



CITY COUNCIL Study Session

September 8, 2025

6:00 PM, Council Chambers - 111 E. Maple Ave.

To view a Council meeting agenda, visit <https://independencemo.portal.civicclerk.com/> and select 'Most Recent Council Agenda'.

COUNCIL SPONSORED ITEMS

1. A resolution directing the City Manager to verify business license compliance within proposed economic development incentive districts. (*Sponsored by Councilmember Stewart*)

CITIZEN REQUESTS

1. Citizen Requests - Per Council Rules, Sec. 6.4 only "Council Sponsored Items" are eligible.

PRESENTATIONS

1. Parks Master Plan Update
2. Housing Authority Overview

INFORMATION ONLY

1. Boards and Commissions Report
2. **Please Note:** In accordance with RSMo. 610.021, the City Council may convene in a Closed Executive Session during or after the meeting, on matters of litigation, legal action, and/or attorney client communications, as permitted by Sec. 610.021(1), on matters of personnel, as permitted by Sec. 610.021(3) and personnel records, as permitted by 610.021(13), on matters of contracts, as permitted by 610.021(12), on matters of real estate, as permitted by 610.021(2) and/or matters of labor negotiations, as permitted by 610.021(9).

BILL NO. _____

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE CITY MANAGER TO VERIFY BUSINESS LICENSE COMPLIANCE WITHIN PROPOSED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVE DISTRICTS

(Sponsored by Councilmember Brice Stewart)

WHEREAS, the City of Independence recognizes the importance of economic development incentive districts—such as Tax Increment Financing (TIF), Community Improvement Districts (CID), Transportation Development Districts (TDD), Chapter 100 bonds, and Chapter 353 redevelopment plans—in stimulating investment, job creation, and community revitalization; and

WHEREAS, the City Council is committed to ensuring that businesses benefiting from, or located within, such incentive districts comply with applicable City laws and regulations; and

WHEREAS, holding a current and valid business license with the City of Independence is a basic requirement of doing business and ensures fairness, accountability, and revenue necessary to support vital City services; and

WHEREAS, verification of business license compliance prior to approving or implementing an economic development incentive district promotes transparency, equity, and public trust in the City's economic development practices;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. That the City Manager is hereby directed to verify that all businesses located within the boundaries of any proposed Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District, Community Improvement District (CID), Transportation Development District (TDD), Chapter 100 bond project, or Chapter 353 redevelopment area possess a current and valid business license with the City of Independence prior to final consideration or approval of such districts or projects by the City Council.

SECTION 2. That the City Manager shall provide the City Council with a written certification of business license compliance as part of the review process for any proposed economic development incentive district.

PASSED THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2025, BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI.

Presiding Officer of the City Council
of the City of Independence, Missouri

ATTEST:

City Clerk

APPROVED - FORM AND LEGALITY:

REVIEWED BY:

City Counselor

City Manager



INDEPENDENCE
★ MISSOURI ★



Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update 09.08.25

Project Team



Project Lead

- Community Engagement
- Demographics & Recreation Trends
- Benchmark Analysis
- Level of Service
- Recreation Program Analysis
- Operational and Maintenance Review
- Funding Strategies
- Action Plan



Project Sub

- Historic Facility Management Plan



Project Sub

- Statistically valid community survey



Project Sub

- Parks and Open Space Existing Conditions
- Site Concepts
- Park Classifications and Level of Service Standards



Where Are We Today?

- Site and facility review
- Levels of service standards
- GIS mapping
- Benchmarking
- Recreation program review

Where Are We Going Tomorrow?

- Community engagement needs analysis
- Community survey
- Demographics & recreation trends analysis review

How Do We Get There?

- Needs prioritization
- Capital development planning
- Financial planning
- Funding and revenue planning
- Strategic action plan implementation

Demographics & Recreation Trends

Population

- Population increases to 125,841 by 2033 (.59% increase)



Age Segments

- Ages 55-75+ is 37% of population by 2033
- Ages 18-34 decreases 3% by 2033



Race

- White Alone: decreases 6% over the next 8 years
- Two or More Races increases 16% of the population by 2033 (5% increase)

