

# **BEMIDJI PARKS AND TRAILS COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA**

Wednesday, July 15, 2026

**City Hall Conference room  
317 4th Street NW  
5:00 PM**

- 1) CALL MEETING TO ORDER**
- 2) APPROVE AGENDA**
- 3) APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
  - a) Meeting minutes from May 12, 2026
- 4) PUBLIC COMMENTS/AGENDA ITEMS**

(Comments limited to Agenda items only and a 3- minute maximum per speaker; 15-minute maximum per meeting regarding groups).
- 5) Commission Member Appointments**
  - b) Appointments
- 6) Commission Member Resignation**
  - c) Deb Faver Resignation
- 7) Secretary Nomination**
- 8) BUSINESS**
  - d) Donation acceptance
- 9) COMMISSIONER UPDATES**
- 10) NEXT MEETING**
  - e) September 8, 2026
- 11) ADJOURN**

**MINUTES  
PARKS & TRAILS COMMISSION MEETING**

**May 12, 2026**

**MEMBERS' PRESENT:** Tom Anderson, Mike Cronin, Kristine Bommersbach, Debra Faver, Tim Faver

**MEMBER(S) ABSENT:** Vicky Beckman

**COUNCIL and BOARD REPRESENTATIVE:** Emelie Rivera

**CITY STAFF & OTHERS:** Scott Schroeder, Rich Spiczka

**CALL TO ORDER:** Bommersbach called the meeting to order at 5:02 PM

**AMENDMENTS TO May 12, 2026 AGENDA:** Added Voyageur Project

A motion was made by D. Faver and seconded by Cronin to add the Voyageur Project to the agenda. The motion passed.

A motion was made by T. Faver and seconded by Cronin to approve the May 12, 2026 agenda. The motion passed.

**APPROVAL OF April 13, 2026 MEETING MINUTES:**

A motion was made by T. Faver and seconded by D. Faver to approve the April 13, 2026 meeting minutes. The motion passed.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

**RECREATION PROGRAMMING AND PARTNERSHIPS:**

Rich Spiczka, Bemidji City Manager attended the meeting to update the Park and Trails Commission members about recreation programming. Due to the entire city recreation staff resigning, Spiczka asked the last resigning member to list the top 10 programs that she felt should remain. Spiczka indicated that homes were found for all of them. Several programs will be managed by the school district, others by the Boys and Girls Club and Community Ed. Casting With Cops will remain a city event managed by the Bemidji Police Department, partnered with the school district and Bemidji State University as needed for registrations. Also building new collaborative networks with local groups like 4H and Friends of the Carnegie will strengthen community programming. There will be ongoing conversations with the partnering groups and formal agreements will be drawn up to be presented for approval by the city council.

Casting With Cops

This event is like "Take a Kid Fishing" but will occur every Tuesday during the summer months down at the city pier by Paul and Babe. There was a grant to

purchase fishing rods and gear, to be handed out at the Tourist Information Center.

#### South Shore Marina Slips

The Recreation Department previously managed the marina slip rental, and now the Parks and Trails Department will manage the marina slips. They are currently fully booked for the summer.

#### Daddy Daughter Dance

This event will continue but be managed through Community Ed.

#### Story Time

Moved from Carnegie Hall to Four Pines Book Store.

Spiczka also mentioned the YMCA and Gateway Park. The YMCA is unable to support any programs this year, however, is expected to establish programming next summer despite no physical building. Gateway Park will be a privately owned, managed and funded park. It may include a splash pad.

### **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CIP) DISCUSSION:**

The commission engaged in a detailed discussion about prioritizing maintenance and capital projects and competing needs for future budgeting.

Schroeder indicated the revised CIP includes urgent roof repairs, including Cameron Park roof as top priority. He indicated many city park buildings are original and will require repairs in coming years.

Schroeder also discussed creating a separate maintenance budget spreadsheet to track ongoing smaller repairs and reduce reliance on CIP funding.

Operational transparency with community, staff members and commissioners contributing observations is increasing in CIP planning. Examples include the viewing binocular at Diamond Point Park, which will be replaced with a safer design or removed temporarily. Also, there is emphasis on balancing ongoing maintenance of park buildings, asphalt and concrete paths, planters, etc. with recognition that storm recovery is impacting capacity, and the impact will be felt for years to come.

