



**PARKS & RECREATION BOARD MEETING**  
**Monday, March 2, 2026 at 4:30 PM**  
**Council Chambers, City Hall at 540 West Hills Circle**

- 1. Opening Business**
- 2. Approval of Agenda**
- 3. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**
  - 3.a. Park Board Minutes 1.5.2026
- 4. Persons Wishing to Appear**
- 5. New Business**
  - 5.a. Park Land Dedication Policy Update
- 6. Old Business**
- 7. Communication**
  - 7.a. Park Maintenance Report
  - 7.b. Recreation Division Report
  - 7.c. Biochar Demonstration
  - 7.d. Great River Greening Spring Tree Planting
  - 7.e. Regional Designation Update - timeline and work completed
  - 7.f. Parks & Recreation 2025 Story
  - 7.g. Rec Programs 2025 Summary
  - 7.h. Emergency Disaster Reimbursement Update
- 8. Adjournment**

**MINUTES - UNAPPROVED**  
**OWATONNA PARKS AND RECREATION**  
**REGULAR PARK BOARD MEETING**  
**January 5, 2026, at 4:30 P.M.**

**LOCATION:** 540 West Hills Circle, Crandall Conference Room 120, Owatonna, MN 55060

**OPENING BUSINESS**

Call to Order at 4:33 p.m. by Jon Thiel

Executive Members Present: Chair: Jon Thiel, Secretary: Sara Baird

Board Members Present: Tyler Cochran, Carter Klecker, Nancy Ness, Nan Silkunas

Members Absent: Gine McGuire, Vice-Chair

Staff Present: Eric Anderson: Recreation Manager, Dani Licht: Aquatics Supervisor,  
Drake Simonson: TPC/Athletics Supervisor, MJ Knudson: Admin Coordinator,  
Maureen Lyons: Admin Coordinator

City Council Member: Don McCann

Guests Present: None

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Motion by Nancy Ness to approve agenda. Second by Sara Baird. All members voted aye.

**APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 1, 2025, MINUTES**

Motion by Nan Silkunas to approve Park Board meeting minutes and bring before the Council. Second by Tyler Cochran. All members voted aye.

**PERSONS WISHING TO APPEAR**

The public forum is intended to afford the public an opportunity to address topics to the Park Board. The public forum will be no longer than 30 minutes in length, and each presenter will have no more than five (5) minutes to speak. Topics of discussion are restricted to local park and recreation topics. The Park Board will only listen and not take action on public forum presentations. None present

**NEW BUSINESS:** None

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Deer Management Update** MJ Knudson presented final details regarding the 2025 archery hunt in City parks. Total deer taken was 27, ten fewer than the previous year. A review of the highlights and challenges will be taken into consideration when planning for 2026. A request was made for information to be available in various formats prior to the season to educate the public as to the benefits of a deer management program. The suggestion of additional information and/or a QR code on the signage at parks may be an option.

**Community Center Task Force update**

Tyler Cochran updated the board on recent task force activities regarding the completion of the intended purpose for the group with the Leatherman Scientific Survey. Next step, City Council may choose to move forward to request legislative approval to bring a ½ cent local

tax proposal to voters over the next two years if approved. Don McCann shared that funding for Fire and Safety building proposals is a priority for the Council before the community center.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

- Park Division and Recreation Division reports were included in the agenda packet. One Park Permit was included at Brown Park on May 30, 2026 for a birthday party that will have a bounce house. Motion was made by Tyler Cochran to approve the Park Permit as submitted. Second by Carter Klecker. All members voted aye.
- Tennis and Pickleball Center season wrap-up along with Youth and Adult Athletics year end reports were provided by Drake Simonson. Board suggestions included advertising Tennis/Pickleball programs/facilities to neighboring communities that don't have similar options, consider a key card/swipe option to more accurately capture the number of users that have passes yet do not reserve court time, and looking into using vetted and trained volunteers to expand the open hours for non-passholder use of City athletics facilities and indoor play space.
- Emergency Disaster Declaration Update: MJ shared that Ed Hoffman is compiling data for the state for the purpose of reimbursement of a percentage of replacement costs for damaged equipment in addition to labor expenses associated with the July 2025 storm.

### **Communication from Park Board members:**

Nan Silkunas expressed support for continuing to have a Parks and Recreation Director. Tyler Cochran shared his appreciation to the staff for all they do to provide park services and recreation programming.

Sara Baird reiterated the message of thanks to staff.

Nancy Ness commented on the beautiful condition of Kaplan's Woods and work that crews have done to clear invasive buckthorn.

Jon Thiel noted that the Park Board website landing page has terminology that needs updating to reflect board positions of Chair and Vice-Chair rather than President and Vice-President. Also noted, the Park Board Meeting Procedures document needs updating.

### **ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion by Tyler Cochran to adjourn. Second by Nancy Ness. All members voted aye.

Meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

After the meeting concluded, staff and board members walked to Vevle Hall for a tour of the newly relocated Parks and Recreation staff offices.

The next board meeting is scheduled for February 2, at 4:30 p.m. 540 West Hills Circle, Conference Room 120.



# Owatonna Zoning and Subdivision Update

## Parkland Dedication Ordinance

City Council Work Session  
January 20, 2026



Real People. Real Solutions.

# Today's Topics

- Parkland Dedication Ordinances (PDOs) – The Basics
- History/Origin
- Benefits of PDOs
- Considerations/Drawbacks of PDOs
- Examples
- Questions/Discussion

# Parkland Dedication Ordinances – The Basics

## Minnesota State Statute Section 462.358, Subd. 2b

- Gives municipalities the authority to require developers to make dedications for parks, trails, and open spaces as part of the subdivision approval process.  
Dedications may include:
  - Land
  - Fees or Cash-in-lieu of land
  - A combination of both
- The authority is given “To protect and promote the public health, safety, and general welfare, to provide for the orderly, economic, and safe development of land, to preserve agricultural lands, to promote the availability of housing affordable to persons and families of all income levels, and to facilitate adequate provision for transportation, water, sewage, storm drainage, schools, parks, playgrounds, and other public services and facilities...”

# Parkland Dedication Ordinances – The Basics

- Minnesota State Statute 462.358
  - Fees or cash accepted in-lieu of land can be used for acquisition or development, **but not maintenance**
- A municipality must have:
  - A capital improvement budget for parks, trails, and open spaces
  - A parks and open space plan or have a parks, trails, and open space component in its comprehensive plan

# History / Origin of PDOs

- The first PDO was passed by the State of Montana in 1919 “For the purpose of promoting the public comfort, welfare and safety, such plat and survey must show that at least one-ninth of the platted area, exclusive of streets, etc., is forever dedicated to the public for parks and playgrounds.”
- In 1923 the City of Bluefield, West Virginia enacted a requirement that “Not less than five percent of the area of all plats shall be dedicated by the owner for parks and playground purposes except in the case of a very small area.”

Journal of Park and Recreation Administration, Volume 28 Number 1,  
Spring 2010 pp. 70-102

# Benefits of Parkland Dedication Ordinances

- Helps ensure we have places for people to exercise, socialize, and play; key factors for health and well-being.
- Provides a funding source for the development of parks, trails and open spaces as an alternative or supplement to a city's general funds.
- Helps ensure parks, trails and open spaces are distributed across the city to provide balanced access for residents.
- Helps cover the cost of growth.
- Increases property values.
- Supports the development of green infrastructure – parks reduce pollution, provide cooling benefits, and manage stormwater.

# Considerations / Drawbacks of PDOs

- **Requires administration**

- Development and approval of ordinance
- Fund management and Utilization
  - Aggregating land/ fee acquisitions into sizes and amounts needed to be impactful
- Enforcement during development review/plat approval and permitting
- Determining 'reasonable portion' and fair valuation must be determined

- **May face legal challenges**

- Must adhere to constitutional and statutory requirements
  - 'Nexus' – show how new parks serve the development in question
  - 'Rough Proportionality'- the fee collected must be proportional to the need created by the development

- **Potential Impact on growth**

- Developer resistance to additional cost
- Potential decrease in affordability

# Comparisons

- **Fee Structure**

- Per-unit basis
- Per-acre basis
- hybrid - rates depending on the development type (residential vs. commercial/industrial)

- **Level of Service Standards**

- Parkland-to-resident ratios
- Minimum park area standards



# Examples – Faribault

## Faribault (population 23,851)

Land (collected at time of platting)

- Residential: 7% of Subdivision Gross Area
- Commercial: 4% of Subdivision Gross Area

Fee-in-lieu (collected at permitting)

- Residential
  - Single Family dwelling - \$1,000
  - Multi Family dwelling - \$500 per unit up to 20, then \$400 per unit up to 50 units, then \$300 per unit for over 50 units
- Commercial
  - \$1,000 per acre

# Examples – Northfield

## Northfield (population 21,316)

### Land

- Residential
  - 12% of Net Land - 0 to 3.9 dwelling units per Net Acre
  - 9% of Net Land - 4 to 7.9 dwelling units per Net Acre
  - 6% of Net Land - 8+ dwelling units per net acre
- Commercial - 5% of Gross Land
- Industrial - 2% for trails only

### Fee-in-lieu (based on Estimated Market Value)

- Residential
  - 16% - 0 to 3.9 dwelling units per net acre
  - 13% - 4 to 7.9 dwelling units per net acre
  - 10% - 8+ dwelling units per net acre

# Examples – New Ulm

## New Ulm (population 14,124)

### Fee-in-lieu

- Residential
  - \$350/lot due at time of platting + \$350/unit fee due at time of building permit
  - For 5+ Dwelling Units/Lot: \$1,050 per lot fee due at time of platting, \$350/unit fee due at time of building permit
- Commercial, Industrial, and Special Purpose
  - \$275 to \$2,200 per square feet due at time of building permit

# Examples – Waseca

## Waseca (population 9,067)

### Land

- Single-Family and Two-Family Homes
  - 8% of Land
  - 14% of Land
- Multi-Family
  - 20% of Land
  - 35% of Land
  - 45% of Land
- Mobile Home Park
  - 13% of Land

### Fee-in-lieu

#### Single-Family and Two-Family Homes

\$420/Lot (up to 3 lots/acre)

\$420/Lot (3 to 5 lots/acre)

#### Multi-Family

\$300/unit (up to 15 units/acre)

\$275/unit (15 - 30 units/acre)

\$250/unit (30+ units/acre)

# Examples – Lakeville

## Lakeville (population 70,023)

### Land

- Residential
  - Low Density Residential (less than 3 units/acre) - 12% of Development
  - Medium Density Residential (3 to 9 units/acre) 14% of Development
  - High Density Residential (9+ units/acre) 17% of Development
- Commercial - 8%
- Industrial - 6%
- Mixed Use - calculated based on the percentage of land area or building square footage devoted to each use

### Cash-in-lieu

- May require cash-in-lieu or a combination of land and cash; based on fair market value

# Examples – Farmington

## Farmington (population 24,464)

### Land

- Residential
  - Low Density - .058 acres/dwelling unit
  - Medium Density - .032 acres/dwelling unit
  - High Density - .023 acres/dwelling unit
- Industrial / Commercial - 5% net area

### Cash-In-Lieu

- appraised fair market value of the land that would be required for land dedication

# Examples – Winona

## Winona (population 25,948)

### Cash

- Residential
  - \$625/dwelling unit

### Land-in-lieu

- Minimum of 3 acres may be accepted in lieu of cash

# Examples – Elk River

## Elk River (population 25,835)

### Land

- Residential
  - Low - .0846 acres/dwelling unit
  - Medium - .054 acres/dwelling unit
  - High Density - .0474 acres/dwelling unit
- Commercial - 8%
- Industrial - 6%
- Mixed Use - calculated based on the percentage of land area or building square footage devoted to each use