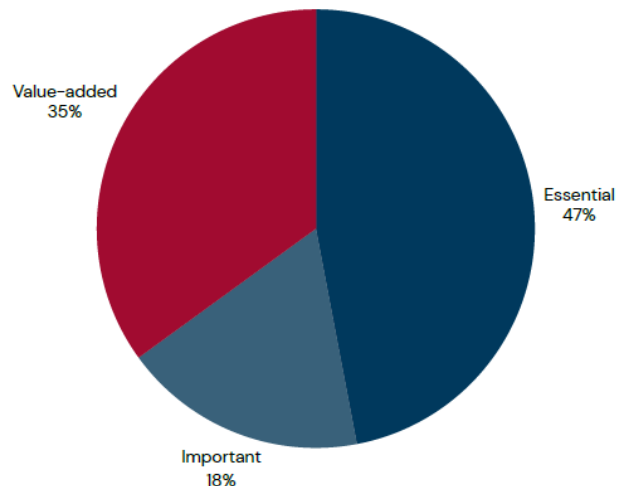
Local Trends

- Canoeing/Kayaking, Fishing, and E-Gaming show market potential above national averages



RECREATION PROGRAM ASSESSMENT SNAPSHOT

The program assessment reviews existing recreation programs, finds service gaps, and offers clear strategies to enhance activities and events.



PROGRAM CLASSIFICATION

Program classifications identify how each program aligns with the mission, goals, and objectives as well as how each program is funded.

CORE PROGRAM AREAS

Core program areas are recommended to assist staff, policy makers, and the public in focusing on what is most important to the community to prioritize funding, staffing, and programming accordingly.

Arts & Culture	Continued Education & Life Skills	Facility Rentals
Nature	Senior Programs	Special Events
Sports & Wellness		

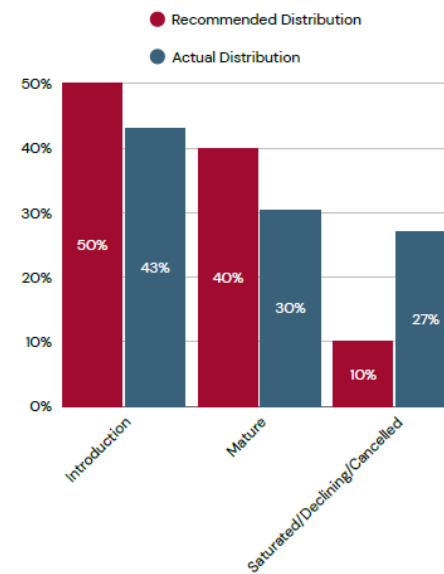


AGES SERVED

Independence currently serves all ages with programming. Opportunities exist to expand programs for teens and adult aged groups.

PROGRAM LIFECYCLES

Program lifecycles should be analyzed to ensure a balanced program mix of new and aging programs.

