

**To:** Chuck Stifter, Director of Parks and Recreation

**From:** Ben Jaszewski, Parks and Planning Superintendent

**Date:** March 10, 2023

**Subject:** Parks and Planning Newsworthy

In the following weeks, staff will be ordering supplies and preparing equipment for the upcoming athletic seasons. Continuing snow will delay this process for staff and residents as everyone waits for the snow to melt and spring temperatures to arrive. Maintenance staff is in the process of making repairs and updating the interiors of warming houses and restrooms. Tasks include painting, bench refurbishing, restroom exhaust vent replacement, and electrical repairs. In preparation for the spring and summer, staff has begun securing goose control permits and will be ready to mitigate goose-related issues around Town Green and Arbor Lakes. Last year the dock at Boundary Creek was removed for repairs when staff realized the dock frame was not safe or salvageable. A new dock was purchase and will be installed this spring once the spring thaw is completed. Staff is also working with Rainbow Tree Care to schedule upcoming Emerald Ash Borer treatments. There are approximately 917 ash trees in maintained park areas of which 512 were deemed appropriate for treatment. Those 512 are treated every other year to protect against infestation of the Emerald Ash Borer. This year 266 ash trees will be treated and 246 in 2024 at an annual cost of about \$18,000. The city has a special fund for EAB treatments.

- **Outdoor Ice Rinks and Skate Loop**

Outdoor ice rinks officially closed for the season on February 27, 2023 concluding a short and difficult winter ice season. Staff will be removing nets and gates over the next few weeks. The ice-skating loop at Central Park will remain open over the weekend and officially close for the season on Sunday March 19<sup>th</sup>, which wraps up the longest season to date. Staff will spend the next few weeks preparing for the rental season in the Phenow Pavilion which begins in April and the splash pad which will open in May.

- **Sports Dome**

The Sports Dome is tentatively scheduled to be fully dismantled during the week of April 24, 2023, dependent on favorable weather conditions. This task generally requires 40 to 50 people to accomplish over an 8 to 10-hour day. To assist with labor, Parks will be utilizing services from a staffing agency to supplement internal park maintenance staff. The contractor providing dismantle supervision services plans to begin their work on Monday, April 24 removing netting, lights, and cables. Once the dome's interior is cleared of all fixtures, the dome can be deflated

and prepared for storage. The entire process can take 4 to 6 days. Barring any unforeseen complications, the dome field should be available for use on Saturday, April 29.

- **Gleason Playground Surfacing**

At a previous meeting staff informed the Board that the city was awarded a \$50,000 for the Gleason playground through the Hennepin Youth Sports Grant program and that the funds would be utilized to add poured-in-place surfacing for the playground area coinciding with the renovation project. The surfacing increases the play equipment installation by \$106,000. With the grant funding and current available funds in the project contingency the poured-in place rubber surfacing will be installed in the entire playground area without increases to the overall Gleason Fields project budget. The playground installation is scheduled for May 1, dependent on weather, and will be available for public use upon substantial completion of the entire project in June.

- **Gleason Ice Rink Paving**

During the budget process, the Board directed staff to include paving one ice rink with concrete at Gleason Fields and allocated \$150,000 in the Park Development Fund for 2023. Staff is working with RJM to coordinate pricing and installation as part of the project. RJM and staff believe quotes will be within the allocated budget, but are working on drainage options to ensure a useable surface are in all four seasons. The Board will review pricing for the ice rink concrete at a future meeting.

- **Playground Installations**

When the Board reviewed and approved playground replacements for Boundary Creek (west), Grove West, and Hidden Meadows in July of 2022 staff communicated to the Board that manufacturing lead times were expected to be six months or more. Due to those extensive lead times installation was delayed until spring of 2023. Boundary Creek (west), Grove West, Hidden Meadows and Gleason Fields are scheduled to be installed in April and May of this year, weather depending. At the March 2023 meeting, the Board will be reviewing the 2023 playground replacements. Those four will be delivered and installed in September and October. With Gleason included, there will be eight new playgrounds installed in 2023. Maintenance staff will be busy with removals and assisting contractors with installation. Residents of each neighborhood will be notified of removals before they begin and provided with an estimated timeline.