

SUPERINTENDENT'S JUNE 2026 REPORT

COMMUNICATIONS TO BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

Park Superintendent's Monthly Report Summary

The month of May blew by us quickly, as it often does. Park activities always take off a bit faster than we are fully ready to handle and are staffed for. The good news is that by the end of the month we are feeling good about where we are on staff and processes to get ready for the big summer rush. Staffing for seasonal positions remains a challenge, but we had a good recruitment process this spring. We rely heavily on our seasonal staff for restroom cleaning, mowing and trimming, playground maintenance, and ball diamond maintenance in Operations. We are also reliant on seasonal and hourly staff to support our Golf Operations, Ranger program, Aquatics, Olbrich, and Warner. All of those operations and programs are situated to be reasonably staffed as we start up, and we are excited to see the Pool open on June 11th as that marks our "Everything is open" date to begin the summer.

Spring was a good one for Golf with rounds exceeding expectations for the year. We ended the month with about 37,000 rounds played to start the year. This is less than last year at the same date, but as we move forward, we will not primarily be comparing to last year's numbers given the reduction in holes from 72 to 54. Disc golf play has also been strong to start the year, and we are making improvements at Elver to enhance the player experience.

Parks has been focusing significant resources on several key acquisitions and we are very hopeful that we will be able to announce some important potential transactions in the coming months. Our focus remains on securing high value properties that meet the goals of the Park and Open Space Plan.

Personnel Updates

Promotions/Hires:

- Kevin Goke, Administrative Leadworker on the Community Services Front Desk team, was appointed as Interim Administrative Supervisor. He began serving in this position May 11, 2026 and will serve in this capacity until the position can be filled permanently.

Section Updates

Community Services Section (Terrence Thompson)

Community Events (Kelly Post)

- Now in its 6th year, Carts in Parks continues to support local small-business entrepreneurs with daily food-vending locations throughout Madison Parks.
- Staff are very busy, engaged in peak-season coordination, working with annual Special Events partners to permit safe and accessible events for all Madison residents.
- Special Events in Madison are essential to our economy and community as they draw thousands of residents to Madison Parks, creating shared spaces for community connection, cultural celebration, and civic pride across neighborhoods.
- Kevin Goke has been provisionally appointed as Interim Customer Services Supervisor.

Parks Alive (Debra Alleyne)

- Parks Alive will feature live art-making at August's Arts and Culture events. Artist team Leilani Chun and Evan Johnson will be in residence during August, applying cellulose paper pulp to trees and landscape elements in public spaces, in partnership with the Friends of Madison Art Commission.
- Seein' is Believin' founder Prenicia Clifton will be returning to partner at Galaxy Park for the Self Care and Wellness theme, featuring youth and adult counseling, yoga, an obstacle course, and more.
- Partnerships are being added at additional parks for yoga, meal planning, and Tai Chi programming at Parks Alive events.

Customer Service (Kevin Goke)

- Staff is working closely with Recreation Services to support customers with the new Goodman Pool Waiver Policy.
- Dog, disc, and lake access permits are steady at around 350 pending, which is typical for this time of year, and staff are on track with processing.

Youth Engagement Program (Lauren Travis)

- We are working closely with Recreation Services to promote the Goodman Pool waiver and assist families with sign-ups.
- We are building new partnerships and solidifying existing ones with Focused Interruption, PHMDC, YWCA, MSCR, MMSD, and other south side stakeholders to support youth engagement, violence prevention, and family access to summer programming.
- Planning is underway for summer programming at Goodman Pool and Summer Nights at Wright, focused on safe, welcoming spaces for youth and families.

Recreation Services & Aquatics (Tracey Hartley)

Recreation Services

- A total of 28 movies are planned and scheduled for the year.
- There are 14 Learning Series events scheduled for the year.
- Adrian M. will be the new AASPIRE intern this summer, focusing on events.
- Wanda Fullmore will start her internship in mid-June.
- The "Nature Everywhere" event, featuring yoga, goats, and live animals, is scheduled for Sunday, June 7.
- A recent ribbon-cutting ceremony was held at Country Grove Park, which now includes a new futsal court, shelter, and restrooms.

Aquatics (Shane Martin)

- The 2026 Aquatic Season is fully staffed with 45 lifeguards and 19 aquatic attendants.
- All beaches now have rope lines and new buoys.
- Splash parks will be open from Memorial Day to Labor Day.
- New pool processes have been introduced this year, including four staff pop-up days to support the public.
- We are celebrating 20 years of the Goodman Pool, with a celebration planned for Friday, July 17, from 3 PM to 7 PM. The rain date for this event is Friday, July 31.