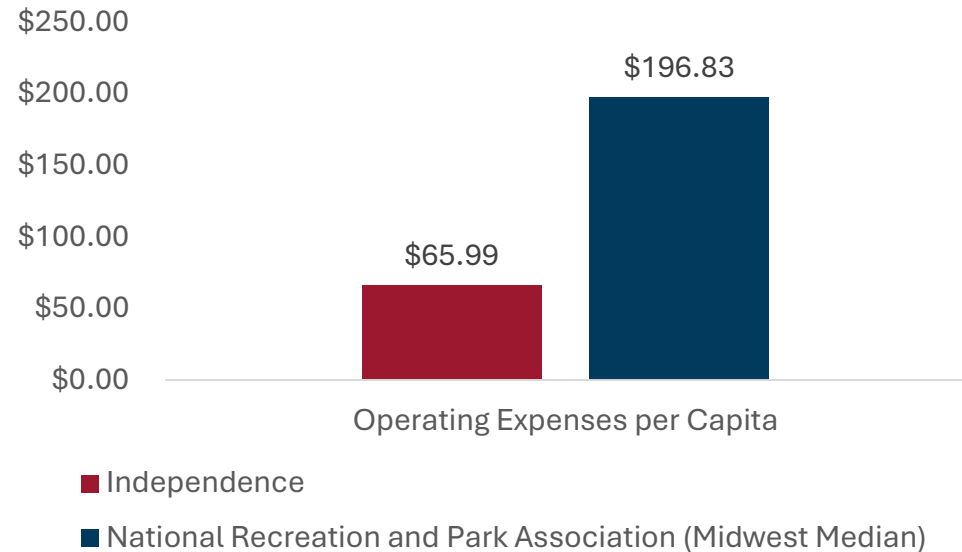


Financial Benchmarks – Operating Expenses

Operating Expenses

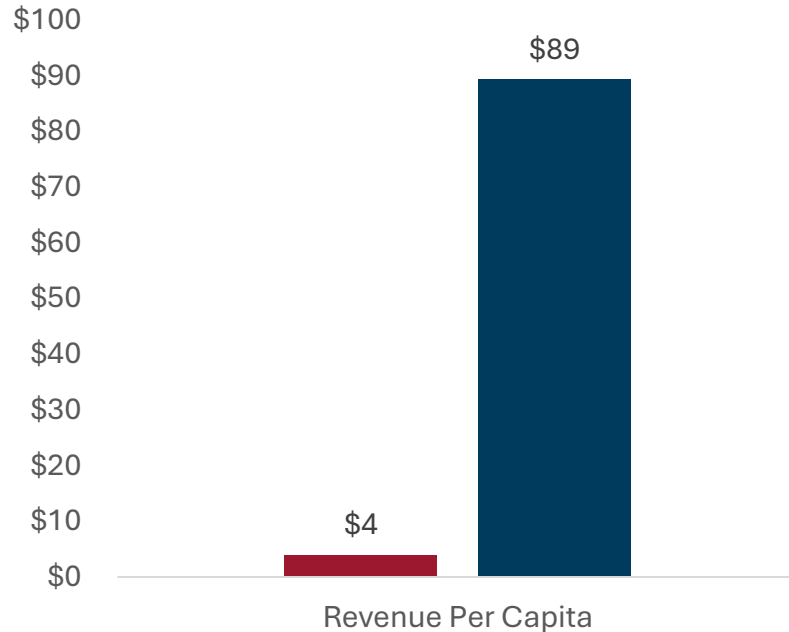


Operating Expenses Per Capita



Financial Benchmarks - Revenue

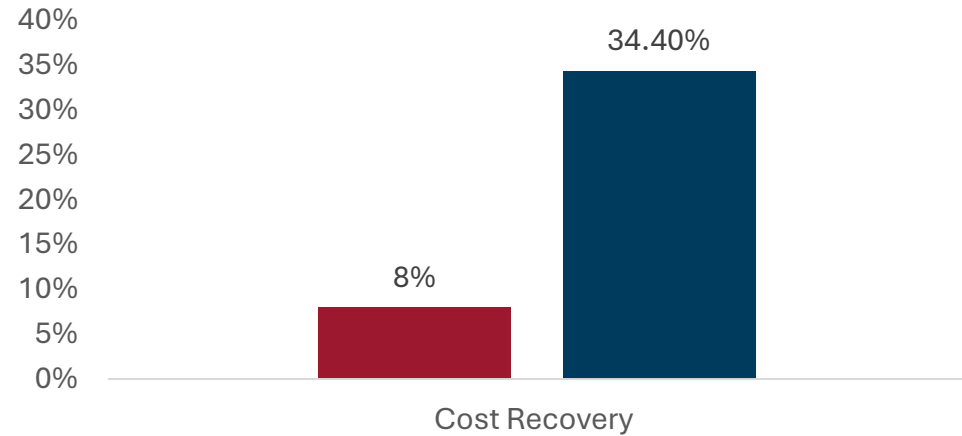
Revenue Per Capita



■ Independence

■ National Recreation and Park Association
(Midwest Median)

