

Bondurant Parks and Recreation Board
Minutes
August 20, 2026

1. Roll Call

Present: Marian Collison, Nic Robinson, Emily Karwoski, Seth Williams, Aaron Rasmussen, Mike Mackin, Penny Moberly

Absent:

City Officials Present: City Administrator Marketa Oliver, Parks & Recreation Director Katie Klus

2. Call to Order and Declaring a Quorum

Karwoski called the meeting to order at and declared a quorum.

3. Abstentions declared

4. Perfecting and Approval of the Agenda

Motion by Rasmussen, seconded by Robinson, to approve agenda. Vote on Motion 7-0. Motion carried.

5. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Rasmussen, seconded by Moberly, to approve the minutes. Vote on Motion 7-0. Motion carried.

a. -7/16/26 Parks & Recreation Board Mtg Minutes

6. Guests requesting to address the Parks Board

7. Action Items

a. -District Corridor Community Garden

The Board discussed the proposed community garden framework and considerations to incorporate into the future design. Discussion included ADA accessibility and mobility needs. The Board also discussed providing garden beds in multiple sizes, parking needs, perimeter fencing, and water access. For water service, the Board discussed the potential use of specialized metering or an automatic shutoff system that would limit water flow after a specified period of time. Once staff has a preliminary design, the design will be taken back to the Board for additional comments.

Motion by Mackin, seconded by Collison, to move forward with this basic design direction. Vote on Motion 7-0. Motion carried.

8. Discussion Items -

a. -Discussion and possible action: Sport Complex Lease Agreements

The Board discussed the future management and allocation of baseball and softball facilities at the Bondurant Regional Sports Complex. The Board recommended that Field 0 remain part of the larger complex rather than being separated for individual use.

The Board requested additional information regarding utilization and capacity of the existing fields, including whether Little League is currently maximizing available field capacity. Staff did not have sufficient information available to answer these questions, and Little League representatives were not present to provide additional information.

The Board also discussed potential updates to future lease terms and requested that staff prepare a draft lease for Board review. Members expressed interest in increased reporting requirements beyond overall participation numbers, including field utilization and capacity and information regarding other organizations provided access to or renting the fields. A shorter lease term was also discussed as a way to allow the City to further evaluate facility utilization and Little League's needs.

Capital improvements and the respective responsibilities of the City and partner organizations were also discussed. Councilman Lineman, Board members, and staff discussed how other metro communities included in staff's research address capital needs. Staff noted that the communities researched provide varying levels of municipal assistance with capital improvements, including partnerships and City funding. The Board discussed whether some improvements or replacements needed at the complex may be more appropriately considered capital items rather than routine maintenance. Opportunities for the City to partner with organizations on grants and provide assistance in pursuing grant funding were also discussed.

Discussion also identified discrepancies between information staff received from the Bondurant-Farrar Community School District regarding facilities available for outside rental and the experiences reported by local sports organizations. Staff will follow up with School District leadership to clarify facility availability and rental practices.

The Board also identified field lighting as a potential opportunity to increase the overall capacity and rental availability of the existing fields. Field lighting will be discussed further as part of the Parks Department priorities agenda item.

b. -Discussion and possible action: Parks and Recreation System Priorities

The Board reviewed the Parks, Trails, and Greenways Master Plan and discussed remaining priorities for the City's parks and recreation system. The Board directed staff to develop a community survey to assist with prioritizing future parks and recreation investments. The survey will include the remaining medium-term priorities identified in the Master Plan (condensing projects with multiple phases into one priority for survey purposes) and ask respondents to rank those projects. The Board also discussed including potential projects and needs that were not specifically contemplated when the Master Plan was developed. Additional items discussed for inclusion in the survey included development of the remaining undeveloped athletic field area at the Bondurant Regional Sports Complex (BRSC). The Board expressed interest in maximizing the efficiency and capacity of the City's existing athletic fields before adding additional facilities. Potential improvements discussed included adding field lighting to extend available playing time and utilizing turf to reduce field recovery time and increase overall availability. The Board discussed exploring grant opportunities and capital improvement funding as potential resources for these types of improvements. The Board also expressed interest in gauging community support for the potential acquisition of additional land for future parks and recreation purposes. Staff will prepare a draft community survey for further review before it is distributed to the public.

9. Reports and Comments:

- a. -Parks & Recreation Director Report
-City Administrator Report
Parks & Recreation Director Report

- Upcoming Events
 - Touch a Truck: Aug. 31st, 2026 from 3-5pm
 - Summer Cribbage Tournament: Aug. 30th, 2026 starting at 1pm
 - Partnering with Bondurant Chamber to combine Halloween efforts. A reminder that Trick or Treat night is the last Saturday in October.
- The Station
 - We have a few remaining contractors that are finishing up AV and small things here and there.
 - Rentals and tours will open Sept. 1st. We have pushed back the date of the first potential rental to Oct. 1st due to prolonged schedule of the AV contractors.

