



STATE OF THE PARK

Fiscal Year 2025–2026

Building a Strong Foundation for the Future

ABSTRACT

This inaugural State of the Park Report highlights the accomplishments, financial stewardship, capital improvements, and strategic initiatives of the Freeburg Recreation Park District during Fiscal Year 2025–2026. It also outlines the Board of Commissioners' long-term vision for the future of Freeburg Recreation Park through responsible planning, community partnerships, and strategic investment.

Prepared by

Board of Commissioners

Freeburg Recreation Park District

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Presented to the Residents, Businesses, and
Community Partners of Freeburg

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The following pages provide an overview of the accomplishments, initiatives, and strategic priorities that shaped Fiscal Year 2025–2026 for the Freeburg Recreation Park District.



Board of Commissioners & Staff

Fiscal Year 2025–2026

The Freeburg Recreation Park District is governed by a five-member Board of Commissioners elected to serve the residents of the district. Together with our staff and professional partners, we remain committed to responsible leadership, financial stewardship, and enhancing recreational opportunities for the Freeburg community.

Board of Commissioners

Name	Position
Dave Van Zummeren	President
Jenny Koerber	Vice President
Rick Barthel	Commissioner
Mike Nussbaumer	Commissioner
Jay Hubert	Commissioner

Administration & Professional Staff

Name	Position
Andrew Polacek	Park Administrator
Tim Donaho	Treasurer & Accountant
Paul Janssen	Secretary
Rosemarie Heidenreich Parker	Attorney

Our Commitment

The Board of Commissioners is committed to preserving and improving the Freeburg Recreation Park District through responsible leadership, sound fiscal management, long-term planning, and strong community partnerships. We believe every decision should enhance the quality of our park while ensuring they remain a valuable community asset for generations to come.

Our Vision

To preserve our traditions, responsibly improve our facilities, and thoughtfully plan while providing recreational opportunities that strengthen the Freeburg community for generations to come

Letter from the President

Dear Residents, Business Owners, Community Partners, and Friends,

Welcome to the inaugural State of the Park Report for the Freeburg Recreation Park District.

As we begin Fiscal Year 2026–2027, I am pleased to share a summary of the progress made during the past year and the vision that will guide our Park District into the future.

Over the past year, the Board of Commissioners has focused on building a stronger organizational foundation through improved governance, responsible fiscal management, long-term planning, and stronger partnerships throughout our community. While many of these accomplishments occur behind the scenes, they are essential to ensuring the Park District remains financially sound and prepared to make meaningful improvements in the years ahead.

One of our greatest priorities has been shifting our focus from simply reacting to immediate needs toward planning for the future. Through the development of a Capital Improvement Plan and the beginning stages of a comprehensive Park Master Plan, we are establishing a roadmap that will guide future Boards in making thoughtful, strategic investments throughout the park.

This report reflects our commitment to transparency and accountability. It highlights not only what has been accomplished during Fiscal Year 2025–2026, but also where we are headed as an organization. Whether it is improving facilities, strengthening community partnerships, expanding recreational opportunities, or preserving the traditions that make Freeburg special, every decision is made with the long-term benefit of our residents in mind.

None of this progress would be possible without the dedication of our fellow Board Commissioners, Park Administrator Andrew Polacek, Treasurer and Accountant Tim Donaho, Secretary Paul Janssen, Attorney Rosemarie Heidenreich Parker, our volunteers, local businesses, community organizations, and the many residents who continue to support the Park District.

On behalf of the Board of Commissioners, thank you for your continued confidence and support. We look forward to working together as we continue building a stronger park system for our community and future generations.