Rangers & Volunteers

Rangers (Steve Dray)

Enforcement Contacts

- Rangers had 79 enforcement contacts in May, resulting in 54 warnings, 19 citations, and 6 behavioral bans. 40 parking citations were also issued.

Disc Golf

- Elver and Hiestand disc golf courses are open, and the courses are very busy with disc golfers. There have been quite a few improvements completed so far, with many more in process or imminent. These include new baskets at both courses, a new retaining wall at hole #1 at Elver, additional portable restrooms at both courses, and upgrades to holes #10 and #12 at Elver.

Hiring & Training

- Our new full-time Ranger and three hourly Rangers have been paired with our field trainers for most of May and were working solo just before the Memorial Day weekend. We also participated in self-defense training in mid-May to enhance Ranger safety while they work in our parks.



Volunteers (John Weichelt)

- **Ride the Drive Volunteer Recruitment:** Continued building out Ride the Drive volunteer recruitment with additional outreach, sign-up materials, and role development. Work in May focused physical outreach to bike shops and other related businesses as well as placement of yard signs and contacts for mass email campaigns.
- **Spring Plant Distribution:** May included a successful spring plant distribution for volunteer garden sites, with a record turnout of 23 sites ordering both native and annual plants. Mulch was delivered to sites, and volunteer plant gardeners picked up their plant orders on Wednesday, May 13.



- **Summer Volunteer Opportunity Preparation:** Continued preparing volunteer support for summer programming, including Parks Alive, goat checking, toy collecting, beach cleanup, invasive removal and other seasonal opportunities. Posting and organizing these roles earlier gives volunteers a clearer path to get involved in a variety of ways all summer.

Adrian clearing invasive- Dames Rocket with a Volunteer Group

Warner Park Community Recreation Center (Zach Watson)

- Warner Park fitness center and pickleball memberships are now available for purchase online and are fully functional.
- Pickleball will officially launch on Monday, June 1. All court reservations will be managed through the Reserve WebTrac online system, which Madison Parks uses for pickleball courts citywide.

- The K.N.O.W. Program partnership with the Madison Parks Foundation will offer basketball camps for boys and girls in grades 5–8, starting the week of June 15. Former East High School Varsity Coach Matt Miota, along with former East High School standout and current Point Guard College Regional Director Rudy Bentley, will lead the camps.
- The expansion art installation is nearly complete, with the final piece scheduled to be installed on June 8.
- The grand opening of the Warner Park Community Recreation Center is set for July 8, from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM, and will feature a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Park Operations (Chad Hughes)

Central Parks (Jay Walters)

- Placed park trash barrels and picnic tables for the season.
- Mowing operations started up full time following record April rainfall.
- Cleaned and power washed beach shelters in preparation for Memorial Day opening.

Ecology Team

- Our round of spring tree plantings started.
- Performed spring invasive control, primarily garlic mustard and dame's rocket.
- Helped coordinate Earth Day volunteer events

Conservation (Hannah Quinlan)

- Spring invasive plant control. Staff, contractors, and volunteers worked on controlling garlic mustard, dame's rocket, bird's foot trefoil, and other species.
- Supported volunteers in planting bur oaks at Turville.
- Began prescribed goat grazing coordination and support.

Construction (Rich Bergmann)

- Continued course re-design construction at Yahara Golf.
- Removed storm damaged playground at Ocean Road Park.
- Poured concrete footings for future gates at Pilgrim and Spring Harbor Parks.
- Began work at Elver disc golf removing and renovating old tees pads.

East Parks (Spencer Werner)

- Hiestand Disc Golf Course was planted with additional trees and shrubs in the restoration areas around hole 2. The course also had some tree pruning in several locations and the fairways were fertilized.
- Parks demo-ed a new, larger, Kress mower that is fully automated and capable of mowing much more grass than our current model.
- Parks Arborists have been working on storm damaged trees as storms have come through.

- Reservation season has kicked off so the shelters are being regularly cleaned, and staff are mostly on mowing routes.

Facilities Maintenance (Joel Ringgenberg)

- Finished de-winterizing shelters for the beginning of season.
- Turned on water in various locations including irrigation, community gardens and drinking fountains.
- Performed routine startup maintenance on splash pads for opening on Memorial Day.