We continued to recognize that some maintenance items have escalated into costly CIP projects due to deferred funding.

## **DNR RELIEF GRANT FOR URBAN FORESTRY**

Acceptance of a DNR grant will fund a comprehensive urban tree inventory, management plan and large-scale tree replacements. The grant covers replacement of trees in specific city areas as required by the DNR. The grant includes a 5-year management plan and planting of 186 large trees (15–20 gallon sizes/approximately 8-10 feet tall). The DNR grant also fund stump removal of 181 stumps across public rights-of-way and parks.

Schroeder indicated the city staff recognizes the importance of centralized communication about tree selection and placement and prefers to manage the communication centrally. However, DNR arborists and city foresters will guide the tree selection and placement based on ecological and spatial needs.

## **PICNIC TABLE PAD**

Ottertail has indicated a tree was planted on unstable ground and offered to place a picnic table pad in this area of Paul Bunyan Park. This must be ADA compliant and tied into the trail. Ottertail will create a design plan for the pad. First City Lights and Crete & Co. will donate the pad. Schroeder will bring the plan to the commission for approval. Commissioners expressed mixed views on a bare concrete pad, with potentially no shade and a decision was deferred until city staff coordinates with the donor to balance the functionality and aesthetics.

## **VOYAGEUR STUMP ART PROJECT INSTALLATION**

Voyageur School presented a plan to carve and paint tree stumps in Diamond Point, Cameron and Algoma Parks, and possibly North Country Park. This art would integrate Ojibwe cultural elements with QR codes to explain the meaning of each piece of art. The Public Arts Commission has approved the plan to be presented to the city council for approval. A motion to approve was made by

## **OTHER PARKS AND TRAILS UPDATES:**

### Beltrami County Park Steering Committee

Schroeder was recommended to the Beltrami County Park Steering Committee and will report insights and potential funding opportunities to support local parks and trails at the next commission meeting.

### Lake Boulevard/Indian Trail:

Schroeder indicated the trail will be cleaned up late spring to allow passage. However, dead trees will not be removed along Lake Boulevard. The DNR has restrictions on what can be removed.

### Spring Bike Ride Safety Initiative:

Bommersbach indicated the bike ride event will be May 29<sup>th</sup>. She has reached out to Community Ed and they will get out the flyers and registration information. Information has been posted on social media and the newsletter. Next step will be to reach out to the radio stations and newspaper. A representative of Bike Minnesota will be helping with the bike audit.

### Parks and Trails Strategic Plan

There is ongoing emphasis on revisiting and updating the city's plan instead of letting it become static. As priorities change, the plan guides CIP priorities, maintenance scheduling and facility development.

### **COMMISSIONER UPDATES:**

None

### **ADJOURNMENT:**

A motion was made by D. Faver and seconded by T. Faver to adjourn the meeting. The motion was passed. The meeting adjourned at 6:03 PM. Next meeting is September 8<sup>th</sup> with a possible special meeting in July, to be communicated at a later date.

**Respectfully submitted,**

Debra Faver  
Commission Secretary

**DEBRA FAVER**  
**1101 LAKE BOULEVARD NORTHEAST**  
**BEMIDJI, MN 56601**  
**(612) 423-5204**

May 19, 2026

Scott Schroeder  
Bemidji Parks and Trails Commission  
1351 5th Street NW  
Bemidji, MN 56601

RE: Resignation

Dear Scott and Commissioners,

Please accept this letter of resignation from the Bemidji Parks and Trails Commission,  
effective immediately.

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Debra Faver", written in black ink.

Debra Faver

# PARKS AND TRAILS COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM



**Meeting Date:** July 15, 2026  
**Action Requested:** Motion to accept donation  
**Prepared By:** Scott Schroeder, Parks & Trails Director

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## **Background:**

This memo is to request Parks & Trails Commission acceptance of a donation from First City of Lights Foundation for a project at the proposed pixel Christmas tree location.

The project will create a level landing pad for the pixel Christmas tree where the tree anchor is currently located while also allowing Ottertail Power to install the tree each fall in a safe and consistent location.