### Cash-in-lieu

- proportionate to the fair market value of the land



# QUESTIONS / DISCUSSION



DATE: March 2, 2026

FROM: Jesse Wilker, Maintenance Manager

Mike Klein, Park Maintenance Foreman

Mary Jo Knudson, Administrative Specialist

SUBJECT: Park Maintenance Update

**Brooktree:**

- Grinding reels & getting equipment ready for 2026 season

**Park Maintenance:**

- Helping Facilities with remodeling projects part of the office relocation/reconfiguration at City Hall
- Maintaining ice rinks (open 39 days), cross-country ski trails
- Helped Recreation with Bold & Cold events
- Tree removal when there is time
- Picnic table board repairs, other prep for spring
- Snow removal
- Christmas decorations taken down first week in February (going forward after Valentines per Chamber)
- Completed forklift and scissor lift training (3-year certification)
- VRF – new field painter with GPS arrived, new mower is ordered

**Permits:**

- (Event Permit) June 20, 2026 – Central Park – Jena Thompson – Daisy Fest
- (Event Permit) May 2-Oct 31, 2026 – Central Park – Farmer's Market
- (Event Permit) May 15, 2026 – WWTP – City Event – Ribbon Cutting
- (Event Permit) May 29-30 – Fairgrounds D3 & D4 – Saloon Showdown Softball Tournament
  - Fees collected by P&R – daily reservation/prep one time (\$500), chalker & rake rental (\$30)
- (Event Permit) June 4, July 2, August 6, September 3; 2026 – Central Park – Downtown Thursdays
- (Event Permit) August 1 – Central Park Stage – Boys of America Finnish Brass Band (\$200 open/close)
- (Event Permit) September 5 – Central Park – Breaking the Stigma Recovery Awareness Event - Spero
- Park Permit – July 18 – Dartt's Park – Wenger Employee Picnic (inflatables, staking, portable, tents)
- Park Permit – September 4 & 5, 2026 – Leo Rudolph – Youth Cross Country set-up and event

**Memorials & Donations (listed as they are installed & invoiced):**

- None

PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

540 WEST HILLS CIRCLE | OWATONNA, MN 55060-4701 | OWATONNA.GOV | 507.444.4321

**Projects 2026:**

- MN DNR dock – contract signed, dock ordered
- Biochar demonstration by Great River Greening – March 18, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. – flyer included
- Adopt-a-Park – 37 locations, 6 available; 20 have 'renewed', waiting for 10 to reply (most likely will)

**Grant projects:**

- MN DNR ReLeaf –additional information was requested from us (which usually means good news!), we have not received final word



**TO:** Park Board

**FROM:** Eric F. Anderson, Recreation Manager

**DATE:** March 2, 2026

**SUBJECT:** Recreation Division Update

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### **1. Staff Updates**

- a. Vacant Recreation Assistant Position Closed January 15
  - i. 21 applicants referred, 5 interviewed
  - ii. Interviews occurred on February 26
- b. Spring/Summer Seasonal Staff - In full hiring mode for all Spring/Summer positions

### **2. General**

- a. Scholarship Assistance Fund
  - i. Balance = \$45159.34 (several additional checks pending deposit in the Scholarship checking account)
    - 1. \$13396.93 in City Restricted Fund as of 2/24/26
    - 2. \$31762.41 in Scholarship checking as of 2/24/26
- b. Spring/Summer 2026 Community Activity Guide
  - i. Registration started January 27, 2026
  - ii. New feature allows live updates to be made to the online guide

### **3. Aquatics**

- a. TPC Pool Closure Update
  - i. West Hills pool has mechanical issues with its HVAC unit. The pool has been closed since Wednesday, February 18. Potential to open the week of March 2 pending completion of repairs. Code requires an operating HVAC unit to be open.
  - ii. Swimming Lessons
    - 1. Due to the closure Winter Session 2 at West Hills has not begun yet. Anticipated start date is Thursday, March 5.

2. Spring Session registration has been delayed and will be determined after the pool officially reopens.
  3. Spring Session classes will be shifted to begin 2-3 weeks later. Due to this change, Saturday and Sunday Spring lessons will be cancelled due to not being able to fit in enough sessions before summer sessions begin. We have modified the weekday schedule to allow Wednesday group lessons to partially make up for not having weekend lessons.
- b. River Springs Water Park
- i. 2026 Large Group Reservations: 48
    1. 10 summer dates have been maxed out on our allowed capacity of 200 large group attendees.
  - ii. Pass Sales
    1. 2026 Pass Sales: 38 passes as of 2/25/2026

#### **4. Athletics/Youth and Adult Sports**

##### **Adult Programs**

| <b><u>Program</u></b>           | <b><u>Division</u></b> | <b><u>Participant Numbers</u></b> | <b><u>Registration Deadline</u></b> | <b><u>Season Starting</u></b> | <b><u>Additional Notes</u></b>  |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Pickleball - 'Intro to' Lessons | Winter Session 2       | 3                                 | Feb 20                              | Feb 20                        |                                 |
| Winter Bag Toss                 | 1 Division             | 8 teams                           | Dec 9                               | Jan 21                        | Season ends March 18            |
| Adult Volleyball                | 6 Divisions            | 41 teams                          |                                     | Feb 18                        | Season complete - all went well |
| Adult Summer Softball           | 2 Divisions            | 6 Teams                           | Mar 17                              | Apr 23                        |                                 |
| Adult Summer Bags               | 2 Divisions            | 3 Teams                           | Apr 21                              | May 20                        |                                 |

##### **Youth Programs**

| <b><u>Program</u></b>                             | <b><u>Age Group</u></b> | <b><u>Participant Numbers</u></b> | <b><u>Registration Deadline</u></b> | <b><u>Season Starting</u></b> | <b><u>Additional Notes</u></b> |
|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Pickleball Lessons – Beginner 1, Winter Session 2 | 4-7 years               | 1                                 | Feb 16                              | Feb 16                        |                                |
| Pickleball Lessons – Beginner 2, Winter Session 2 | 7-10 years              | 2                                 | Feb 16                              | Feb 16                        |                                |

|                                               |                                         |     |        |        |                 |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-----|--------|--------|-----------------|
| Tennis Lessons – Beginner 1, Winter Session 2 | 4-7 years                               | 8   | Feb 16 | Feb 16 |                 |
| Tennis Lessons – Beginner 2, Winter Session 2 | 7-10 years                              | 8   | Feb 16 | Feb 16 |                 |
| Tennis Lessons – Beginner 3, Winter Session 2 | 10-12 years                             | 12  | Feb 16 | Feb 16 |                 |
| Basketball                                    | K-2 <sup>nd</sup> grades                | 137 | Jan 2  | Jan 17 | Last Day Feb 28 |
| Basketball                                    | 3 <sup>rd</sup> grade                   | 39  | Jan 4  | Jan 24 | Last Day Feb 28 |
| Basketball                                    | 4 <sup>th</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup> grades | 90  | Jan 4  | Jan 24 | Last Day Feb 28 |
| Soccer (Boys & Girls)                         | 5-K                                     | 159 | Feb10  | Apr 25 |                 |
| Soccer (Boys & Girls)                         | 1 <sup>st</sup> -2 <sup>nd</sup> grades | 168 | Feb10  | Apr 25 |                 |
| Soccer (Boys & Girls)                         | 3 <sup>rd</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup> grades | 86  | Feb10  | Apr 25 |                 |
| Soccer (Boys & Girls)                         | 5 <sup>th</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup> grades | 38  | Feb10  | Apr 25 |                 |

## 5. Brooktree Golf Course

|                 | Season Pass | Patron Pass |
|-----------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>2026 YTD</b> | 27          | 0           |
| <b>2025</b>     | 323         | 21          |
| <b>2024</b>     | 342         | 30          |

- a. 2026 Season Passes went on sale December 1. Sale ended December 31<sup>st</sup>.
  - i. \$10 off base package
  - ii. \$5 off additional package
- b. Chill Aqui
  - i. Winter Hours will remain as 9:00 AM-3:00 PM (but will continue to be evaluated and may be adjusted if necessary).
  - ii. New menu items coming in the spring
- c. New events and tournaments
  - i. Spring and Fall Scrambles (only 1 last year)

- ii. Couples golf
    - 1. Once a month. May-August
  - iii. Monthly scramble challenge
    - 1. May-August
  - iv. Match play tournament
    - 1. Found old trophy in storage. Last played in 2010.
  - v. Superintendent's Revenge
- d. Updating website to be more user friendly
  - i. Easy access to tee times and rates from mobile
  - ii. FAQs
  - iii. Adding rules and maintenance updates pages
- e. 2026 Season
  - i. Opening Pro-shop Tuesday/Thursday 10a-430pm starting March 16 week.
  - ii. Maintenance on schedule to clear off course in preparation for opening date (Targeting late March or early April)
- f. Golf Now Data Updates – see attachments
  - i. Map of booking site addresses
  - ii. 2024 & 2025 booking revenue numbers

## **6. Events**

- a. Bold & Cold Winter Festival (January 21-25) update
  - i. Snow Sculpture Competition: Cancelled (not enough snow)
  - ii. Pool Bingo: Rescheduled to February 20
    - 1. February 20 Participant Numbers: 21 participants
  - iii. Pickleball Tournament: First year running with 13 teams, double elimination bracket
  - iv. Snowshoeing: Cancelled due to lack of packable snow
  - v. Rock on Ice: Rescheduled to February 7
    - 1. February 7 Participant Numbers: 50 participants
  - vi. Luminary Hike: Rescheduled to February 7
    - 1. February 7 Participant Numbers: 100 participants
  - vii. Tennis and Pickleball Open House
    - 1. February 20 Participant Numbers were not tracked  
Consistently busy during open hours.
  - viii. Ice Fishing: Rescheduled to 2/28
  - ix. Puzzle Competition: First year running with 12 teams
  - x. Social Media Campaign Launched November 19
    - 1. 28 posts marketing events

## 7. Ice Rinks

- a. Closed for the Season
- b. Outdoor ice rinks at Morehouse, Brooktree, Countryview, and Buecksler
  - i. Opened at 3 PM on Thursday, December 18.
  - ii. Last day grooming rinks was February 8.
- c. Martin Equipment operated out of the Morehouse Chalet

## 8. Recreation Programs - Youth, Family & Senior

- a. Senior Programming
  - i. Legends
    - 1. 2026 memberships = 215

| <b><u>Program</u></b>                     | <b><u>Participant Numbers (as of (2/25/25))</u></b> | <b><u>Registration Deadline</u></b> | <b><u>Trip Date</u></b> | <b><u>Additional Notes</u></b> |
|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Diners, Drive-Ins, & Dives: The Nook      | 12/27                                               | Feb 26                              | Mar 5                   | New program                    |
| Treasure Island                           | 20/27                                               | Mar 4                               | Mar 11                  |                                |
| Guys and Dolls                            | 0/27                                                | Feb 18                              | Mar 18                  | Canceled                       |
| Diners, Drive-Ins, & Dives: Blue Door Pub | 10/26                                               | Apr 2                               | Apr 11                  | New Program                    |

- b. Adaptive Programs
  - i. Bowling League Mondays
    - 1. 44 Participants registered for February
    - 2. 35 Participants registered for March
  - ii. Adaptive egg hunt March 4
  - iii. Adaptive hangout begins March 1
  - iv. Adaptive Tie Dye March 19 (15 registered)
- c. Rec on the Go Schedule
  - i. 2026 planning 8 dates (including Summer & Fall)
  - ii. 2026 planning locations include Colonial Manor trailer park and Skyline Gardens

## 9. Tennis & Pickleball Center

- a. Fitness Basketball Court - Resurfaced 2/17/26
- b. Tennis/Pickleball Season Passes and Walking Program Passes are available (season started September 1).