Mall Maintenance (Mark Kiesow)

- Downtown has been enhanced for the season with the planting of colorful spring flowers at the top of State Street, adding beauty and vibrancy for residents and visitors to enjoy.
- The sidewalk power washing program continues, which helps maintain a clean, safe, and welcoming downtown environment by regularly removing dirt, stains, gum, and debris from public walkways. This ongoing effort improves the appearance of the area and enhances the experience for residents, businesses, and visitors alike.
- The downtown visitor center booth has been installed on W. Main Street once again, to provide residents and visitors with a convenient resource for local information, events, attractions, and business recommendations. The booth will serve as a welcoming point of contact that enhances the overall downtown experience and promotes community engagement.
- Spring turf maintenance activities are underway to promote healthy, attractive turf throughout the downtown area. Services such as mowing, fertilizing, edging, and aerating help maintain the appearance and quality of landscaped areas.

West Parks (Charlotte Blotz)

- Performed softball field maintenance for spring games including grooming, chalking, and painting.
- Onboarded new seasonal staff and trained them on cleaning shelters and bathrooms, trash truck assistance and mowing and string trimming.
- Continued Elver disc golf work including brush removal and top-dressing gravel for the season.
- Storm damage clean up at Garner Park of downed trees from an April storm.
- Prepared Forest Hill for Memorial Day including mowing, string trimming, and mulching.

Planning & Development (Adam Kaniewski)

During the past month the P&D team has had their hands full with coordination of a multitude of construction projects in their early stages while continuing to move forward the design and permitting of projects in the design phase. With summer upon us, the increase in inquiries from the

public has continued as well as requests for new memorial bench locations. P&D staff also work to coordinate with neighborhood groups that have received neighborhood grants from the Planning Division for volunteer projects in parks. In June, the P&D team welcomes a second AASPIRE intern that will be a great addition to the team for the summer.

Parks Capital Projects – Design

- The [Madison LakeWay](#) project reached the 65% design milestone, with public works bidding anticipated to occur this fall. P&D staff are reviewing the 65% design drawings and coordinating with various City agencies to finalize the construction details.
- Design work continues for the [Cypress Spray Park](#) project. An open house was held in the park to receive public input on June 4.
- Community engagement for the next round of playground replacements for [Orton Park](#), [James Madison Park](#), [Marshall Park](#), [Heifetz Park](#), and [Newbery Park](#) is complete. P&D staff are now working to prepare construction plans. Construction is anticipated to begin in either fall of 2026 or spring of 2027.
- Design of the [Warner Park Southeast Recreation Area](#) project is officially underway with design consultant, KL Engineering.
- The annual sport court crack filling and resurfacing project is expected to be advertised for bidding in June.
- Design is underway for the [Reindahl Park Accessible Playground](#). The playground will be the fifth accessible playground in the system. P&D staff held the first public input meeting on May 18. Construction is expected to occur in 2027. This project was made possible by the Madison Parks Foundation.
- P&D staff continue to support the [Odana Hills Golf Course and Park renovation project](#). Staff involvement includes consultant coordination and public input support.
- P&D staff are assisting and coordinating with Engineering-Facilities Management staff for repairs to the Warner Park Boat Launch restroom building. The restrooms are currently closed as they are not functional.
- Preliminary design and coordination is underway for the following projects: Haen Family Park Sun Shelter Replacement, Paunack Park Sun Shelter Replacement, Garner Park Parking Lot Reconstruction, Garner Park Pickleball Courts, Rennebohm Park Accessible Parking, Owen Park Driveway Reconstruction, Manchester Park Path Connection, Marshall Park Boat Launch Reconstruction and Dredging, Carpenter-Ridgeway Singletrack, Edgewood Pleasure Drive Fencing, Dog Park Entrance Kiosks, Olin Park Pavillion Renovation.

Parks Capital Projects – Construction

- The [Kennedy](#) Park playground replacement construction is just about complete and will be followed by the completion of the playground at [Sandburg](#) Park. From there, the contractor will move on to playground replacements at [Ontario](#) Park and then [Skyview](#) Park.

