


COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

	Number:	25-469	Meeting:	December 22, 2025
	Agenda Item:	47a	Roll Call:	<input type="text"/>
	Submitted by:	Benjamin R. Page, Parks and Recreation Director		

AGENDA HEADING:

Amendments to Municipal Code Chapter 74 Parks and Recreation capturing advancements of the Parks and Recreation system, updating specific fees for use of facilities, and other various changes.

SYNOPSIS:

Recommended approval of changes to Municipal Code Chapter 74 Parks and Recreation, including these substantive changes which reflect the advancements of the Parks and Recreation Department since the previous update in 2024:

Article IV. Facilities

- Section 74-94: Clarifying fire limitations include parkland and recreational property or facility
- Section 74-96: Containers; materials; belongings: Adding belongings may not be left in a way that impedes use
- Section 74-99: Adding limitations to horses and similar animals
- Section 74-101: Deleting former facility
- Section 74-107: Excluding watercraft from buoyed area
- Section 74-210: Mobile food vendors and transient merchants: Modifying to eliminate repeated information

Article V. Fees

- Changes to *existing* fees are proposed for the following facilities:
 - Section 74-176: Ball diamonds and soccer fields
 - Section 74-177: Bike and related equipment rental
 - Section 74-180: Community recreation center building rentals
 - Section 74-181: Golf courses
 - Section 74-182: Park shelters and other park rentals
 - Section 74-183: Aquatic centers, swimming pools and marina
 - Section 74-184: Brenton Skating Plaza
 - Section 74-188: Miscellaneous

- Addition of *new* fees are proposed for the following facilities:
 - Section 74-176: Ball diamonds and soccer fields
 - Section 74-182: Park shelters and other park rentals
 - Section 74-184: Brenton Skating Plaza
 - Section 74-190: Penalty and enforcement

Article VI. Mobile Food Vendors in Designated Parks

- Section 74-210: Mobile food vendors and transient merchants

FISCAL IMPACT:

The proposed fee changes are estimated to minimally increase revenue received by the City.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- Chapter 74 of the Des Moines Municipal Code is dedicated to the organization and management of the City parks and recreation facilities and outlines the role of the Parks and Recreation Board, the authority of the Parks and Recreation Director, operation of City parks and recreation facilities and the fees for use of facilities and programs.
- In addition to Chapter 74, topics related to parks and recreation responsibilities can also be found in Chapter 18 – Animals, Chapter 34 – Cemeteries, Chapter 114 – Traffic and Vehicles, Chapter 130 – Waterways and others, but the proposed changes that are a part of this action are limited to Chapter 74.
- All changes to the City Municipal Code must be approved by City Council.
- The substantive changes proposed to Chapter 74 reflect advancements of the Parks and Recreation Department since the previous most recent update in 2024. These are described in succinct detail below. Additional minor changes are proposed to improve formatting, consistency, and clarity, but do not modify the meaning of the existing ordinance language.
- Elected and appointed leaders should use this Communication as a guide to the changes but still read in detail the proposed modifications shown with “track changes” on in the copy of the Municipal Code Chapter 74 Parks and Recreation provided in their meeting packet. Substantive changes include:

Article IV. Facilities

- *Section 74-94. Fires: Expanding to parkland and recreational facilities* – This proposed change will support safety by clarifying that the current limitations regarding fires applies to all properties under Parks and Recreation purview.

- *Section 74-96. Containers; materials; belongings. (formerly Glass containers and waste materials): Adding belongings may not be left in a way that impedes use* – This proposed change clarifies the properties the section applies to and that belongings cannot be left or stored in a way that impedes use by others.
- *Section 74-99. Dogs and other pets: Adding limitations to horses and similar animals* – This proposed change clarifies that our facilities are not intended to accommodate horses and similar animals, except for service purposes as allowed by state or federal law.
- *Section 74-101. Overnight use of parks by special permit: Deleting former facility* – This proposed change removes the former cabin at Ewing Park as an exception to overnight use.
- *Section 74-107. Beaches: Excluding watercraft from buoyed area* – This proposed change supports safe use of Gray's Lake by specifying that watercraft may not enter the swimming area within the buoys.
- *Section 74-210. Mobile food vendors and transient merchants: Modifying to eliminate repeated details*: This proposed change removes fee and timeline details that are maintained by and updated through the City Clerk to eliminate the risk of including incorrect information in Chapter 74. It is clear that those seeking this information may find it via the City Clerk.

Article V. Fees

- Changes to *existing* fees are proposed for the following facilities to help recoup a greater share of staff time and operational costs and still remain some of the lowest in the metro area, if not the lowest:
 - *Section 74-176(d) and (e). Ball diamonds and soccer fields* – The proposed change increases the fee for additional marking and lining by request of the renter at both James W. Cownie Baseball Park and George Davis Softball Park from \$30 per hour to \$50 per game to help recoup a greater share of staff time and operational costs supporting the task. (Please see below for new fees now included in this section.)
 - *Section 74-177. Bike and related equipment rental* – The proposed change increases the fee for half day (6 hour) rentals by \$10 to \$20 per rental option. Additionally, the full day fee has been removed because this option is no longer offered.
 - *Section 74-180(a). Community recreation center building rentals* – The proposed changes increase the daily, monthly, and annual pass admission fees for both age groups by \$1, \$12, and \$50-\$100 respectively.
 - *Section 74-181(a) – (f). Golf courses* – Please refer to the attachment to the Roll Call provided by C-Corporation for additional details beyond this summary: The proposed changes include: (a) modifying definitions of weekday, weekend, and twilight in various amounts per course and type; (b) increasing daily, military, and senior green fees in various amounts per course and type; (c) modifying season badge fees to be in line with the goal of a 30% discount to play for badge holders; (d) increasing cart fees in both the green fees that include carts and individual cart rentals by \$1 each; (e) increasing miniature golf fees in the three (3) paying categories by \$3 each; and (f) increasing high school team fees by \$3 per player in dual meets and \$2 per player in tournaments.