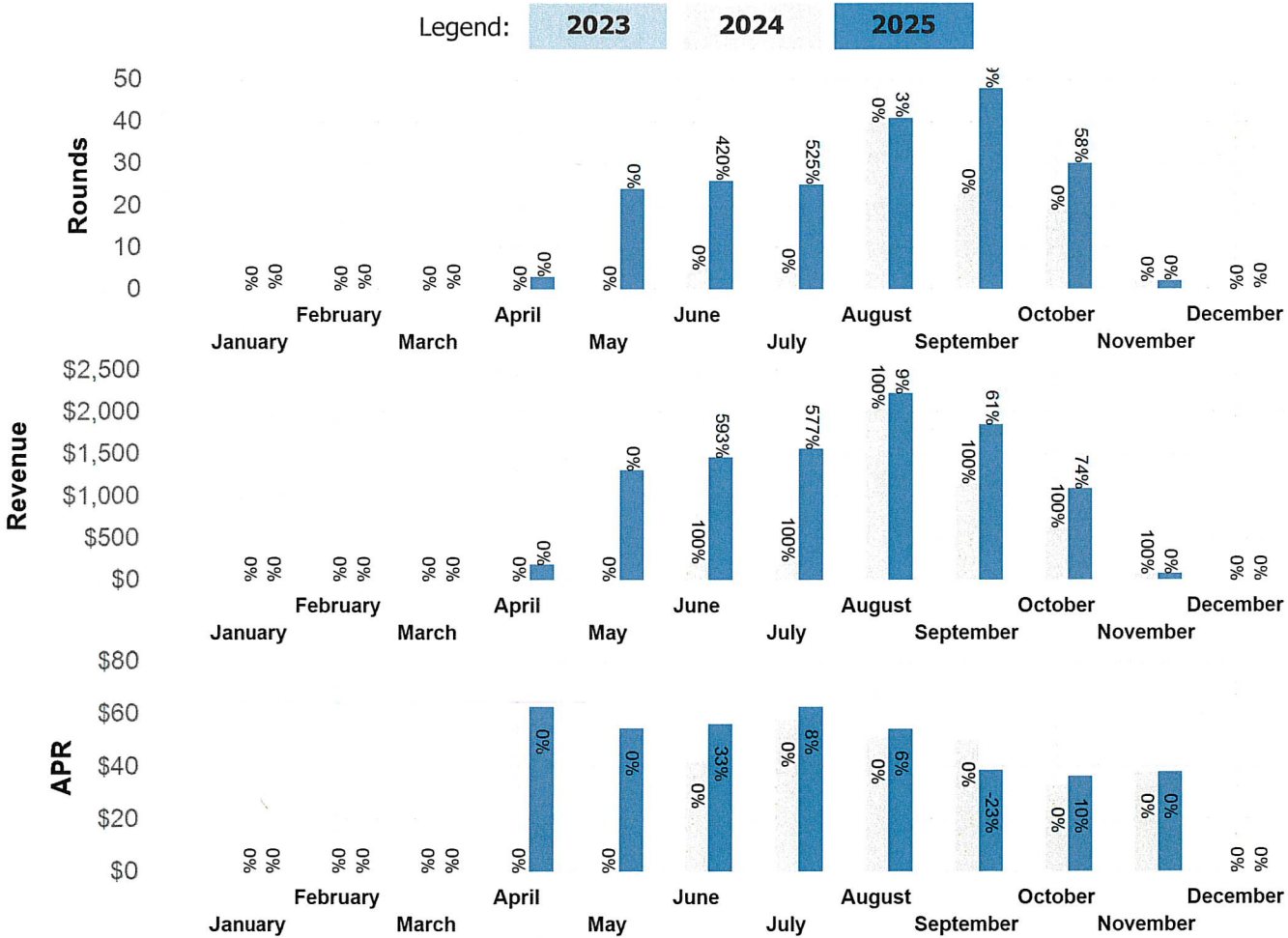


- i. 5-Month (Jan-May) These sell at the end of December and start of January
  - 1. Junior – 6
  - 2. Individual – 11
  - 3. Couple – 6
  - 4. Family – 5
- ii. 9-Month (Sept-May)
  - 1. Junior – 4
  - 2. Individual – 10
  - 3. Couple – 6
  - 4. Family - 4
- iii. 12-Month (Sept-August)
  - 1. Junior – 9
  - 2. Individual – 20
  - 3. Couple – 13
  - 4. Family – 8
- iv. Individual Month – sold 14 with various expiration dates
- v. Walking - 12

# Course Rounds And Revenue

**Course:** Brooktree Golf Course  
**Rate Set Holes:** (All)  
**Rate Sets:** (All)

**Date Range:** 1/1/2025 - 12/31/2025  
**Method:** (All)  
**Owner Groups:** (All)



| Month     | Rounds |      |      | Revenue |            |            | APR  |         |         |
|-----------|--------|------|------|---------|------------|------------|------|---------|---------|
|           | 2023   | 2024 | 2025 | 2023    | 2024       | 2025       | 2023 | 2024    | 2025    |
| January   |        |      |      |         |            |            |      |         |         |
| February  |        |      |      |         |            |            |      |         |         |
| March     |        |      |      |         |            |            |      |         |         |
| April     |        |      | 3    |         |            | \$189.00   |      |         | \$63.00 |
| May       |        |      | 24   |         |            | \$1,312.00 |      |         | \$54.67 |
| June      |        | 5    | 26   |         | \$211.00   | \$1,463.00 |      | \$42.20 | \$56.27 |
| July      |        | 4    | 25   |         | \$232.00   | \$1,570.00 |      | \$58.00 | \$62.80 |
| August    |        | 40   | 41   |         | \$2,053.00 | \$2,233.00 |      | \$51.33 | \$54.46 |
| September |        | 23   | 48   |         | \$1,156.00 | \$1,858.00 |      | \$50.26 | \$38.71 |
| October   |        | 19   | 30   |         | \$626.00   | \$1,088.00 |      | \$32.95 | \$36.27 |
| November  |        | 2    | 2    |         | \$76.00    | \$76.00    |      | \$38.00 | \$38.00 |
| December  |        |      |      |         |            |            |      |         |         |
| Totals    |        | 93   | 199  |         | \$4,354.00 | \$9,789.00 |      | \$46.82 | \$49.19 |



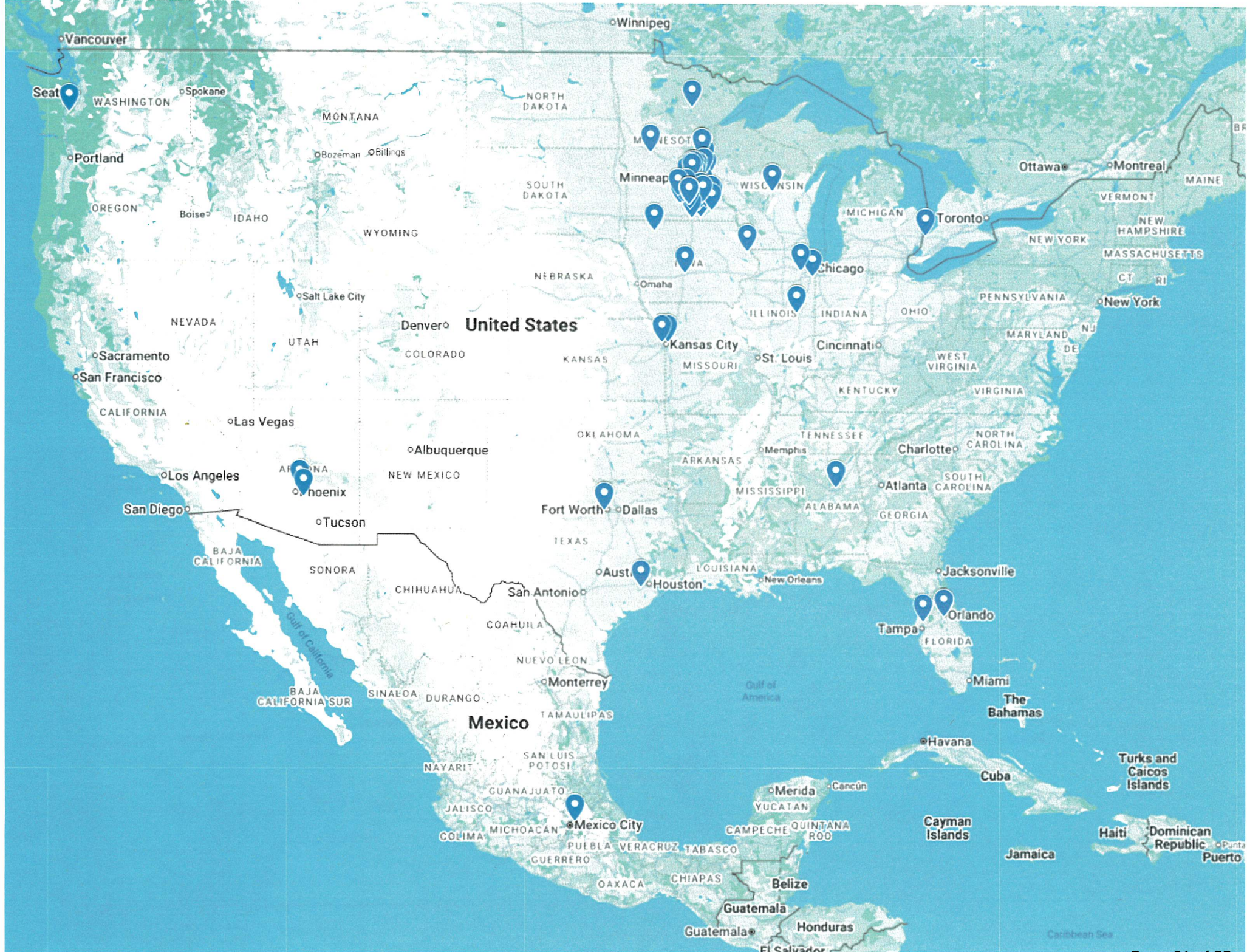






photo credit: Karl Harkenson

# On Site Biochar Demonstration

## March 18, 2026 11:00 - 1:00 pm



Please join us! Great River Greening will demonstrate the use of biochar kilns for converting waste wood into soil enriching biochar as a cleaner burning, alternative to open pile burning.

- GRG staff will be onsite operating an Oregon & Ring of Fire biochar kiln

### Schedule

- 11:00 am-11:15 am: Observe Ignition
- 11:15 -12:45 pm: Proper feeding of waste wood
- 12:45-1:00 pm: Kiln quench, biochar assessment, uses,..

This event is open to all. Come for all or part of the demonstration. Please register so we can communicate changes

### Event Details:

Wednesday March 18, 2026 11 am -1 pm  
Kaplan's Woods  
1205 18<sup>th</sup> ST SW  
Owatonna, MN 55060  
44.065915, -93.241909

### Questions? Contact:

Todd Rexine, Conservation Director  
trexine@greatrivergreening.org  
651.272.3992

### WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

Natural Sytem Managers.,  
Conservation Professionals,  
Fire Professionals, Foresters,  
Conservation Service  
Providers, Agricultural  
Producers and Gardeners

### Thank you to our funders



**To learn more & register, ..**  
**scan the QR code**  
**or visit:**

**[greatrivergreening.org/events](http://greatrivergreening.org/events)**



# On Site Biochar Demonstration

March 18, 2026 11:00 - 1:00 pm

## Biochar Benefits & Applications

### Agroforestry systems:

- Provides a low-emission way to dispose of woody debris
- Aids establishment of trees and shrubs
- Enhances forest soil health and wildlife habitat
- Reduces wildfire risk by lowering fuel loads
- Supports use of biomass from invasive or diseased tree removal

### Agricultural systems:

- Improves crop yield
- Improves soil structure and tilth
- Increases nutrient retention and availability
- Boosts water-holding capacity in droughty-prone or compacted soils
- Stimulates microbial activity and root development
- Helps balance soil pH, especially in acidic soils
- Supports crop establishment in degraded land

