

Independence Park Commission



39th Parks & Recreation Sales Tax Program Report
April 18, 2022

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Executive Summary

The Independence Park Commission was established by Ordinance in 1999. The Commission's primary mission is to act in an advisory capacity to the City Council relating to public education, use, and knowledge regarding Parks and Recreation activities. The Commission also serves as the official Parks and Recreation Sales Tax Oversight Committee.

It is the opinion of the members of the Independence Park Commission that the activities, initiatives, and projects funded by the Parks Improvement Sales Tax are in keeping with the program's intent, and that the program is critical in supporting the work of the Department to enhance the quality of life in Independence.



Sales Tax Review

The current Parks Improvement Sales Tax (PRST) was renewed in perpetuity in August of 2010. This tax is estimated to generate approximately \$4.3 million this fiscal year and is dedicated to fund on-going parks maintenance, certain facility operations, recreation programming and various parks and recreation related capital projects. Through March 31, 2022, the tax has generated \$3,531,528, or 80.5%, of the PRST revenue anticipated for this entire Fiscal Year.

Current Commissioners

The Park Commission is comprised of seven voting members appointed by the City Council. Current members of the Park Commission include Gail Price – Chair, Ira Anders, Kay Douglas, Jana Evans, and Paula Martin, with two vacancies.

Current Project Status

Both falls at Waterfall Park required significant repairs. The pipe behind the large fall had separated. A contractor was hired to move the large stone, dig down to the pipe, repair the damaged section and restore the area. The smaller fall required similar work. Both are operational again. Asphalt repair work on Waterfall Trail and by the new bridge on Mill Creek Trail will occur when weather permits.



Park Revitalization Program

The Park Revitalization program is an on-going effort that addresses routine needs such as replacing park benches and trash receptacles, repairing damaged playground equipment, repairing mechanical systems, replenishing playground safety surfaces, and repairs to trails, parking lots, and concrete surfaces. Park staff addresses these needs continuously to ensure that facilities are kept in working order throughout the year.

At Sermon Center, masonry repair work has been completed on the north wall of the east parking lot. The leaking roof has been fixed and a new sky light installed over the gymnasium at Palmer Senior Center. City crews completed asphalt overlay repairs on the trails at George Owens Nature Park before Enchanted Forest. Irrigation lines at the Athletic Complex have been replaced.

Staff is in the process of obtaining bids for repairs to the concrete patio at Hiram Young Park. Work will begin in the next few weeks.

Park Maintenance crews installed bollards on the new bridge in Mill Creek Park and have been replacing picnic tables and trash cans where needed in all the parks. Unhoused camps are cleared out as necessary.



Park Maintenance Operations

Routine maintenance and operations transitioned from mowing through November, to snow removal, and back to mowing in March. Throughout all the parks, trees have been trimmed, canopies were raised and some were removed due to disease or storm damage. Crews planted evergreens at the Vaile Mansion and natives at National Frontier Trails Museum.

Graffiti and vandalism work orders are addressed as necessary. Signs were installed in parks to notify the unhoused when clean-ups will take place.

Park maintenance crews built and installed a “pumpkin tree” at the Uptown Market for the fall season. It was re-decorated and used again during the numerous Christmas festivities. Staff also cut, moved, re-installed, and hung lights on four large evergreen trees at the Independence Utilities Center, Independence Uptown Market, Englewood, and Cable-Dahmer Arena. Maintenance crews installed exterior lights and decorations at the City’s historic sites and the Uptown Market.

In March staff began the process of re-opening Adventure Oasis and the splash pads at McCoy and Rotary parks.



Recreation Programming & Operations

Recreation Programming & Operations are returning to normal following Covid guidelines. Recreation staff continue to work diligently to provide high-quality programming and maintain operations while adhering to proper safety protocols for patrons, participants, and staff.

Palmer Senior Center

- Home Delivered Meal Program – From October 2021 through March 2022, staff delivered a total of 6,420 meals and served 4,378 meals on-site
- Wellness Phone Calls – Staff and volunteers made 2,026 Wellness Check phone calls
- Fitness Classes – 1,984 seniors participated in Silver Sneakers or Renew Active programs.
- Programs – 6,561 seniors used the computer lab, game room and gymnasium
- Special Activities – Halloween Party, Veteran Recognition, Thanksgiving Luncheon, Christmas Celebration, Pinecone Christmas Ornaments (with George Owens Nature Park), Covid Vaccination Clinic, Snowballs and More, Valentine's Day Party, St. Patrick's Day Celebration with Independence Police K-9 Presentation
- Day Trips resumed with 40 patrons visiting the New Theatre Restaurant in February