The work will also improve drainage along the adjacent trail. After winter snowmelt and during heavy rain events, this section of trail floods. Grading and leveling the area will help mitigate standing water and improve trail conditions.

Staff recommends that the Commission accept the donation from First City of Lights and support the project to level the area for the pixel tree and help mitigate flooding of the adjacent trail.

## **Recommendation:**

Accept donation

# MEMO

**To:** Parks & Trails Commission  
**From:** Parks & Trails Department  
**Date:** June 18, 2026  
**Subject:** Acceptance of Donation for Pixel Tree Pad and Trail Drainage Improvement

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This memo is to request Parks & Trails Commission acceptance of a donation from First City of Lights Foundation for a project at the proposed pixel Christmas tree location.

The project will create a level landing pad for the pixel Christmas tree where the tree anchor is currently located while also allowing Ottertail Power to install the tree each fall in a safe and consistent location.

The work will also improve drainage along the adjacent trail. After winter snowmelt and during heavy rain events, this section of trail floods. Grading and leveling the area will help mitigate standing water and improve trail conditions.

Staff recommends that the Commission accept the donation from First City of Lights and support the project to level the area for the pixel tree and help mitigate flooding of the adjacent trail.



**Figure 1.** Proposed project area for pixel tree pad and adjacent trail drainage improvement.





*Strength in every pour,  
Precision in every job.*

# PROPOSAL

CRETE AND CO LLC  
1374 LAKEWOOD DR NW  
BEMIDJI, MN 56601  
218-766-0052

06/19/2026

QUOTE First City of Lights Foundation  
TO P.O. Box 1991  
Bemidji, MN 56601  
firstcityoflightsfoundation@gmail.com

| JOB                                   | LOCATION             | START DATE |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|------------|
| 26232 - Christmas Tree Base Dirt Work | Downtown Bemidji, MN |            |

| ITEM         | DESCRIPTION               | QUAN   | UNIT | UNIT PRICE   | EXT PRICE    |
|--------------|---------------------------|--------|------|--------------|--------------|
| 5            | Mobilization              | 1.000  | LS   | \$ 500.00    | \$ 500.00    |
| 20           | Dirt Work                 | 12.000 | HRS  | \$ 285.00    | \$3,420.00   |
| Project Cost |                           |        |      |              | \$3,920.00   |
| 30           | Crete And Co LLC Donation | 1.000  | LS   | (\$3,920.00) | (\$3,920.00) |
| TOTAL:       |                           |        |      |              | \$ 0.00      |

## Specs and Scope of Work:

### Dirt Work:

- Dirt work to regrade approximately 32' diameter area for Christmas tree to sit level.
- Perimeter area to be graded to same height as concrete pad nearby.
- Area to be crowned to center point where tree anchor is to allow for proper drainage.
- Includes soil preparation only. Seeding or sodding not included.
- Necessary topsoil material for grading to be donated by Lakes Concrete Plus.
- Crete And Co to reuse existing cover over anchor point
- Project to be completed between 7/13/2026 and 10/31/2026 at Crete And Co's discretion. Coordination will occur with Parks and Trails Department and City of Bemidji.

## Exclusions

1. All permits, fees, and inspections
2. Lawn Repair (top soil, seeding, etc...)
3. All landscaping
4. SWPPP
5. Silt Fence/Erosion Control measures.
6. Tree and stump removal
7. Damage to tree roots caused by concrete removal/excavation
8. Damage to unmarked utility lines - Locates will be called in as needed
9. Damage/repairs to sprinkler heads/lines
10. Rock excavation
11. Wear/damage to paved surfaces (asphalt, concrete, etc..) caused by normal use of equipment/trucks
12. Hauling away any excavated soils, all excavated soils to be stockpiled near work site unless stated otherwise
13. Hazardous material removal
14. Utility work of any kind
15. Cold Weather Concrete costs - Billed as needed if required

All work will be completed in accordance with this proposal unless subsequent changes are agreed upon in writing. Balances not paid by the due date are subject to late fees.