Cost Recovery with Earned Revenue

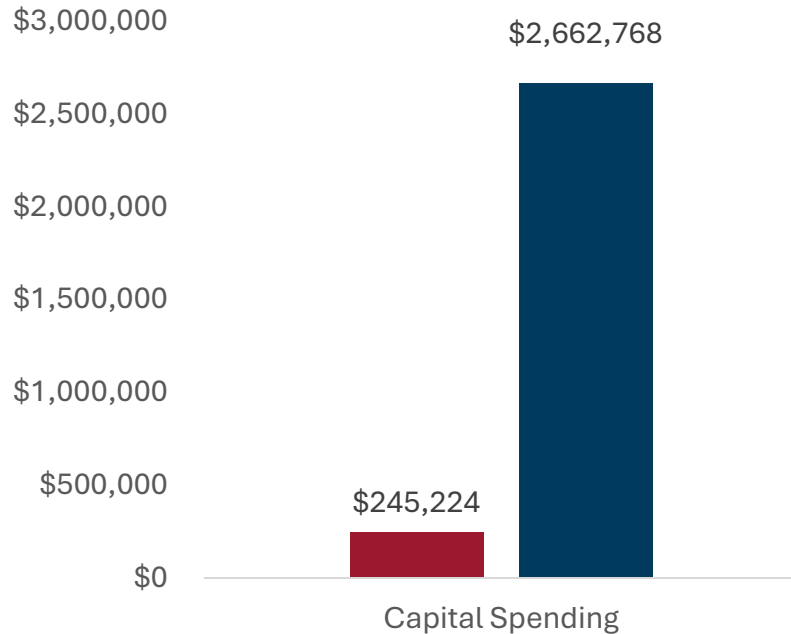


■ Independence

■ National Recreation and Park Association (Midwest Median)

Financial Benchmarks – Capital & FTE

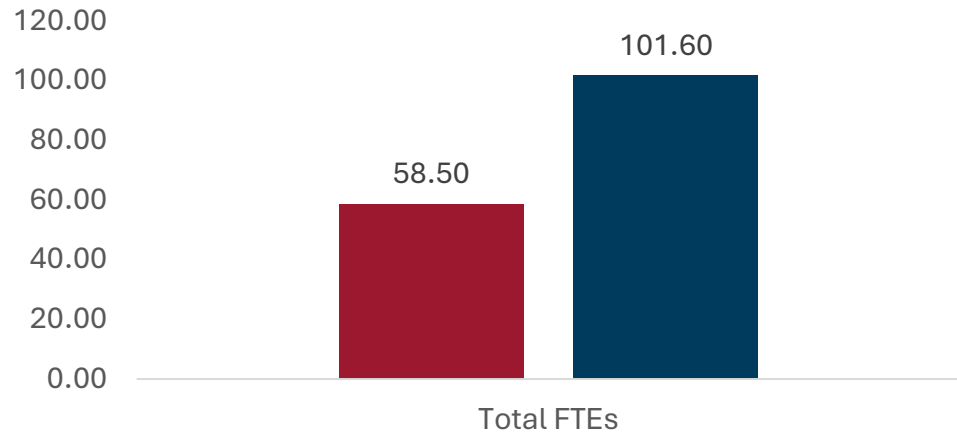
Capital Spending



■ Independence

■ National Recreation and Park Association
(Midwest Median)