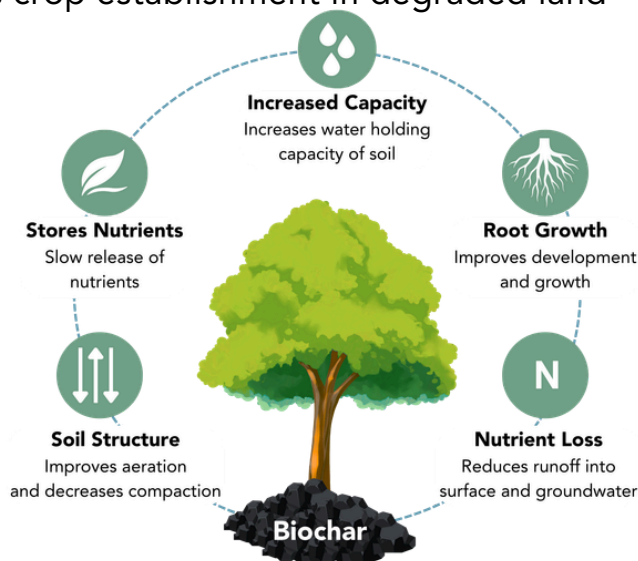


photo credits: Todd Rexine, Karl Harkenson, Katie Edmonds

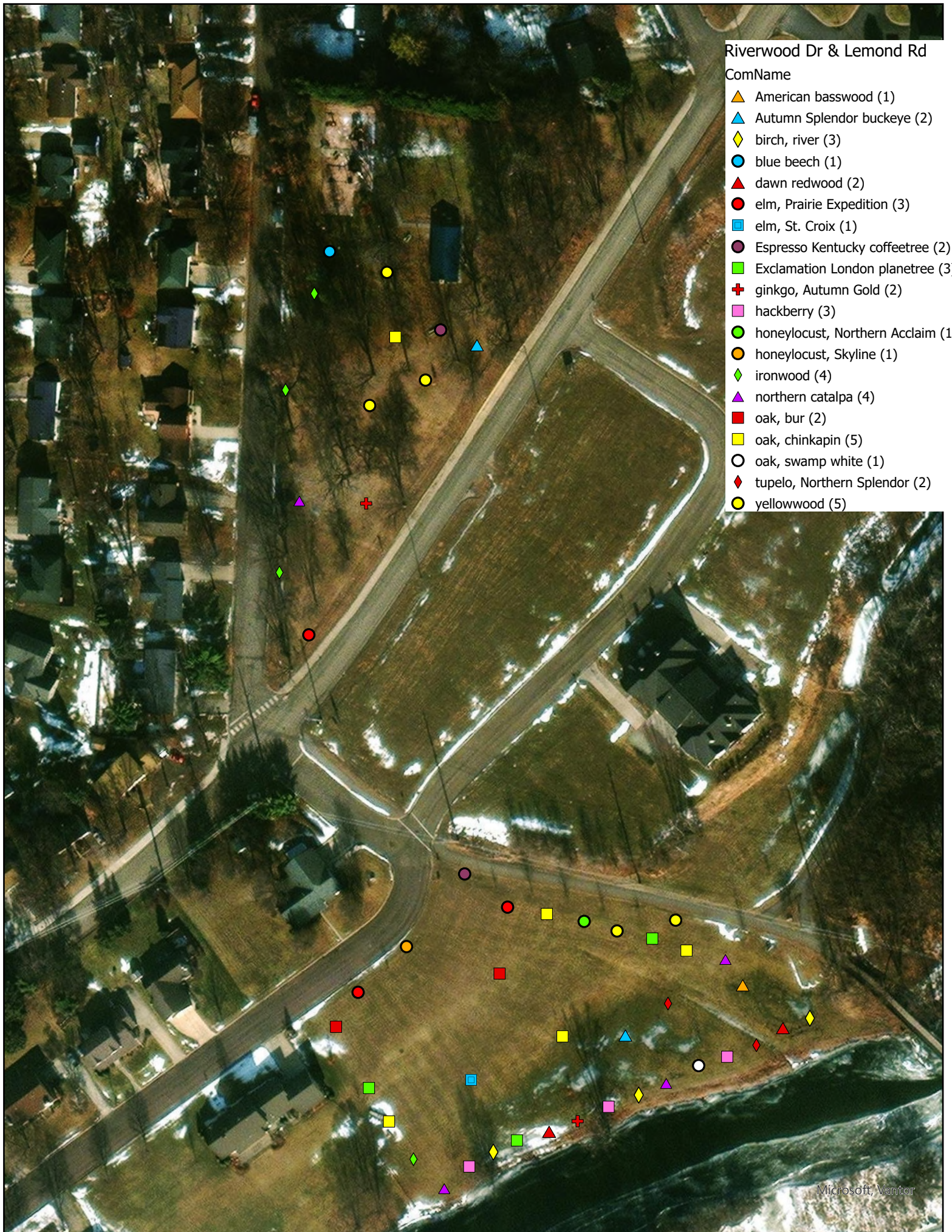
## What is Biochar?

Biochar is created from wood waste that is heated through a low oxygen environment (pyrolysis) and transformed into stabilized carbon. Biochar can then be used as a soil amendment to increase organic carbon in the soil.

Biochar created using flame capped kilns is a highly stable form of carbon that can enrich the soil for over 100 years.









## OWATONNA REGIONAL PARK – MASTER PLANNING CHECKLIST

### Component #1 – Proposer/Implementing Agency - COMPLETE

### Component #2 – Regional Significance Statement, Introduction/Overview, Site Information - COMPLETE

- X Regional Significance Statement
- X Overview/Description
- X General Site Characteristics

### Component #3 – Setting & Regional Context - COMPLETE

- X Regional Context – Analysis of regional comparisons, compliment or duplicate
- X Map Uploaded
- X Provides a High-Quality Outdoor Recreation Experience
  - X Images
- X Provides a Natural and Scenic Setting Offering a Compelling Sense of Place
  - X Images
- X Well-located to Serve a Regional Need and/or Tourism Destination
- X Fills a Gap in Recreational Opportunity within the Region (review after analysis)

### Component #4 – Vision, Trends, Public Health Values and Public Engagement - COMPLETE

*Public input, demographics, recreational trends, public values, economic opportunities. WHY? Practical research or evidence of demand. [GMRPTC website](#) – additional demographic, research and public values info.*

- X Vision Statement – overarching & supported by the public.
- X Regional Demographic Information – trends pertinent to Owa, population change, age groups, emerging populations, demand for park/trail in this location, basis for amenities being proposed
  - X Regional Demographic Charts
- X Economic Development/Tourism Support – opportunities and how it serves ED/T support
  - X ED/T uploads
- X Recreational Trends Information – user data with connection
  - X Rec trends uploads
- X Public Health Values Narrative – underserved & non-traditional users
  - X Public Health uploads
- X Public Involvement Summary – show inclusivity and volume
  - X Public Involvement uploads

## Component #5 – Development Master Plan and Implementation Plan

- X Development Plan Overview – including accessibility guidelines
- X Development Plan Images
- X Acquisition Plan
- X Development Feature – Individual with detail
- X Support Material
- \_\_\_ **Implementation Plan** – strategy, prioritization, cost projections, phasing, funding (not just Legacy)  

Describe the implementation strategy and development priorities. A clear strategy for which components or use areas are the top priority should be outlined in a narrative or some similar format. A variety of realistic alternative funding sources must be identified, as Legacy funding cannot and should not be the only funding source for a particular facility.
- X Development to date
- \_\_\_ **Development Phases**  

A phased budget, broken down by implementation phase with a cost estimate for all proposed improvements, needs to be included. Cost estimates are based on a Master Plan-level professional evaluation , supported by the development details for each particular item. (We have some of that)
- \_\_\_ Repair and replacement

## Component #6 – Management, Operational Sustainability, Natural Resource Sustainability, Programming & Marketing Plans, Research and User Metrics

- \_\_\_ Joint Organization Responsibilities Not included, because they are not joint, but refer to agreement.  

OTA agreement should be included. Any other rules, regulations or ordinances affecting the site should be described.
- \_\_\_ Operational Sustainability  

An operational sustainability plan and a budget should provide a reasonable basis for maintenance and operations costs and sources of funding at a Master Plan level. That basis may be derived based on past agency experience, professional analysis or similar assessment. In addition to listing current management and operation expenses, the expected increase in operating expenses associated with the implementation of each development phase (or some similar benchmarking) should be presented. *(I do have some information on building and maintaining natural trails from a workshop that Logan went to.)*
- \_\_\_ Natural Resources Sustainability  

Shows that the agency understands the unique natural resources in the facility and the challenges for managing them. Should describe the approach used to foster environmentally sustainable infrastructure design, construction or operations. Broad strategies for addressing the top priority challenges should be included in this section, with the costs included in either the Capital implementation plan or the management/sustainability plan.



## \_\_\_ Programming

Outline activities that will engage park or trail users and keep them coming back. “Connecting People to the Outdoors” is a pillar in the 25-year Legacy Plan and is taken seriously. Programming is critical to proactively attracting a broad spectrum of users to your facility, including new, non-traditional, and marginalized users that have been historically underserved. Cost estimates and funding sources (including programming revenue) must be included.

## \_\_\_ Marketing – Currently working on MarCom Plan

Outline the various marketing, advertising and outreach strategies and partnerships that will be used to ensure that local and regional users are made aware of the park or trail. Agencies are encouraged to explore both traditional (free and paid advertising, websites, tourism agency partnerships, etc.) and non-traditional (event partnerships, direct outreach to user groups, social media, etc.) approaches that have the realistic potential to achieve a regional level of use. Cost estimates and funding sources must be included. *We can use a MarCom for this, with some tweaking and additions.*

## \_\_\_ User Metrics Placer AI

## \_\_\_ Budgets

Full Maintenance & Operations Budget with components:

Marketing Plan

Operational & Sustainability Plan

Management Plan

Research and User Metrics

Programming Plan

Natural Resource Sustainability Plan

ALL – Need to review all text for transfer issues (random symbols, etc.)

NEXT UP IN THE PROCESS AFTER SUBMISSION – Master Plan Evaluation

Full evaluation of the Master Plan is completed in a multi-pronged process as listed below:

Staff Review & Site Visit – Commission consultants review the Master Plan for completeness and eligibility. A formal site visit is completed to verify the assumptions, status, practicality and realism of the plan, which is then provided to the Commission in a report.

ETeam review of Master Plan document – The Evaluation Team (ETeam) will conduct a simultaneous evaluation the Master Plan on two tracks:

Track One: Designation Criteria Scoring -This is the traditional evaluation tool based on the Designation Criteria listed in Section III, providing a score reflecting the facility’s merit as a regional outdoor recreation facility.

Track Two: Plan Readiness Grading – An evaluation tool will grade each of the Master Plan components to measure completeness and the agency’s readiness for implementation success. A total grade above a certain level is needed to pass the plan, as well as passing scores for each of the individual components. Plans or components that fail Track Two will be sent back to the applicant for improvement. They will then be re-evaluated by the ETeam before final Commission consideration.

Public Comment – The Commission may seek feedback from the public, public representing groups or partner agencies where feasible and appropriate. Typical concerns for review may be the overall consistency and fit of a particular facility within that District’s vision, within the overall Greater MN Strategic Plan, or with adjoining jurisdictions or facilities. Public communication and feedback is important to achieve consistency with adjoining jurisdictions or facilities in a region.

Commission Determination – All of the above information, as well as other items deemed necessary from time to time, will be deliberated by the Commission. If determined to fit this plan, the applicant facility may then be designated as a part of the GM Regional System.

*\*Note on MP Updates\** Over the course of time, Master Plans need to be updated to reflect changing conditions and use patterns. The online Data Management System (DMS) is designed to help make updates easier by modifying the document only where necessary. Annual changes to reflect recent projects, rearranged phasing or updated management practices are not items worthy of a Master Plan update. However, when significant changes in vision, design or implementation (typically 4-10 year basis), the Commission must be notified of a potential update. When completed, an updated Master Plan making notable changes to the regional story will be re-evaluated per Step 2 procedures.

After Designation – Legacy Funding Applications are annual.

Agencies request Legacy funding for regionally impactful components of the designed facilities. GMRPTC consultants review the applications, conduct site visits with each district’s Commissioners and score the applications according to the Commission’s criteria. The ETeam provides additional review, if requested by the consultant team. The Commission is responsible for determining the priority list of funded projects for submission to the Legislature.



