



Madison Parks Division

330 E. Lakeside St.
Madison, WI 53715
608-266-4711 • cityofmadison.com/parks

MADISON PARKS

October 7, 2025

To: Board of Park Commissioners
From: CJ Ryan, Assistant Parks Superintendent
Re: Summary of 2026 Park Fees

The Board of Park Commissioners establishes Park Fees on an annual basis. On September 15, 2025, the Facilities, Programs, and Fees Subcommittee reviewed the proposed 2026 Park Fee changes. As part of an improved process this year, each work unit submitted its proposed changes along with a presentation summarizing the proposed changes and their anticipated impacts. After review and discussion, the Subcommittee recommended approval of the proposed fees, with minor revisions noted in the meeting minutes.

Table 1 provides a summary of the proposed fee changes by program area. The October 8, 2025, Board of Park Commissioners agenda includes links to each detailed fee proposal and staff presentation for further reference.

Table 1. Summary of Proposed 2026 Park Fee Changes

Program Area	Fee Summary
Warner Park Community and Recreation Center	New fees for expanded programs and facilities. Fees for existing spaces remain the same.
Forest Hill Cemetery	3% increase for all fees. Administrative fee increase to offset software costs.
Athletics	Cricket Pitch fees adjusted to align with comparable facilities. Policy updates regarding change/transfer requests and weather-related cancellations.
Shelter Reservations	New year-round shelter at the Imagination Center Policy updates for reservation changes and transfers.
Permits (Dog, Disc, Mooring, etc.)	Fee increases to align with 2026 Dane County fees.
Aquatics Program	Resident fees remain unchanged. Slight reductions to select non-resident fees.
Recreation Services	New ski poles-only rental option. Increase Winter Family Prom to \$10 per family. All other fees remain unchanged.
Special Event Permits	Increase in "Damage to Property" fee to reflect higher labor costs. Clarified weekly Farmer's Market fee structure.
Olbrich Botanical Gardens	Increase room rental rates to reflect labor costs and enhanced service levels. Addition of new small-event spaces. Updated photo permit structure to accommodate larger groups.
Golf Program	Fee increases reflecting market rates and cost adjustments. New rate category established for junior golfers.

In developing the 2026 Park Fee proposals, the Parks Division sought to maintain affordability while addressing rising operational and labor costs. Overall trends in the proposed changes include:

- Introduction of new fees for new programs and facilities.
- Adjustments to reflect increased labor and operational costs.
- Modest or no increases in many areas to preserve accessibility for residents.

Some proposals include related policy updates. For example, the Athletic and Shelter Reservation policies introduce a new option for partial refunds when cancellations are due to major weather events, based on National Weather Service data.

All individual fee proposals and supporting presentations are included in the Board of Park Commissioners agenda materials for your review.