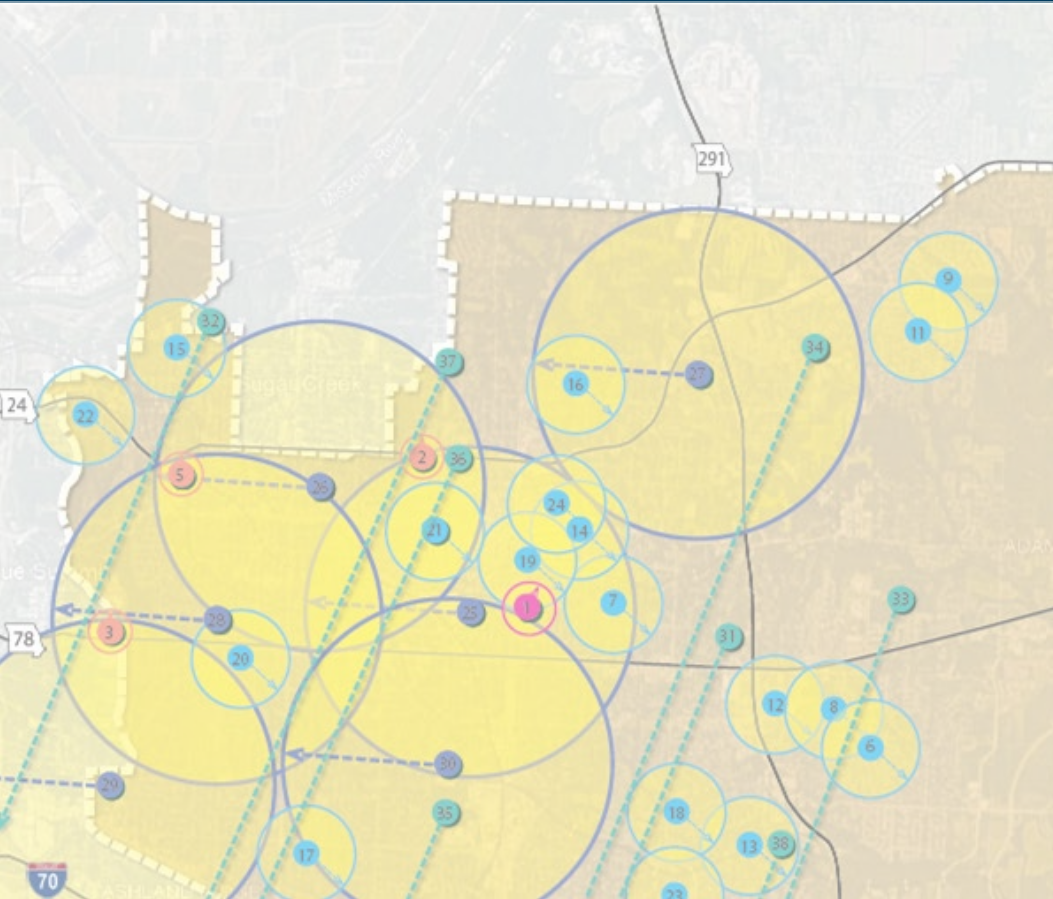
Total Full Time Equivalents



■ Independence

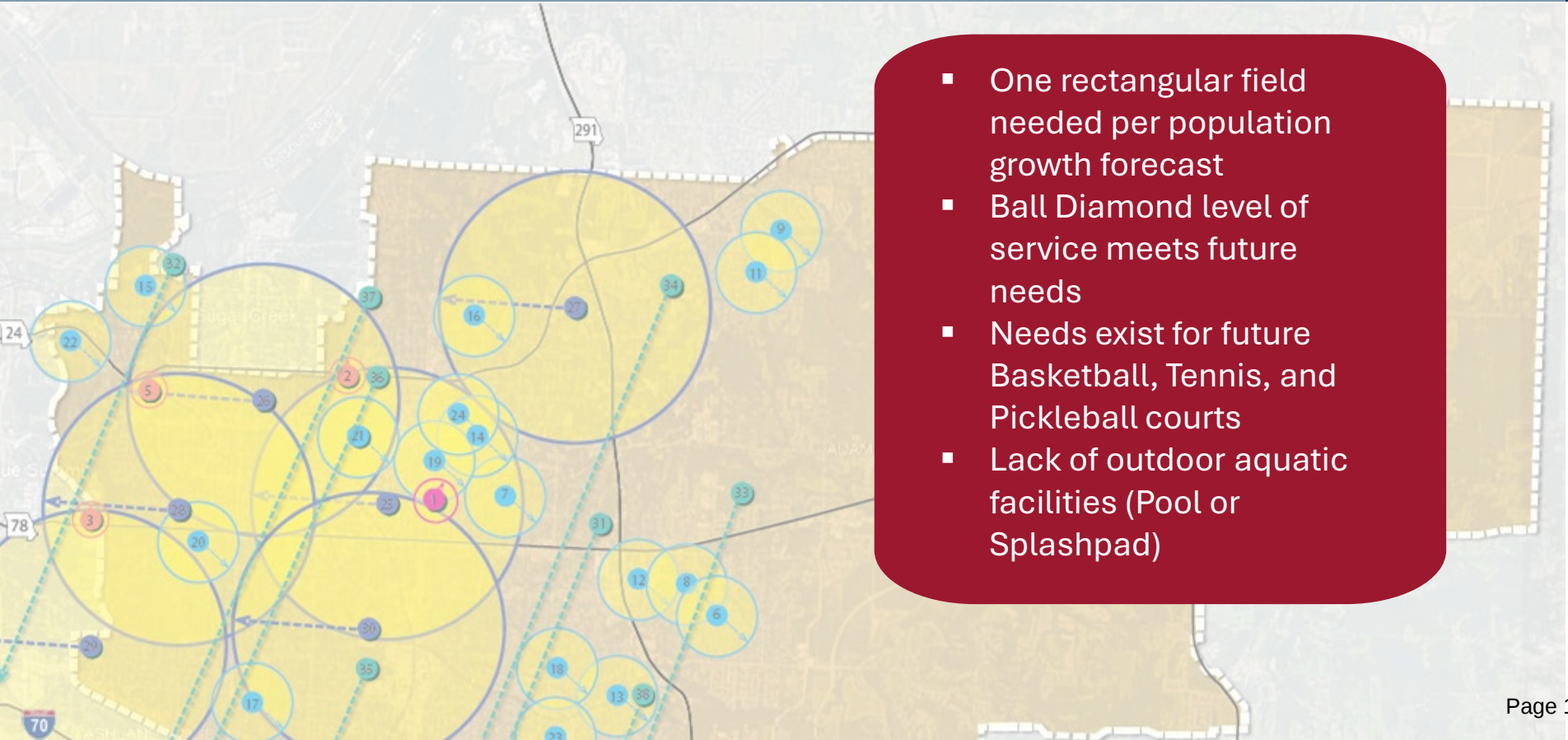
■ National Recreation and Park Association (Midwest Median)