ANNUAL  
OVERVIEW

# PROGRAMMING

YOUTH, FAMILY,  
SENIOR & ADAPTIVE

2025



# 2025 HIGHLIGHTS

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- Spooky Pumpkin Trail was successful with 102 pumpkins and around 1300 attendees. (Approximately 1,000 more than past years)
- Cancelled half as many trips as last year
- Rec on the Go was active in the community this summer, impacting roughly 430 residents.
- Successful Fall Park Passport with 176 entries submitted and many people/families on the trails.
- Adaptive Bowling remains the top attended program.
- Hired new Kayaking Program Lead with extensive professional experience in paddling. Ran 4 sessions serving 16 people.
- Senior membership was renamed Legends
- Social Commons room names were updated
- Sewing room was moved to second floor for more visibility and accessibility



# 2025 CHALLENGES

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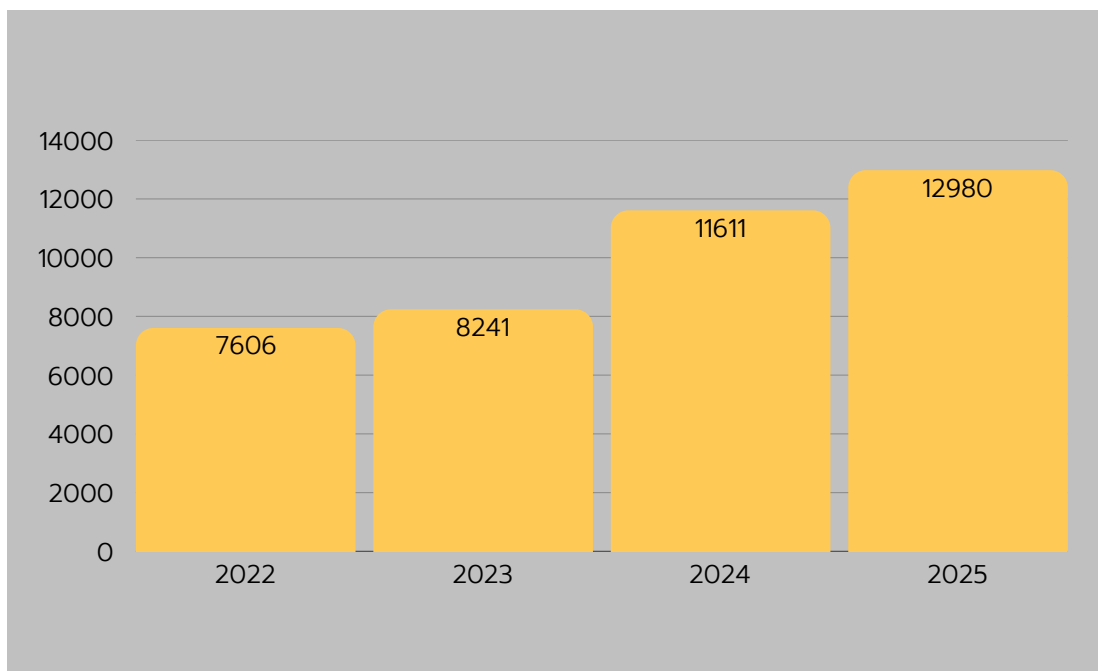
- Staff turnover created challenges in this area of programming. Majority of seasonal staff were new along with supervisor.
- Participant expectations and deliverables were inconsistent at times due to staff turnover.
- Working to rebuild trust and strengthen communication and positive interactions with user groups and participants.
- Programs that were once fairly successful are no longer running at the same capacity (example being Adaptive Fishing).
- Finding staff with experience in skill specific programs (ie: archery, snowshoeing).
- Weather impacted camps requiring relocation and/or rescheduling.





# PARTICIPATION AS A WHOLE

YOUTH  
FAMILY  
SENIOR  
ADAPTIVE  
PROGRAMMING



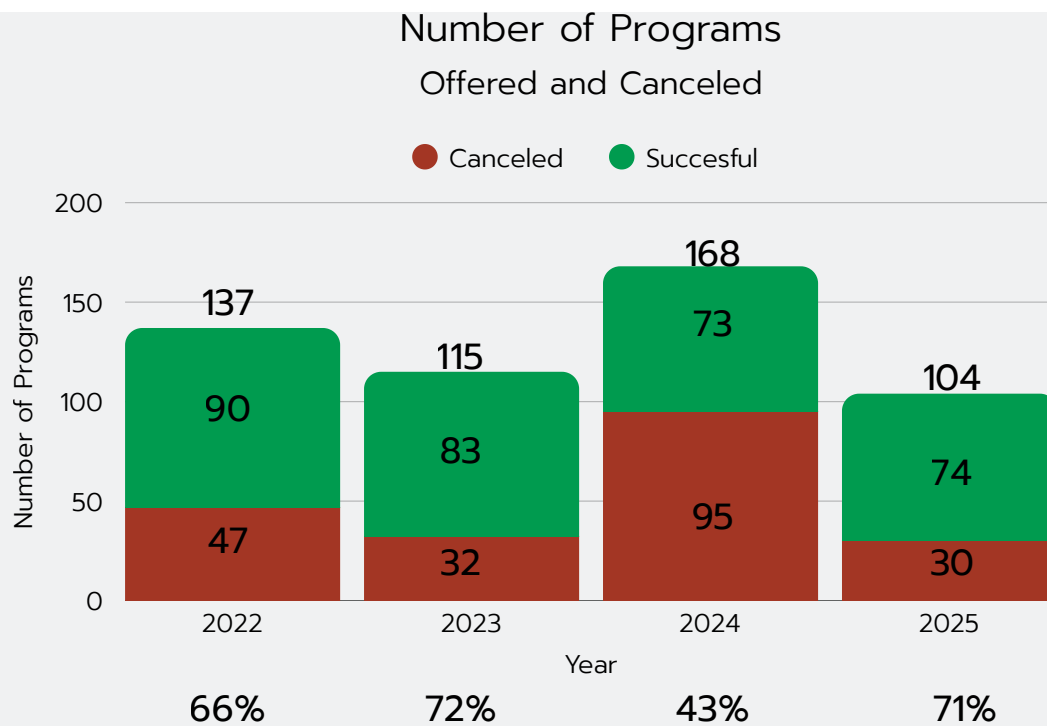
In 2025, Rec programming served 12,980 participants. this was a significant increase from previous years

Programming Participation increased by approximately 10% in 2025





# NUMBER OF PROGRAMS

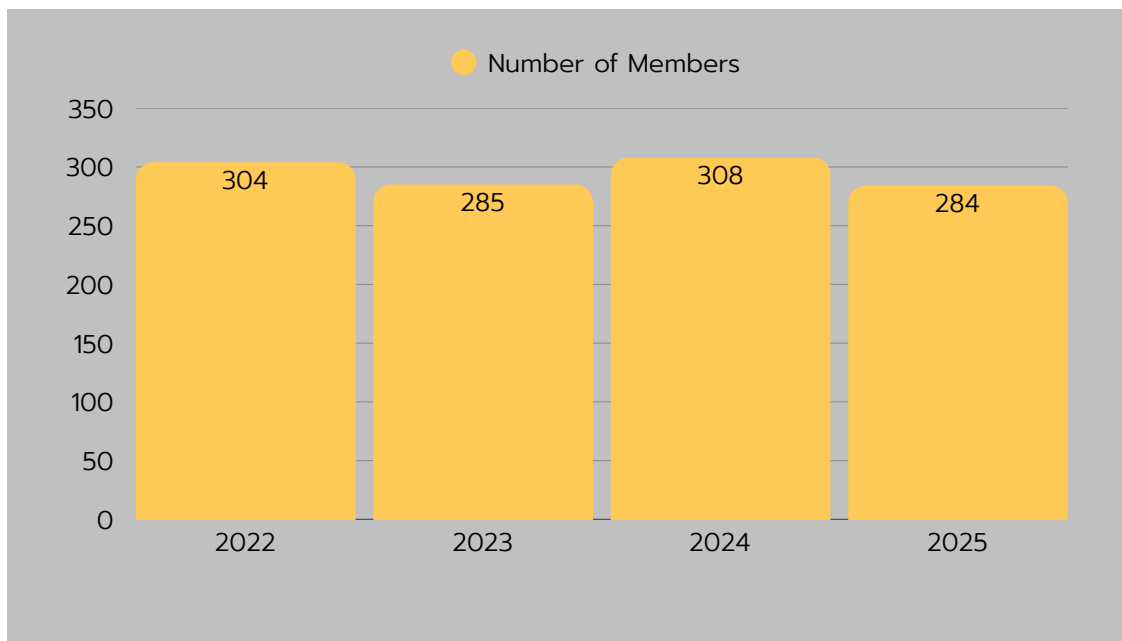


Canceled programs are noted in red.

Weekly senior programs at the west hills social commons such as cards, pool and bingo are not included.



# LEGENDS MEMBERSHIPS

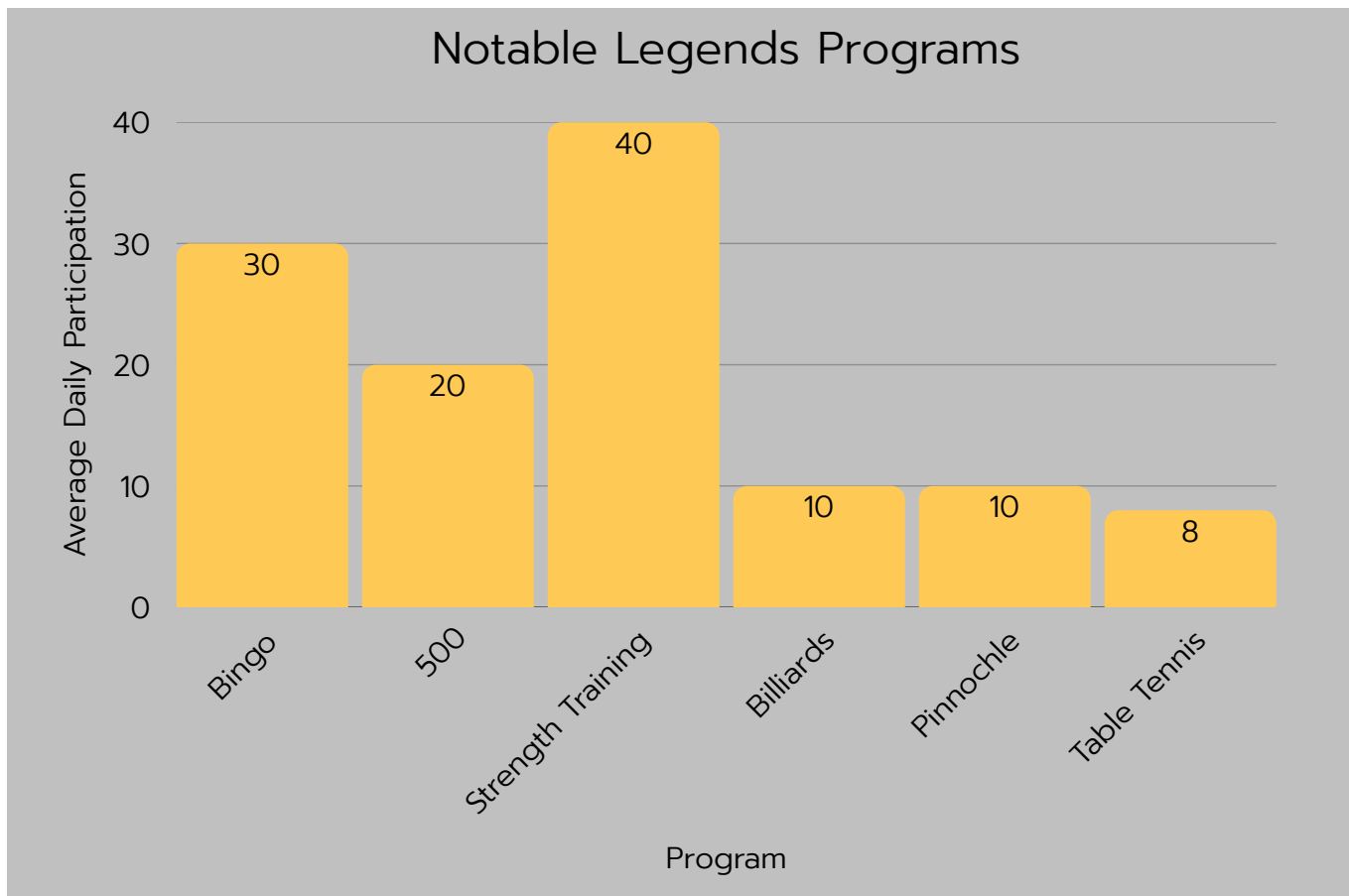


The majority of members are age 70 or older. Our goal is to bring more members in 2026 with new innovative programs and more extensive marketing efforts, focusing on all senior age groups.