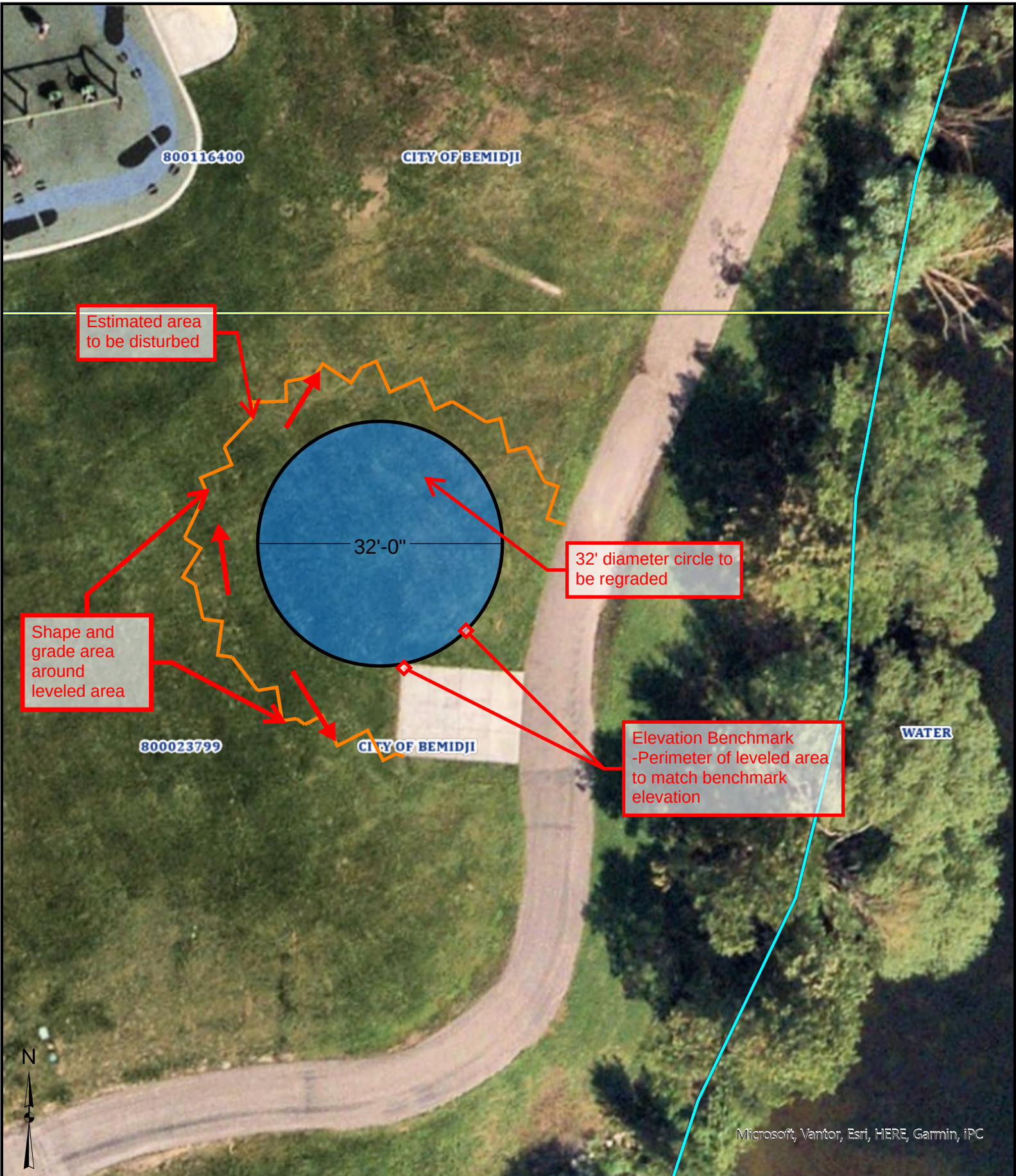
Signature

X

Date:

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Please sign here to accept the terms and conditions



These data are provided on an "AS-IS" basis, without warranty of any type, expressed or implied, including but not limited to any warranty as to their performance, merchantability, or fitness for any particular purpose.

## Sketch 2

1:282

Date: 6/9/2026

This map is not a substitute for accurate field surveys or for locating actual property lines and any adjacent features.