Level of Service



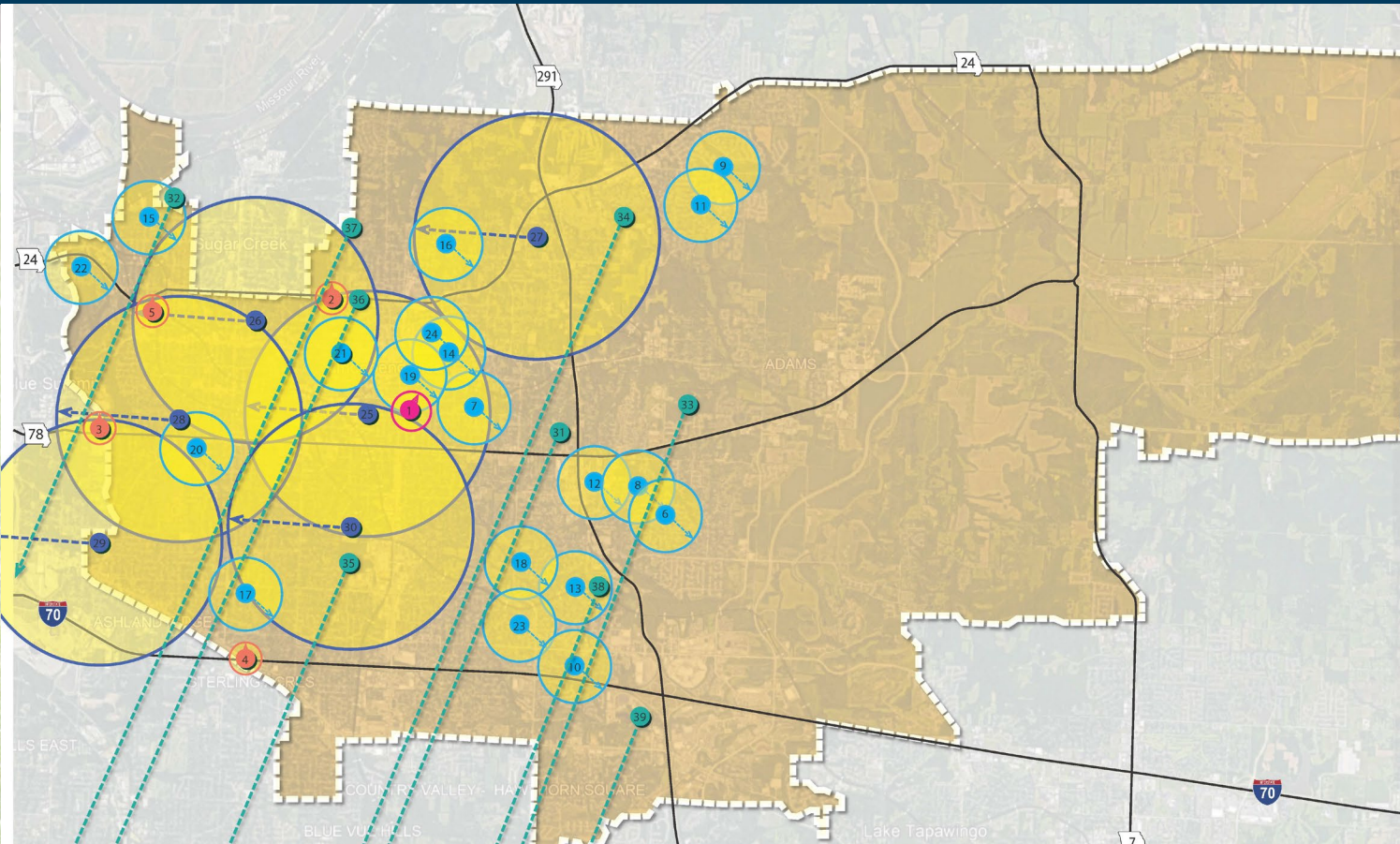
- High concentration of parks in western part of City
- Current developed park acreage (6.41 acres per 1000 people) falls below national benchmarks (12.8 acres per 1000 people in Midwest)
- Needs exist for neighborhood, community, and regional parkland
- Current trail mileage (34.92) is above national benchmarks (29)

