by HGA. This would be part of the greater McKnight fields redesign and expansion. This would go hand in hand with the parking lot redesign at McKnight. (Sarah Zahradka)

Plaza at McKnight	<i>PARK-26-014</i>	3	0	0	0	0	0	484,000	0	0	0	0	484,000
063 Park Fund								484,000					484,000

Creating a plaza that connects all central units of the new McKnight field. This concrete plaza would have permanent shade structures and moveable picnic tables that can be moved out to create a larger space for events like art in the park, food truck night, etc. This plaza becomes the heart of the complex connecting legion field to the playgrounds, skate park and softball fields as well as the parking lot. (Sarah Zahradka)

Skate Park at McKnight	<i>PARK-26-015</i>	3	0	0	0	250,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	250,000
063 Park Fund						250,000							250,000

New skate and BMX park at the new McKnight complex. Details of exact objects in this park would have to be completed with help from community experts in the skate and BMX field. Estimate is provided by HGA. This would be part of the greater McKnight fields redesign and expansion. (Sarah Zahradka)

Department	Project #	Priority	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	Total
Design Plans and Specifications for the McKnight Athletic Complex	PARK-26-017	2	300,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	300,000
063 Park Fund			300,000										300,000

Working with a professional design firm to develop complete plans and specifications to include grading, drainage, proposed phasing, etc. for potential improvements to the McKnight Athletic Complex. The plans would include designs for the entire complex.

Parks and Recreation Total	300,000	1,314,000	1,285,867	252,000	1,165,000	484,000	525,000	1,462,900	0	0	6,788,767
GRAND TOTAL	300,000	1,314,000	1,285,867	252,000	1,165,000	484,000	525,000	1,462,900	0	0	6,788,767