- Programs begin in earnest starting in September. Jamie and Katie are putting together programs now.
- Project Updates:
 - Moving Curiously: This has been partially installed. The remaining concrete will be poured in time with the completion of the Filmore Ave project. Look for an upcoming ribbon cutting event invite.
 - Eye of Imagination: This is also partially installed - the artist is returning to make some final modifications and to install signage. A bench has also been ordered to accompany this piece. A ribbon cutting will also be scheduled for this piece.
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 - Disc Golf: With the almost continuous rain the last month, Public Works hasn't been able to get into Eagle Park to pour the final concrete and install baskets/signage. Once we have a better idea of the completion timeline, we will schedule a ribbon cutting.
 - Silo Mural: The artists are scheduled to complete the mural in the month of September. We will be planning an artist reception and a community art program. You will receive invitations when the date/time is confirmed.
 - Silo Commons: Henkel Construction has been hired as the Construction Manager at Risk for this project. They are currently working on dewatering the silos and removing the remaining debris on the inside of the silo structure. The Parks & Recreation Board is invited to a Special City Council Mtg on Aug. 31st regarding Silo Commons operations.

City Administrator Report

- The City opened bids to continue Truman to 16th st. The bids came in under the engineer's estimate.
- CVT is moving along well - the contractor will be prepping for the delivery of the bridge next week.

10. Adjournment

Motion by Rasmussen, seconded by Moberly, to adjourn. Vote on Motion 7-0. Motion carried.

Katie Klus
Communication and Events Coordinator

ATTEST:

Emily Karwoski
Board Chair

Bondurant Community Garden

Proposed Design & Operating Framework

Staff contacted and/or visited community garden programs in Pleasant Hill, Cedar Falls, West Des Moines, Norwalk, Charles City, and Des Moines to identify successful practices, common challenges, and maintenance considerations. Programs ranged from approximately 18 plots to 180 plots at a single location and included both city-operated and partnership-based models.

Based on this research, staff recommends the following framework for development of a community garden.

Recommended Garden Design

Raised Beds

- Utilize raised garden beds rather than in-ground plots.
- Arrange beds in a layout that minimizes mowing and trimming between individual plots.
- Incorporate enhanced-accessibility beds from the beginning rather than attempting to retrofit the garden later.
- Include hard-surface or accessible routes to designated accessible beds.
- Consider incorporating a ledge or shelf on accessible beds to provide gardeners a place for tools and supplies.

Ground Surface & Maintenance

- Avoid narrow turf areas between individual beds wherever possible. Other communities identified mowing, trimming, and weed management between plots as significant maintenance issues.
- Consider crushed aggregate, mulch, or another maintainable surface around beds and primary circulation areas.
- Design the site around the equipment that will actually be used to maintain it, including adequate mower access where turf remains.

Water

- Provide centrally located hydrant(s) with hoses and watering wands.
- Provide multiple hoses or connection points where practical – this would be determined during the design phase based on overall bed number and layout.
- Water should be metered, even if gardeners are not individually charged for consumption.

Fencing & Security

- Provide perimeter fencing rather than requiring gardeners to construct inconsistent fencing around individual beds.
- Consider controlled access with a combination or similar lock that can be changed annually.
- Clearly establish that gardeners may harvest only from their assigned plots.
- Recognize that fencing and controlled access can help address both wildlife, vandalism and produce theft.

Tools & Storage

- Provide a lockable storage shed on a concrete pad within the garden.
- Provide shared, durable equipment such as wheelbarrows, hoses, and watering wands.
- Gardeners should provide personal items such as gloves and small hand tools.
- Encourage donations of appropriate garden tools and equipment.
- Establish a system for identifying City-owned versus privately owned tools.

Proposed Operations

Plot Assignment

- Require annual registration, a signed garden agreement utilizing the City's existing CivicRec reservation platform, which already can accommodate this type of use.
- Consider limiting participation to one plot per household initially to maximize the number of households served.
- Allow gardeners in good standing first opportunity to renew before opening plots to new applicants.
- Maintain a waiting list when the garden reaches capacity.

Gardener Responsibilities

Gardeners should be responsible for:

- Planting and maintaining their assigned bed.
- Regular weeding.
- Harvesting their produce.
- Maintaining the plot in an orderly condition.
- Cleaning the plot at the end of the season.

- Providing their own soil amendments, compost, mulch, and other growing materials.
- Following restrictions established in the annual garden agreement.

The agreement should also address abandoned plots, prohibited plants/materials, produce harvesting, pesticide/herbicide use, structures, fencing, watering practices, end-of-season cleanup, and consequences for failure to maintain a plot.

City Responsibilities

The City should anticipate responsibility for:

- Water infrastructure
- Common-area mowing and vegetation management
- Perimeter fencing and common infrastructure
- Periodic garden inspections
- Maintenance of shared tools and facilities

Inspections & Communication

Research indicates that people management can require as much or more staff time than physical garden maintenance.

Staff would conduct regular inspections during the growing season, approximately every two weeks. One staff member should serve as the primary program contact so gardeners receive consistent information.

A small gardener leadership or volunteer group may assist with communication and identifying issues; however, other communities' experiences suggest volunteers should supplement rather than replace clear City oversight.

