THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE

MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council

FROM: DK Wesley, City Manager

DATE: June 2, 2026

SUBJECT: Strategic Framework for Community Center Hours Reduction

This memo is in response to a request at the May 26th City Council meeting during the FY2027 Proposed budget hearing for additional information related to the reduction of community center hours. Below please find a brief summary of how the proposed hours were determined as well as continued efforts to meet community needs.

A primary objective of this budget process is to achieve structural balance—ensuring that recurring revenues consistently equal or exceed recurring expenditures. Maintaining this objective necessitated the identification of service reductions across the organization, including adjusting community center operating hours to align with previous service levels.

Asheville Parks & Recreation (APR) community centers, and the dedicated team members who manage them, are vital assets to our city. With eight fully staffed and programmed centers, we offer over 100 weekly programs, in addition to rental space for partner groups and residents hosting events.

To realize the required savings, we focused on reducing operating hours during historically lower-traffic periods. This approach yields a two-fold financial benefit: reducing contract security costs and lowering expenditures on temporary seasonal staff who typically cover night and weekend shifts. It is important to note that all community centers are included in the proposed operating schedule. The reduction averages 7.75 hours per week, primarily occurring on weekdays, with total reductions ranging from 6 to 10 hours per location. The new operating hours are scheduled to begin on Saturday, August 29, 2026.

Staff is also collecting information to evaluate the overall impact to the utilization. This will be determined by evaluating the total number of participants that are impacted by the change in the hours of operation. Realizing savings is the primary objective of reducing center hours. Staff is committed to achieve the savings that have been proposed by modifying the operating hours across all of the centers.

Staff is also committed to continue working with user groups to ensure that centers are accessible for their activities and that the least amount of disruption will occur. These continued activities will include using user data to inform operating hour adjustments. At this time, none of the suggested operating hour adjustments are final.

Key details regarding new hours:

- **Updated Schedules:** Operating hours will be location-specific, meaning a center in one neighborhood may open earlier or close later than another.
- **Accommodations:** Adjustments to schedules and locations have been made to allow most existing programs and partners to maintain current service levels with minimal disruption.
- **Flexibility:** If a center's proposed new hours do not meet a current partner group's needs, center managers are working diligently to find alternative space and availability for scheduling groups.