Level of Service



- One rectangular field needed per population growth forecast
- Ball Diamond level of service meets future needs
- Needs exist for future Basketball, Tennis, and Pickleball courts
- Lack of outdoor aquatic facilities (Pool or Splashpad)

Level of Service



LEGEND

-  Pocket Parks
-  Neighborhood Parks
-  Regional Parks
-  Community Parks
-  Cemeteries

LOW HIGH Levels of Service

CEMETERIES

1. WOODLAWN CEMETERY

POCKET PARKS

2. BRADY PARK
3. CHARLES LONG PARK
4. HIGH RIDGE GREENSPACE
5. OVERTON PARK

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

6. BECKETT PARK
7. BENTON PARK
8. BLACKBURN SCHOOL PARK
9. BUND-JACK PARK
10. CARRIAGE HILL PARK
11. CLER-MONT SCHOOL PARK
12. CLOTHIER PARK
13. CRACKERNECK PARK
14. CURTIS GREENSPACE
15. DAVIS PARK
16. DICKINSON PARK
17. FIREHOUSE PARK
18. GLENDALE PARK
19. HIRAM YOUNG PARK
20. ROTARY PARK
21. POLLY'S POP PARK
22. ST. CLAIR PARK
23. SYCAMORE HILLS PARK
24. YOUNG PARK

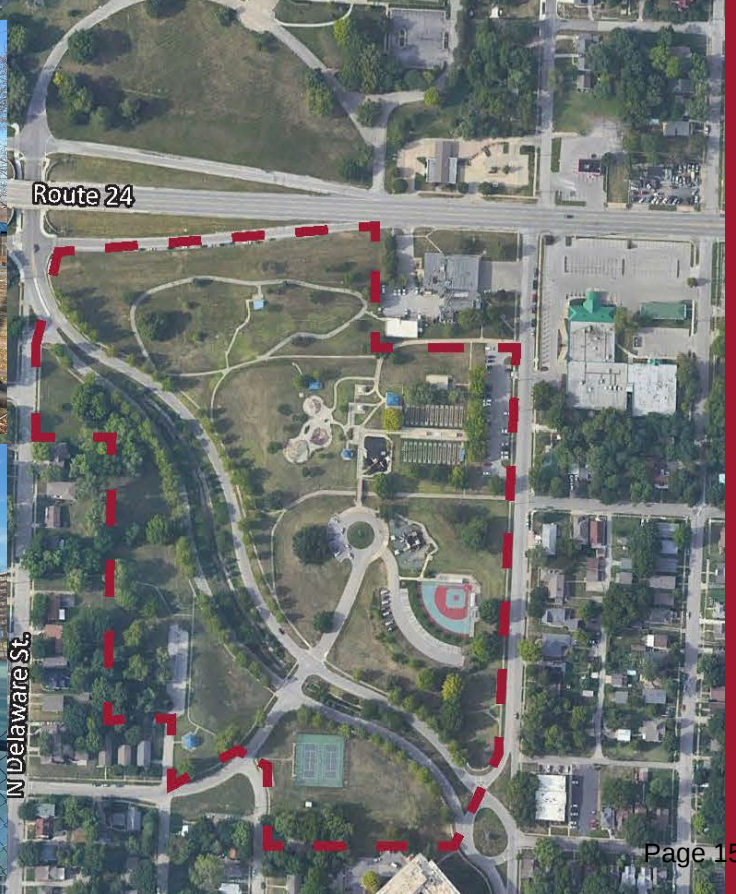
COMMUNITY PARKS

25. BINGHAM-WAGGONE ESTATE PARK
26. BUNDSCHU PARK
27. CHOPLIN HOOD PARK
28. HILL PARK
29. PHIL ROBERTS PARK
30. SANTA FE PARK

