



GRAND RAPIDS
IT'S IN MINNESOTA'S NATURE

**Recreation and Park Department
IRA Civic Center
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Memorandum

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Dale Anderson, Director of Parks & Recreation
Date: June 22, 2026
Re: Department Head Report

The conference rooms at the arena have remained busy hosting many team functions, banquets, public meetings, trainings, voting, blood drives, and several wedding / baby showers. We have become a very popular place for hosting graduation parties, between the conference room and Miner's Pavilion, we held 9 this spring.

We had another successful ice season at Yanmar Arena. GRAHA hosted 15 weekend tournaments bringing thousands of visitors to our area. The refrigerated pavilion ice has been a blessing as we now have over 550 kids playing hockey here in GR!

We will be putting ice back in the Kauppi Rink to begin summer programming on July 6th. Local hockey camps and figure skating will fill most of the weekday icetimes. A girls high school festival, a goalie camp, a Minnesota Hockey HP tryout, and a girls high school summer league will help fill weekends.

Back in March we submitted a Minnesota DNR Regional grant for major improvements at Blandin Beach. The grant request includes a new restroom facility, a splash pad, a large pavilion, a sand volleyball court, and connecting sidewalks making the entire park accessible. We will find out on June 30th if we were successful.

I will be requesting CIP funding again in 2027 to resurface our tennis courts and install a new play structure at Grussendorf Park and to replace the poly facing with fiberglass on our outdoor hockey boards at the YMCA. These items are becoming safety concerns.

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The Lion's Club plans to begin construction on a new pavilion at McGowan Park in July. This is a cooperative effort as our public works department did site-prep and had concrete poured last fall. This will be a great addition as pavilions in neighborhood parks are very popular.

The Grand Rapids Sports Complex is seeing another busy season. In late May we hosted the 7A girl's fastpitch section playoffs. Currently we have men's slowpitch softball, association girl's fastpitch, association soccer, association lacrosse, and YMCA youth soccer and t-ball programs. The softball association raised money and had new safety netting installed this spring.

With City Engineer Wegwerth as the lead, I've been working closely on the Legion Park Master Plan. Through a series of meetings with stakeholders and two public open houses, we're close to solidifying a plan. It's exciting to think of what this park could become for residents and future athletes in our community. It's very impressive that the U or M Extension estimates the park generated \$11.3 million in economic activity in 2025.

Feel free to contact me with any questions.