Respectfully,



Dave Van Zummeren
President
Freeburg Recreation Park District

By the Numbers

Fiscal Year 2025–2026

Governance

- 1 New Treasurer & Accountant
- 1 Capital Planning Consultant
- 1 Updated Board Bylaws Adopted

Capital Projects

- \$350,000 LED Athletic Lighting Project Completed
- 1 Restroom Project in Planning
- 1 Capital Improvement Plan Initiated

Community

- 2-Day Homecoming Celebration
- 1 Cardinals Care Kids Clinic
- 500 Homecoming Souvenir Cups

Looking Ahead

- 2027 Target Restroom Completion
- 5-Year Strategic Vision
- 1 Park Master Plan Under Development



Organizational Improvements

Building a Strong Foundation

During Fiscal Year 2025–2026, the Board of Commissioners focused on strengthening the organizational structure of the Freeburg Recreation Park District. These improvements were designed to increase accountability, improve financial oversight, and establish a long-term vision for future Boards.

While many of these initiatives occurred behind the scenes, they represent some of the most important accomplishments of the year.

Board Governance

The Board adopted updated Board Bylaws to modernize the governance of the Park District and establish clear procedures for meetings, officer responsibilities, committees, financial oversight, and Board operations.

These updates provide consistency, improve transparency, and create a stronger framework for future Boards.

Financial Oversight

The Board strengthened financial management by engaging **Tim Donaho** as Treasurer and Accountant.

This investment provides:

- Professional financial reporting
- Improved budget oversight
- Stronger internal financial controls
- Enhanced transparency and accountability

Sound fiscal management remains one of the Board's highest priorities as the Park District plans future capital improvements.

Long-Term Planning

Recognizing the importance of planning before building, the Board retained **Scott Dunahey of Active Connections** to begin development of the Park District's first Capital Improvement Plan.

The Capital Improvement Plan will identify facility needs, prioritize future projects, and establish recommendations that will serve as the foundation for a comprehensive Park Master Plan.

This planning process will help ensure future improvements are completed strategically, responsibly, and in a manner that best serves the community.

Looking Forward

The Board believes strong organizations are built through thoughtful planning, responsible leadership, and sound financial management. The improvements made during Fiscal Year 2025–2026 have positioned the Park District to pursue future capital projects while remaining accountable to the residents of Freeburg.

Capital Improvements

Investing in Our Parks

The Freeburg Recreation Park District continues to invest in projects that improve safety, enhance recreational opportunities, and preserve park facilities for future generations. During Fiscal Year 2025–2026, the Board focused on maintaining existing infrastructure while planning for several significant capital improvements.

LED Athletic Field Lighting

The new LED lighting project at the SISBL baseball complex represents one of the most significant investments in park infrastructure in recent years. The upgraded lighting system improves visibility, energy efficiency, and the overall experience for players, families, and visitors.

Pavilion Improvements

The Park District completed a repainting project for the park pavilions, helping preserve one of the park's most frequently used amenities. This investment improves the appearance of the facilities, extends their lifespan, and provides a more welcoming environment for family gatherings, community events, and pavilion rentals.

New Public Restroom Facility

The Board began planning for the replacement of the existing restroom facility. Throughout the year, preliminary designs were developed, construction estimates were obtained, and funding strategies were evaluated.

The Board's goal is to begin construction in late 2026, and have a new restroom facility by Spring 2027, creating a modern, durable facility that will better serve park visitors for decades to come.

Future Capital Projects

As part of the Capital Improvement Plan and future Park Master Plan, several additional projects are being evaluated, including:

- Development of a multi-purpose basketball, pickleball, and tennis court complex
- Improvements to park-owned buildings and infrastructure
- Expansion of the park security camera system
- Trail maintenance and accessibility improvements
- Continued Park beautification and landscaping
- Baseball field improvements, including the addition of topsoil (Turface) to improve field conditions and playability
- Replacement and maintenance of park equipment as needed

Planning for the Future

Every capital project is evaluated with a focus on long-term durability, fiscal responsibility, and community benefit. The Board remains committed to making thoughtful investments that enhance the Park District while protecting taxpayer resources.

Homecoming & Community Partnerships

Freeburg Homecoming 2026

For generations, the Freeburg Homecoming has brought together residents, businesses, volunteers, and visitors to celebrate our community. Hosted by the Freeburg Recreation Park District, Homecoming remains one of the community's signature annual events and serves as an important tradition for families of all ages.