# LEGENDS MEMBERSHIPS

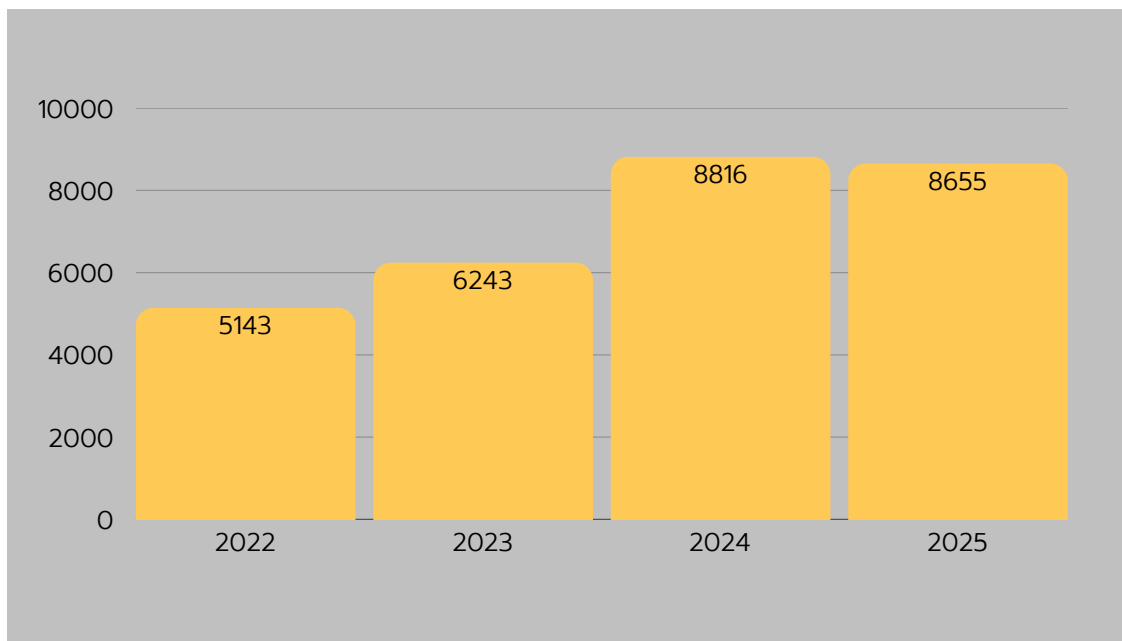
## Notable Programs



The Social Commons offers a variety of programs to Legends members including games, activities, entertainment, educational classes, and speakers. In 2025 these programs served an average of 721 monthly participants.



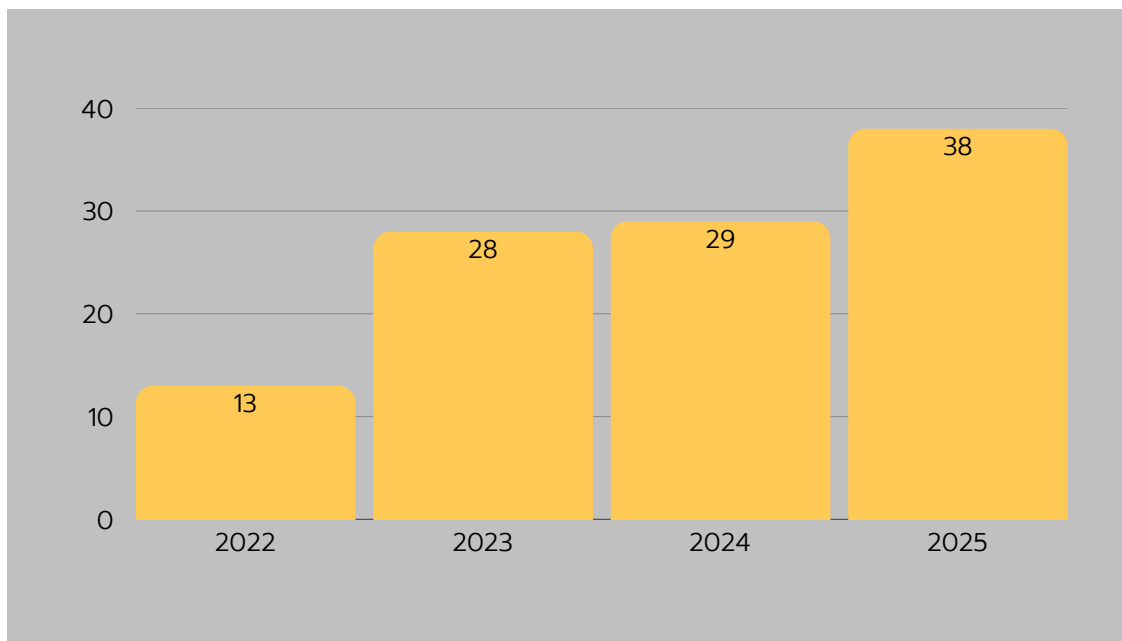
# LEGENDS MEMBERSHIP SCANS/CHECK-INS



Prior to 2024, many guests did not scan in. there was a significant increase in efforts to make sure all members scanned in beginning in 2024 resulting in much more accurate data



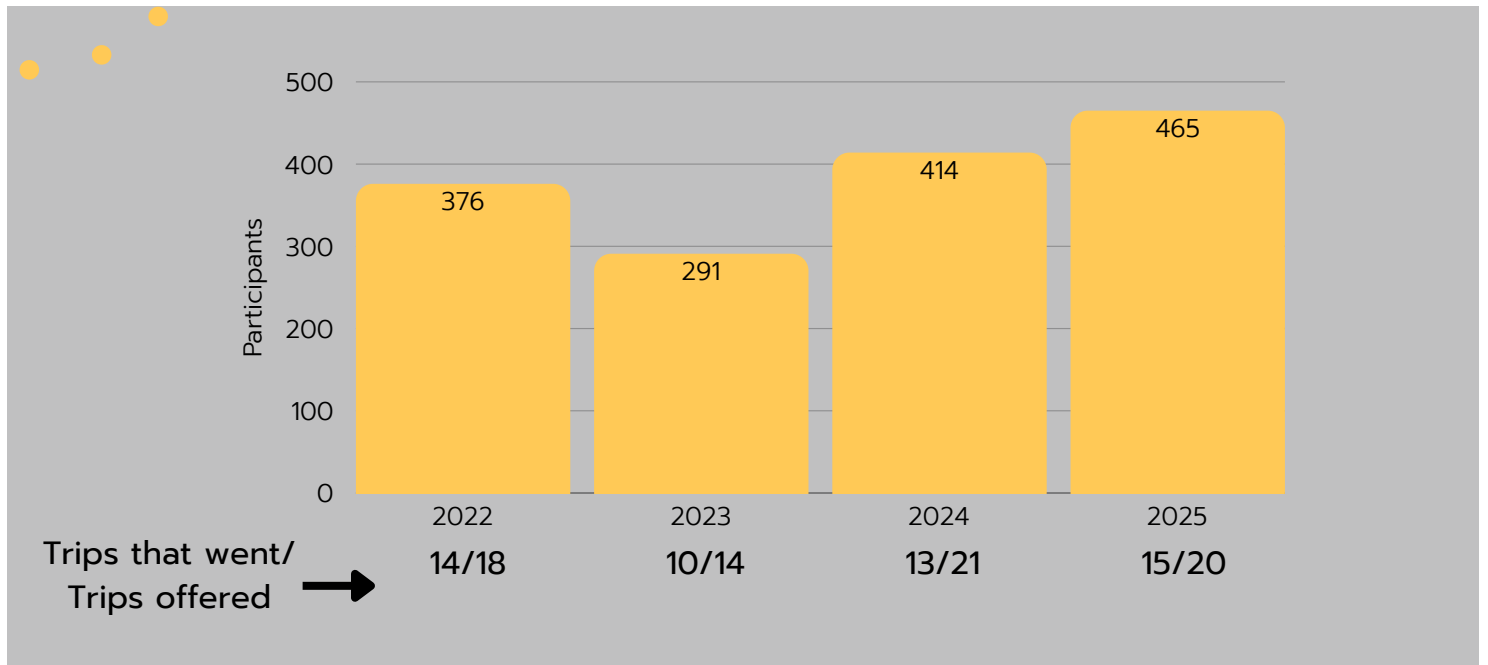
# LEGENDS DAY PASSES



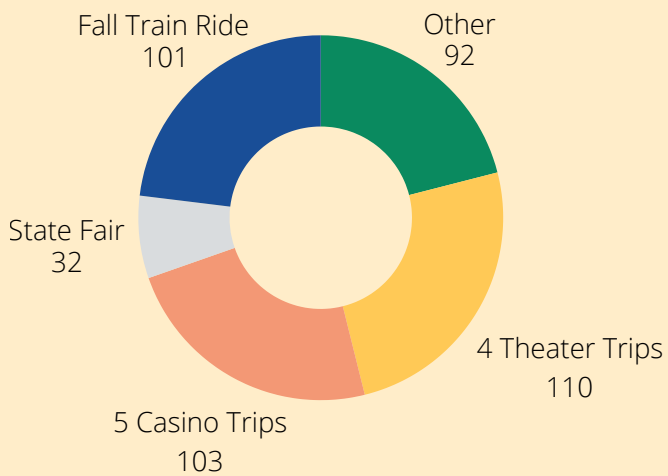
The number of day passes sold is increasing although the number remains fairly low. We would like to begin having more single day programs or events that attract more non-members to purchase day passes. Guests purchasing day passes may be any age and must be accompanied by a member.



# SENIOR AND FAMILY TRIPS



2025 Trip Participants



## SPECIFIC TRIP NUMBERS

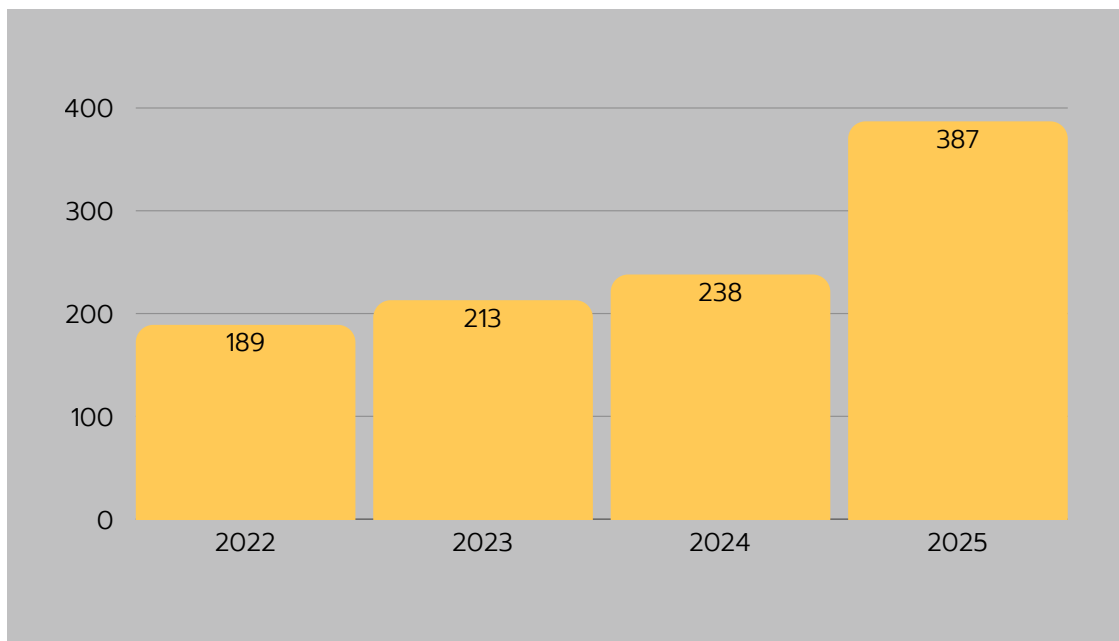
Family Trips are open to all ages and no member discount is offered. Senior trips are only open to those 50+ and include a member discount. In 2025, 11 of the 20 offered trips were senior trips. The most attended trips were the Fall Train Ride and Grease, while the lowest attended trips were a St. Paul Saints game and Love Letters. In general, Treasure Island trips tend to be the most consistently attended hovering in the 20s for participation. Trips that were canceled include the Brewery Crawl, Minnetonka Boat Cruise, Wine Wonderland and SPAM and Sips.