Key Lessons from Other Communities

The research consistently identified several practical lessons:

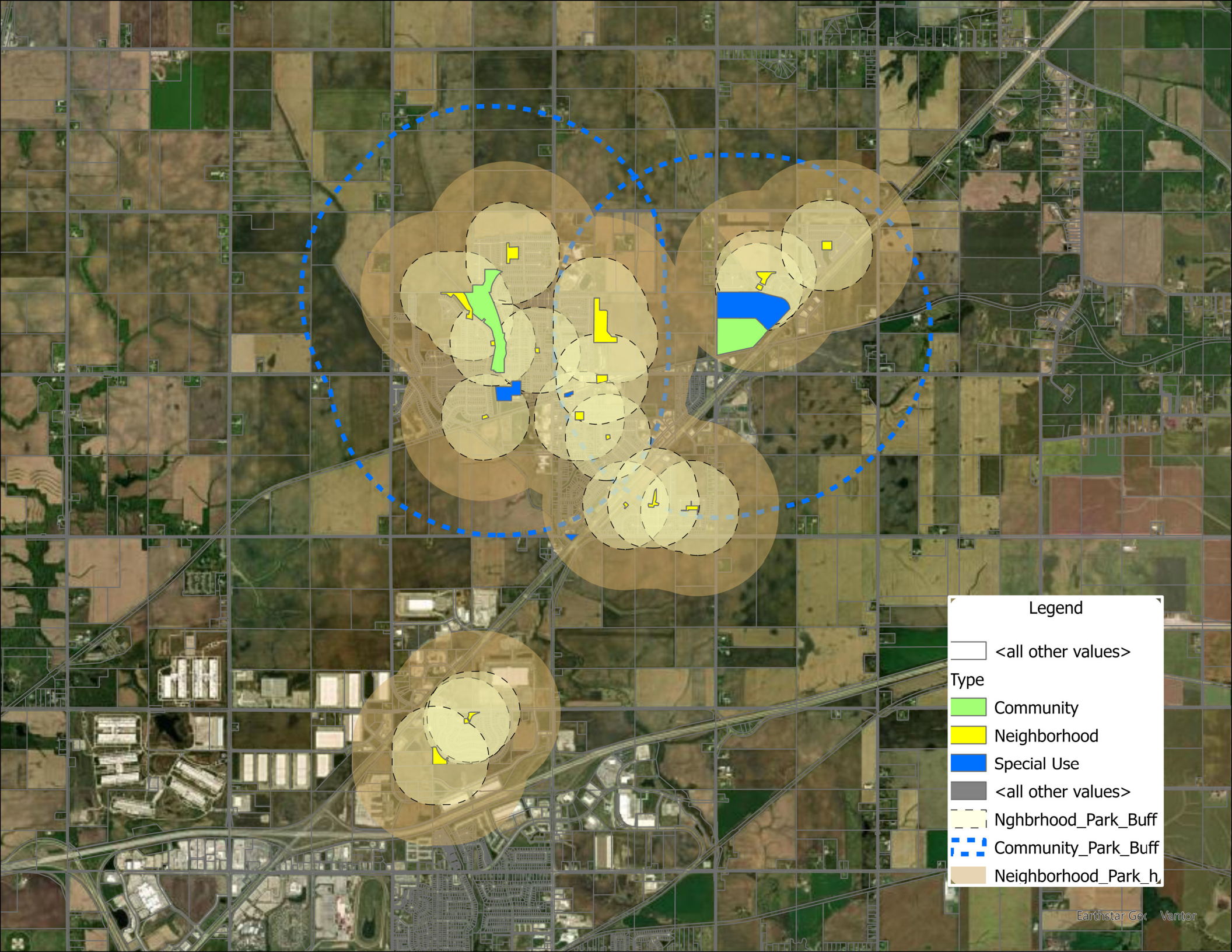
1. **Design for maintenance from the beginning:** Narrow turf areas, weeds between beds, and inefficient layouts create substantial recurring labor.
2. **Provide secure storage:** Communities without sheds identified them as a desired improvement, while established programs successfully use shared locked storage.
3. **Expect high demand:** Several nearby programs operate at capacity and maintain waiting lists.
4. **Provide clear rules before opening:** Produce theft, abandoned plots, weeds, vandalism, and interpersonal complaints occur even in established programs.
5. **Accessibility** should be incorporated during initial construction.

6. Reliable water access and basic shared tools significantly improve usability.
7. **Clearly define what gardeners must provide themselves:** Soil amendments, compost, mulch, gloves, small hand tools, and other individual gardening supplies should remain the responsibility of each gardener.
8. Community gardens require ongoing administration, not simply physical maintenance.

Overall Direction

The recommended approach is a raised-bed community garden designed for low municipal maintenance, controlled access, shared water and basic tools, accessible gardening opportunities, clear annual operating rules, and defined responsibilities between gardeners and the City.

The physical design should prioritize long-term maintenance efficiency. Program procedures should clearly establish expectations for plot maintenance, materials, cleanup, acceptable use, and communication so gardeners understand their responsibilities before receiving a plot.



Legend

<all other values>

Type

Community

Neighborhood

Special Use

<all other values>

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