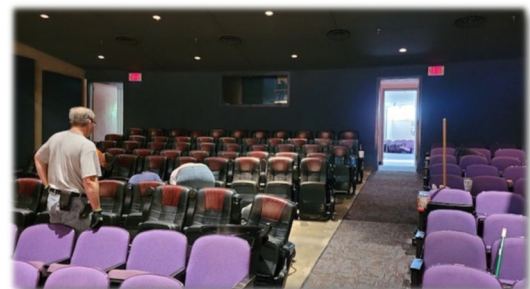
Truman Memorial Building

- Programs: Emergency Preparedness Training, Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration, Independence Firefighter physical assessments
- Rentals: Living Church of God – 18 services, Spirit of Independence Band – 9 rehearsals & 1 concert
- Meetings: City of Independence Values Program, Sustainability Commission, Queen City & IGSA pre-season meetings
- Fitness Classes: TRX Boot Camp – 325 participants, Silver Sneakers – 220 participants
- Table Tennis Club: 776 participants
- Bridge & Duplicate Bridge – 531 participants



Roger T. Sermon Community Center

- Fitness Classes - 2 new classes began in 2022 for a total of 22 classes each week
Over 3000 participants from October through March
- Rentals – 83 private and city rentals from October through March
- Warming Center – 299 people served over 19 days
226 hotel vouchers provided in partnership with Community Services League (CSL)
- Best Little Arts & Crafts Show – 100+ vendors and nearly 1000 shoppers
- Powerhouse Theatre - New theatre seats on main floor and balcony installed by members of the theatre groups & Powerhouse Theatre Foundation who helped fund the project
- Encore Theatre – “Let Him Sleep ‘Til It’s Time for His Funeral in October
- City Theatre of Independence – “The Outgoing Tide” in November
“Over the River & Through the Woods” in January
- Children’s Performing Theatre – “Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, Jr.” in December
“The Enchanted Bookshop” in February & March



Independence Uptown Market

- Independence Police Dept. Trunk or Treat
- Uptown Hoedown
- Mayor's Prayer Breakfast
- Santa's Holiday X-Press at the Uptown Market
- Uptown Holiday Market
- Community Services League Christmas Store
- Mayor's State of the City Address
- Winter Clothing Donation Drive for Community Services League



Wellness, Sports, Aquatics, Inclusion

- Sports – 42 individual game/tournament field & tennis court reservations
41 individual practice field & tennis court reservations
- Community Garden – All garden beds were fully utilized through October. Some gardeners decide to continue with winter gardens through December. Registrations for the 2022 season began in March with most of the beds rented. Park Maintenance crews mowed the grounds around the beds.
- Farmers Market: Every Wednesday and Saturday through October with 35 – 45 produce, meat, bakery, and craft vendors. The market offers an EBT snap tokens program and served approximately 750 patrons each week.
- Winter Farmers Market: First Saturday of each month December through April with about 20 vendors and an average of 250 patrons at each event.
- Homeschool Recreation Program – 66 individual visits, 23 families

George Owens Nature Park & Family Programs

- Attendance – 5,194 visitors (DeWitt Hall, fishing, hiking)
- On Site Programs – 2,139 participants (Enchanted Forest, Pumpkin Painting for CSL, Winter Solstice Torch-Lit Hike, Bugs, Master Naturalist, Native Pottery, Winter Seeding, Pickup Chess, Herp Days, Walking Club)
- Off Site Programs – 1,142 participants (Hill Park Skate Event with Human Relations Committee, Holiday Square Lighting, Fairmount Block Party Christmas Ornaments, Palmer Center Christmas Ornaments, Pickup Chess at IUM, Walking Club at Clothier Park)
- Volunteer Service: 574 hours (Rebuilt bridge to Lake Lorraine, collected native seeds, mulched trails, replaced benches along trails, removed invasive plants, painted landscape mural, gardened)
- Eagle Scout Projects – Designed, built, and installed bridge over stream crossing, cleared and removed brush from Lookout Trail
- Trail Signage – Phase 1 of new trail signs installed



In Closing

It is the opinion of the Park Commission that the activities, initiatives, and projects supported by the Parks Improvement Sales Tax are in keeping with the program's intent, and that the work of the Parks|Recreation|Tourism Department continues to enhance the quality of life in Independence.

The members of the Independence Park Commission, on behalf of the residents of Independence, express our gratitude and appreciation to the Mayor and City Council for their continued support of providing the best possible parks, recreation facilities, and programs for the residents of Independence.



INDEPENDENCE
★PARKS★RECREATION★TOURISM★