- *Section 74-182(subsections noted in summary). Park shelters and other park rentals* – The proposed changes include modifications to these subsections: (3) increasing most of the enclosed shelter fees by \$10 to \$40 per rental; (5) increasing rentals at Gray's Lake Park including Christine Hensley Terrace by \$8 per hour and \$50 per three (3)-hour block; (former 10) deleting wading pool fee as all have been removed; and (10) deleting limit on director to waive the open space permit fee. (Please see below for new fees now included in this section.)
- *Section 74-183(a)(2) to (5) and (b). Aquatic centers, swimming pools and marina* – The proposed changes include modifications to these subsections: (a)(2) increasing season passes for youth agencies (i.e. daycares) by \$5 in each category; (a)(3) increasing exclusive use per hour fee by \$50 per hour; (a)(4) increasing pool rental for programs and practices by \$15 per hour; (a)(5) increasing swim meet fee by \$500 per day; and (b) increasing Birdland Marina moorage fees by \$3 for double access and \$2 for single access.
- *Section 74-184(a)(1): Brenton Skating Plaza* – The proposed change increases the fee for children under five (5) years of age from free to \$2. (Please see below for new fees now included in this section.)
- *Section 74-188(a): Miscellaneous* – The proposed change increases the fee for commercial photo or video permits from \$10 to \$20 per day. This fee has not increased since its inception in 2014.
- Addition of *new* fees are proposed for the following facilities:
 - *Section 74-176(c). Ball diamonds and soccer fields* – This proposed change modifies fees charged for tournaments to fees charged per game at James W. Cownie Soccer Park. The fees charged per tournament were introduced last year and after a year of testing, this modification will further streamline the reservation process and tournament negotiations. The higher cost for adult games continues to address the increased restoration needed following adult versus youth games. (Please see above for modified fees in this section.)
 - *Section 74-182(subsections noted in summary). Park shelters and other park rentals* – These proposed additions include: (5)d. kayak rental fees for \$10 per half hour and \$18 per hour; (6)a. and b. add that refunds may be requested and additional fees may be charged if participation varies from the original estimated number of trail users; (6)c. adds that the new trail cleaning fee may be charged; (9)c. a cleaning fee for trail use cleaning of \$50 per hour for a minimum of two (2) hours; and (12) a new park road closure fee of \$25 per hour for up to six (6) hours on park roads in eight (8) parks. (Please see above for modified fees in this section.)
 - *Section 74-184(a)(1). Brenton Skating Plaza* – These proposed changes add a second punch pass that allows four (4) admissions to be purchased for \$25 and introduces skate rentals to be included for free with paid admissions, both beginning on January 2 and going through end of season. (Please see above for modified fees in this section.)
 - *Section 74-190(a)(b): Penalty and enforcement* – This proposed addition enables newly established fines to be issued so that department staff may and Police must enforce provisions of the ordinance and Parks and Recreation Rules.

Article VI. Mobile Food Vendors in Designated Parks

- *Section 74-210: Mobile Food Vendors and Transient Merchants* – The proposed change removes the temporary status of this article.
- *Section 74-210(a)(ii): Mobile Food Vendors and Transient Merchants* – The proposed change adds the ability for the concessionaire to bring food carts to the three (3) ballpark facilities covered by the concessionaire agreement, and when the concessionaire chooses not to operate during an event covered by this agreement then for the concessionaire to agree that the event may bring a mobile vendor/merchant to the facility during the rental.
- *Section 74-210(b): Mobile Food Vendors and Transient Merchants* – The proposed change eliminates the designated parking spaces identified by on-site signage.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):

Date: December 9, 2024

Roll Call Number: [24-1685](#) and [24-1686](#)

Action: [Amending](#) Chapter 74 of the Municipal Code relating to Parks and Recreation. ([Council Communication No. 24-500](#)) Moved by Gatto that this ordinance be considered and given first vote for passage. Second by Coleman. Motion Carried 7-0.

- (A) [Final](#) consideration of ordinance above (waiver requested by Ben Page, Parks and Recreation Director), requires six (6) votes. Moved by Gatto that the rule requiring that an ordinance must be considered and voted on for passage at two (2) Council meetings prior to the meeting at which it is to be finally passed be suspended, that the ordinance be placed upon its final passage and that the ordinance do now pass, [16,405](#). Second by Voss. Motion Carried 7-0.

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S):

Board: Golf Advisory Committee

Date: October 16, 2025

Resolution Number: N/A

Action: Motion by Potter to approve C-Corp's proposed fee modifications as presented. Second by McCargar. Motion carried.

Board: Parks and Recreation Board

Date: November 25, 2025

Resolution Number: 25-078

Action: Motion by Davis to approve as presented. Second by Beltrame. Motion carried.

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS: NONE

For more information on this and other agenda items, please call the City Clerk's Office at 515-283-4209 or visit the Clerk's Office on the first floor of City Hall, 400 Robert D Ray Drive. Council agendas are available to the public at the City Clerk's Office on Thursday afternoon preceding Monday's Council meeting. Citizens can also request to receive meeting notices and agendas by email by calling the Clerk's Office or sending their request via email to cityclerk@dmgov.org.