There was a non-refundable deposit that had covered the cost of 15 tickets for the Saints trip. In order to not lose any more money than the original deposit, we decided to send the trip with 12 people. The boat cruise had about 25 people registered and more was expected. the boat that was chosen had a minimum of 42 people that must attend and there would not be enough tables and chairs for everyone to be seated. Since there was interest in this trip, we will likely look into another boat cruise with a different venue for next summer.





# YOUTH SUMMER CAMPS & DAY PROGRAMS



## 2025 Program Participants

Wild About Science  
42

Other  
141

Little Tykes Sports Camp  
149

Splash Camp  
27

Dino Camp  
28

## SPECIFIC CAMP NUMBERS

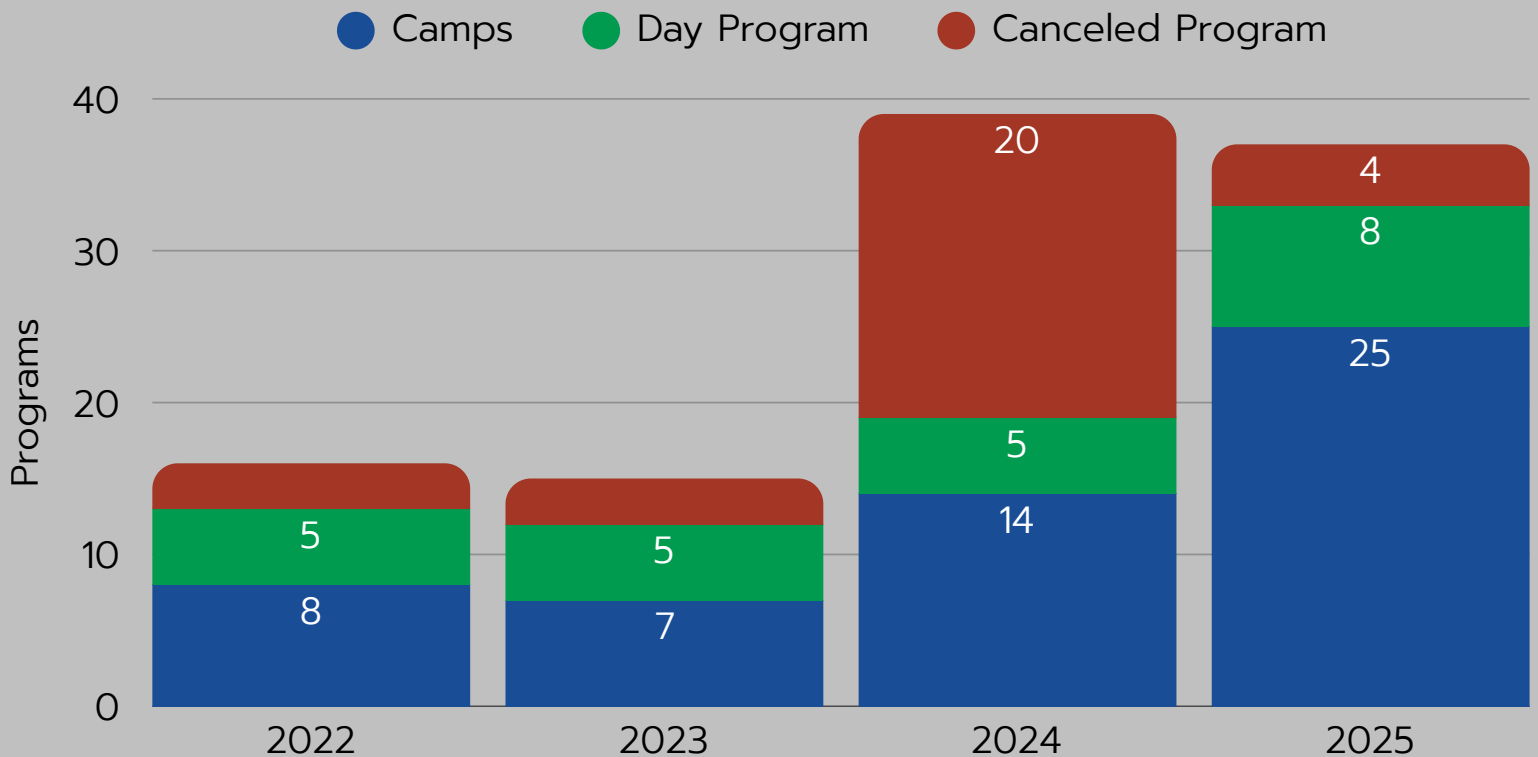
This year, 11 Youth Camps ran totaling 387 participants. Most camps ran multiple sessions. The most attended camps were Little Tykes Sports Camp and Wild About Science, while the least attended were Super Hero Camp and Dino Fossils Camp. In general, most camps have participant numbers stayed in the 20s.

**Note:** Every Camp that was planned ran successfully! Little tykes was added to programming for the first time in 2025. It was previously under athletics



# YOUTH SUMMER CAMPS & DAY PROGRAMS

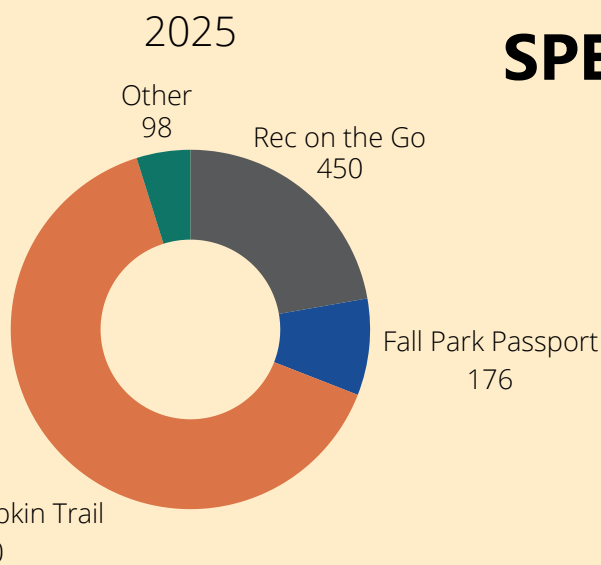
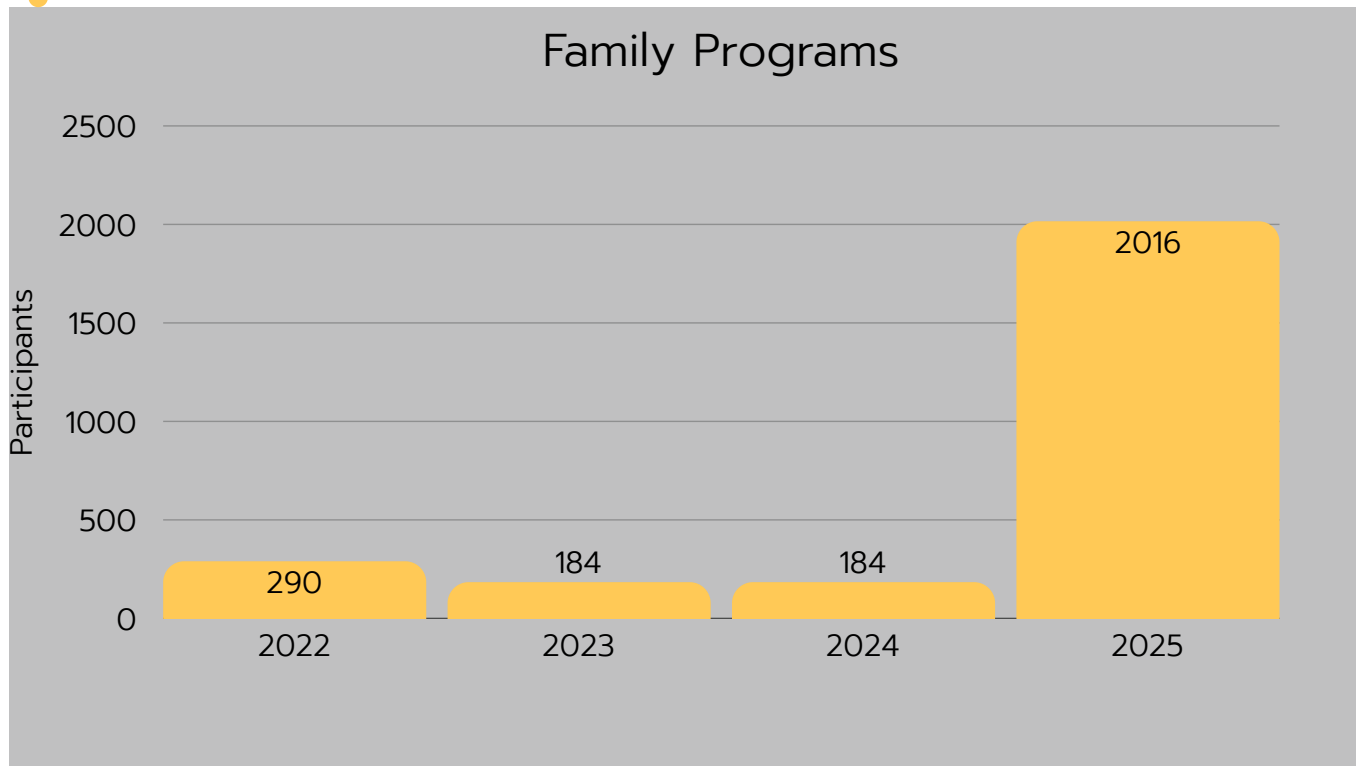
Program type



Note: the canceled youth programs in 2025 were primarily pre-school age programs. This has been re-structured into a different pre-school age activities to encourage more participation.