- Parks Construction team has begun construction of the playground replacement project at Portland Park.
- Installation of a new well transfer pipe at Yahara Hills Golf Course is nearly complete.
- Construction of the Hoyt Park Parking Lot is expected to be in early June.
- Construction has begun on the [Warner Park Pickleball Courts](#) and [Worthington Park Futsal Courts](#).
- Installation of [Beach Accessibility Improvements](#) at Esther Beach, Warner Beach, and Tenney Beach are underway. This project was made possible by the Madison Parks Foundation.
- The park improvement project at [Kenneth Newville Park](#) is currently advertised for bidding. Bids are expected to be received on June 11.
- The [James Madison Park – Lincoln School retaining wall replacement](#) project is currently advertised for bidding. Bids are expected to be received on June 11.
- P&D staff are coordinating the installation of two new lights and poles at the Warner Park Beach parking lot.
- No bids were received for the [Country Grove Park Singletrack](#) project. Staff are currently evaluating next steps.

Park Planning

- P&D staff have completed a series of public input meetings to receive input for Park Development Plans for the 50 neighborhood and mini parks in the [southeast](#) and [southwest](#) areas. Staff are now working to develop draft plans for each park, incorporating feedback received.
- Staff have continued work to engage with a Geomorphologist consultant to perform work in accordance with the Vilas Park Cultural Resources Report.
- Staff are coordinating with Planning Division staff to provide input for the Downtown Area Plan.
- Staff are coordinating with the design team for the Madison Police Department South District Station project which will also include planning for Fraust Park.

Development Review / Park Impact Fees

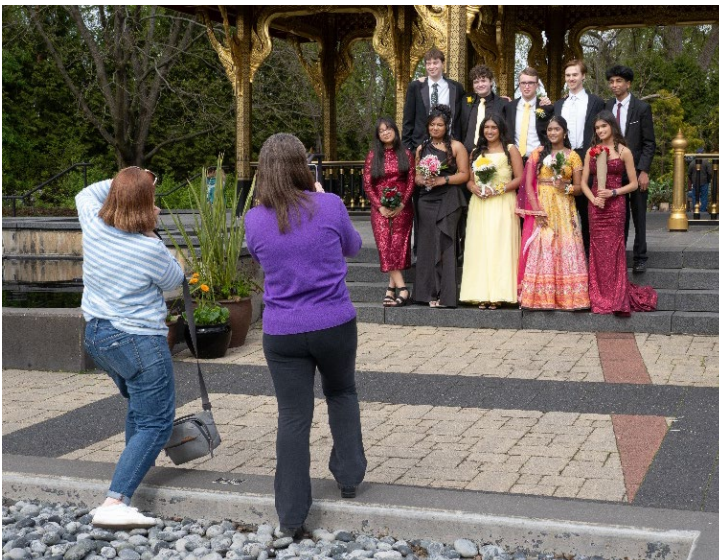
- The Needs Assessment update process was kicked off and the project is currently in the data gathering stage.
- In the month of May staff completed reviews of 18 development projects and coordinated and processed 23 separate Park Impact Fee payments totaling about \$400,000.
- [Interns](#) – This summer we've welcomed 7 horticulture interns funded by OBS and 1 AASPIRE intern who will work on interpretive projects. Interns started in late May and early June.



- [Bayview Community Center](#) – Olbrich Botanical Gardens partnered with Henry Vilas Zoo for a community workday at Bayview Community Center. The resident community garden plots at Bayview Community Center needed soil improvements. Henry Vilas Zoo brought in composted “zoo poo” that was processed by Sassy Cow to help improve the soil. They also added some native plants. Olbrich Botanical Gardens chipped in culturally relevant seeds, a few more native plants, a small army of helping hands and a veritable fleet of wheelbarrows to do the planting and compost distribution.

Olbrich Botanical Gardens

- [Prom Photos](#) – Every May, Olbrich Botanical Gardens is one of the popular locations for prom photos. Photo permits for prom photos are \$5 per high school student. In the 4 weekends of proms, over 1300 students had their prom photos taken at Olbrich Botanical Gardens.



- [Summer Breeze Block Party](#) (June 12 & 13, 4-8pm): Olbrich Botanical Gardens and Garver Events are teaming up to throw a Summer Breeze block party! Join us for two nights filled with pop-up artmaking activities, classic lawn games, dance parties, and local food cart fare. Sugar Ave. is the site for multiple food trucks for this year's event. Online tickets available at <https://www.olbrich.org/calendar/summer-breeze>
- [Garden Early Closure](#): Olbrich Botanical Gardens will close early at 2pm on June 12 and 13 to prepare for Summer Breeze that evening.