The 2026 celebration continues that tradition while introducing exciting new attractions and expanded entertainment.

2026 Event Highlights

- **Friday & Saturday, August 14–15, 2026**
- **Fredbird** serving as Parade Grand Marshal
- **Arch Rival Roller Derby Girls** featured in the parade
- Live music both evenings featuring **Klose Kuarters, Alex Thomure, and Ian Ferguson**
- Carnival rides throughout the weekend
- Community parade featuring local organizations and marching bands
- Classic Car Show
- Cornhole Tournament
- Pedal Pull Contest
- Fireworks finale celebrating **America's 250th Anniversary**
- Expanded sponsorship opportunities and commemorative Homecoming cups

Community Partnerships

The success of Homecoming would not be possible without the support of our volunteers, local businesses, sponsors, community organizations, the Village of Freeburg, public safety agencies, and countless individuals who dedicate their time to making this tradition possible.

Together, these partnerships continue to strengthen our community while creating lasting memories for residents and visitors alike.

Financial Stewardship

Responsible Planning. Responsible Spending.

The Freeburg Recreation Park District is committed to managing public resources with transparency, accountability, and long-term responsibility. Every financial decision is made with the goal of maximizing value for taxpayers while preserving and improving our parks.

Our Commitment

During Fiscal Year 2025–2026, the Board remained focused on:

- Maintaining responsible budgets and financial oversight.
- Seeking competitive pricing for major capital projects.
- Pursuing grants, sponsorships, and community partnerships whenever possible.
- Planning future improvements before construction begins.
- Investing in projects that provide long-term value to the community.

Financial Priorities

- Maintain responsible budgets
- Seek competitive bids
- Pursue grants and sponsorships
- Plan before building
- Protect taxpayer investments

Planning for Tomorrow

As the Park District prepares for future capital improvements, the Board continues evaluating funding options that balance community needs with responsible fiscal management. Through careful planning and sound financial practices, we remain committed to protecting taxpayer resources while investing in the future of Freeburg Recreation Park.

Building Tomorrow's Park

The accomplishments highlighted throughout this report represent more than a successful year—they represent the beginning of a long-term commitment to the future of the Freeburg Recreation Park District.

Our vision extends beyond individual projects. We envision a park that continues to serve as the heart of our community, a place where families gather, children play, athletes compete, neighbors celebrate, and traditions continue for generations to come.

Over the next five years, the Board of Commissioners will continue focusing on responsible financial stewardship, thoughtful planning, and strategic investments that improve the quality of our parks while preserving the traditions that make them special.

Future Priorities

- Construct a new public restroom facility
- Develop a multi-purpose basketball, pickleball, and tennis court complex
- Expand the park security camera system
- Continue trail improvements and park beautification
- Improve park-owned buildings and infrastructure
- Enhance athletic fields and recreational amenities
- Expand community events and sponsorship opportunities
- Maintain responsible fiscal stewardship

Our Commitment

Every decision made by the Board of Commissioners will continue to be guided by four principles:

- **Preserve:** Protect the traditions, natural beauty, and facilities that make Freeburg Recreation Park unique.
- **Improve:** Invest responsibly in projects that enhance recreation and strengthen our community.
- **Plan:** Develop a long-term vision that connects future improvements into one cohesive park system.
- **Serve:** Remain accountable to the residents, businesses, volunteers, and visitors who make our Park District successful.

Looking Ahead

The future of the Freeburg Recreation Park District will not be built in a single year. It will be built through consistent leadership, thoughtful planning, and the continued support of our community. As we continue implementing our Capital Improvement Plan and developing a comprehensive Park Master Plan, every project will be evaluated with one goal in mind: creating a park system that serves today's residents while preparing for future generations.

On behalf of the Board of Commissioners, thank you for your trust, your partnership, and your continued support as we work together to build a stronger future for Freeburg Recreation Park.

"The greatest success of any Board is not measured by what it completes during its own term, but by the foundation it leaves for those who follow."