# FAMILY



## SPECIFIC FAMILY PROGRAMS

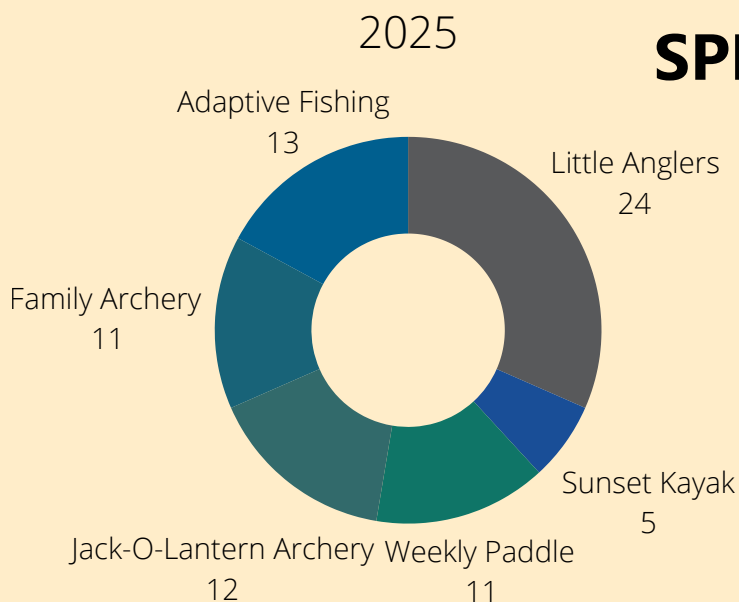
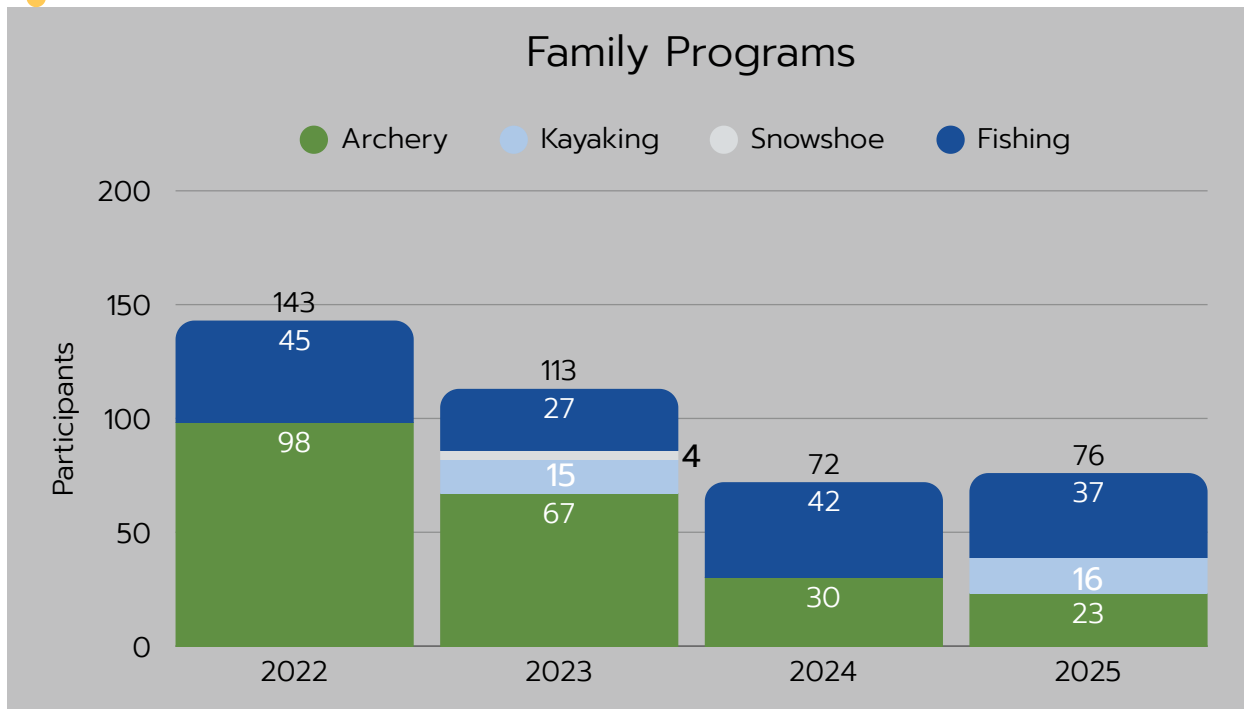
This year, 9 Family Programs run totaling 2,004 participants. Some programs ran with a small capacity while others had great levels of participation. The top three best performing programs were Spooky Pumpkin Trail, Rec on the Go and Fall Passport.

Note: We cancelled three programs due to low registration.

Rec on the go data includes two downtown Thursday events.



# OUTDOOR EDUCATION



## SPECIFIC FAMILY PROGRAMS

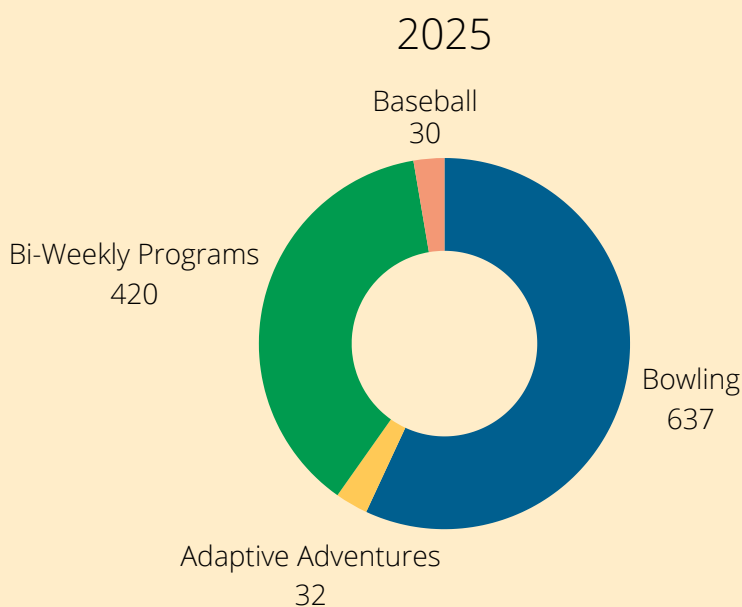
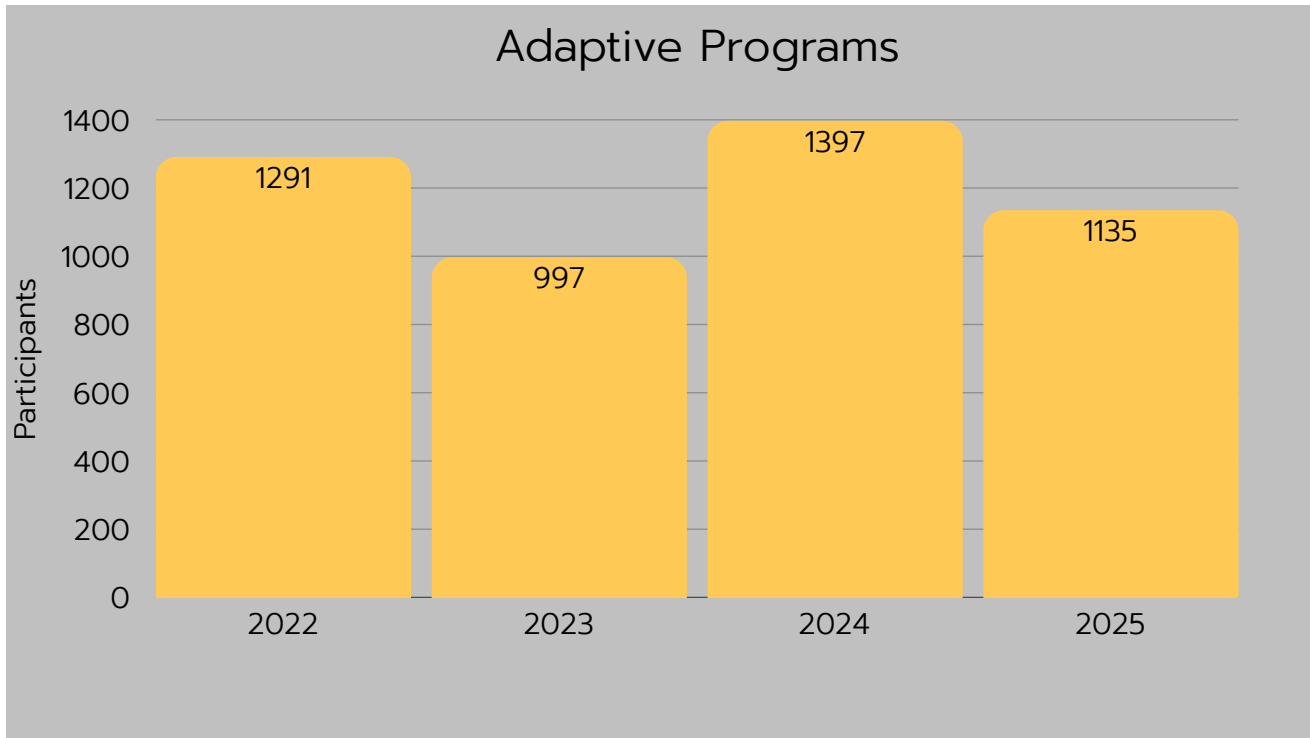
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Rec on the go data includes two downtown Thursday events.



# ADAPTIVE



Bowling is the most consistently attended activity averaging 53 participants per month. This program runs each Monday night.



# PARKS AND RECREATION FACEBOOK

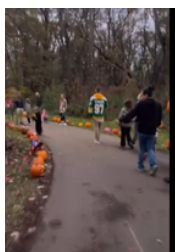
## QUESTIONS WE ASKED OURSELVES PRIOR TO EACH POSTING.

- Why am I posting?
- Who am I trying to reach?
- When would this person be most active on Facebook?
- Is there enough variety in our content type?

## WHAT DID WE LEARN ABOUT OUR FACEBOOK ACCOUNT?

- People use it as a primary source for updates and information.
- Flyers are not received as well as other content types.
- When done correctly, videos can take off quickly and generate lots of traction.

1



**Post:** Thank you to everyone who attended the spooky pumpkin trail tonight....come get your last walk through by 8:00pm! [#owatonnamn](#) [#Halloween](#) [#Pumpkins](#) [#VisitOwatonna](#) [#CommunityEvent](#) [#Spooky](#).

**Content Type:** Reel **Views:** 35,825  
**Interactions:** 212 **Posted:** 10/25/2025

2



**Post:** All aboard for a magical autumn adventure through the vibrant countryside on a scenic 90-minute train ride at the Minnesota Transportation Museum in Osceola! After soaking in the breathtaking fall colors, we'll top off the day with a relaxing stop at Rustic Roots Winery—cheers to unforgettable views and even better company! Get registered today at [Owatonna.gov](#)

**Content Type:** Photo **Views:** 25,757  
**Interactions:** 97 **Posted:** 06/27/2025

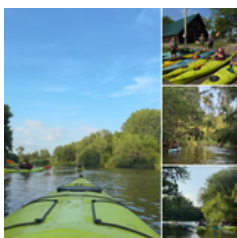
3



**Post:** Ready for a family adventure that's more fun than a squirrel on a treadmill? Owatonna's Fall Parks Passport program is back from Sept 15 to Oct 13! Grab your passport online or at the Parks & Rec office, then go nuts finding hidden clues in the parks. And the best part? It's free!

**Content Type:** Photo **Views:** 8,596  
**Interactions:** 31 **Posted:** 09/17/25

4



**Post:** The first weekly paddle Tuesday night was a success! Come join us every Tuesday at Morehouse Park! register online at <https://secure.rec1.com/MN/owatonna-mn/catalog> or call 507-444-4321

**Content Type:** Photo **Views:** 8,186  
**Interactions:** 59 **Posted:** 07/23/2025

5



**Post:** Has your family started its adventure with the Fall Park Passport yet? If not, don't worry, it's not too late!

Explore Owatonna's amazing parks and trails and collect your secret words at: Mineral Springs Park, Leo Rudolph Park, Dartt's Park, North Straight River Parkway, Morehouse Park, Buxton Trail, Kaplan's Woods Trail, Manthey Park, Summer Park, Kaplan's Woods Parkway

Adventure, fun, and fall colors await...start your Fall Park Passport journey today!

**Content Type:** Photo **Views:** 7,972  
**Interactions:** 53 **Posted:** 10/4/2025



# 2026 VISIONS

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- Adaptive Hangout
  - Rebranding of bi-weekly programming
  - Weekly programming offering a variety of activities including a sensory room
- Specific and purposeful Kayaking programs
  - Kayak Bird Watching
  - Kayak Skills & Self Rescue
- Diners, Drive-ins and Dives trip series
- Option to double up on summer camps to get a full day camp experience
- Re-implement volunteer program