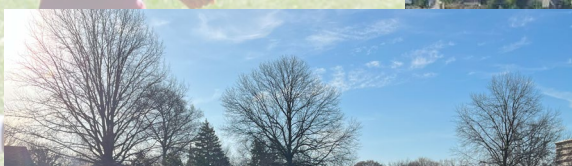
REGIONAL PARKS

31. ADVENTURE OASIS WATERPARK
32. FAIRMOUNT PARK
33. GEORGE OWENS PARK
34. INDEPENDENCE ATHLETICS COMPLEX
35. LIPTON CONSERVATION AREA
36. MCCOY PARK
37. MILL CREEK PARK
38. VAN HOOK PARK
39. WATERFALL PARK

McCoy Park



McCoy Park



BBQ Grills 0 (Good Condition)
Picnic Shelters + (Excellent Condition)
Picnic Tables + (Excellent Condition)
2-Inclusive Playgrounds + (Excellent Condition)
1-Inclusive Play-field + (Excellent Condition)

Restrooms 0 (Good Condition)
Signage 0 (Good Condition)
Walking Path 0 (Good Condition)
Grills 0 (Good Condition)
Splash Pad - (Needs Improvement)
Pickleball/Tennis Courts 0 (Good Condition)
Horseshoes 0 Good Condition

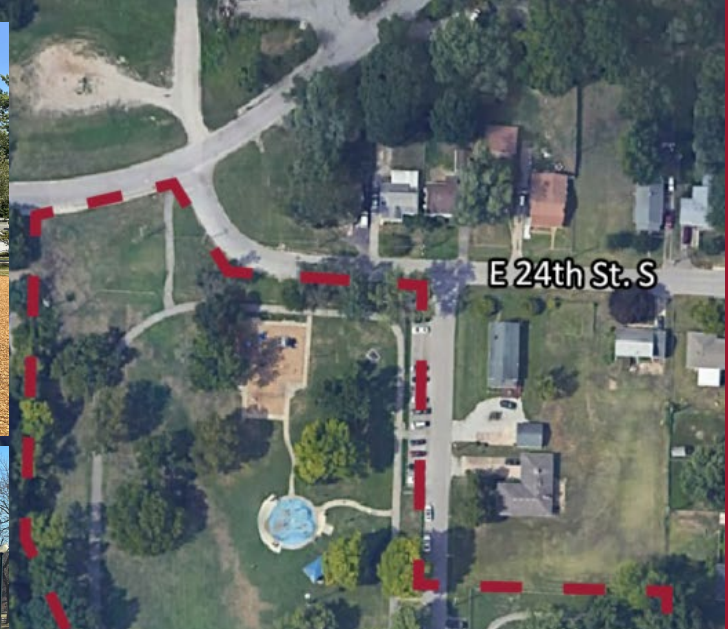
Rating Key

+ Excellent Condition
0 Good Condition
- Needs Improvement

Rotary Park



Rotary Park



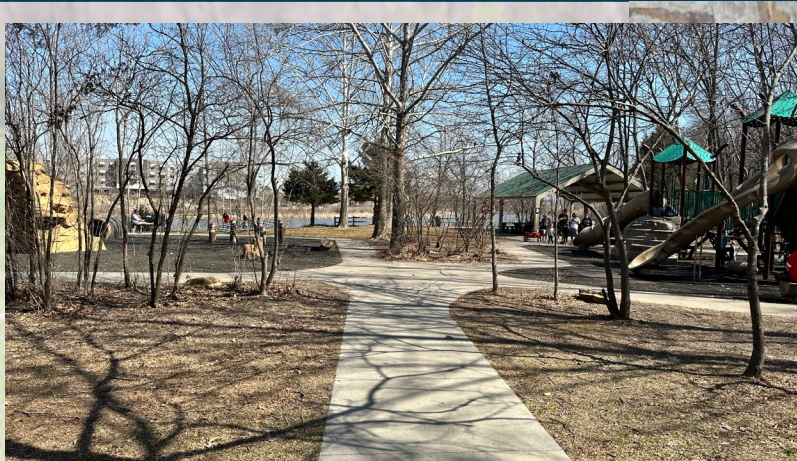
Picnic Shelters 0 (Good Condition)
Picnic Tables 0 (Good Condition)
Playground + (Excellent Condition)
Restrooms 0 (Good Condition)
Signage 0 (Good Condition)
Walking Path - (Needs Improvement)

Splash Pad - (Needs Improvement)
Outdoor Exercise Equipment +
(Excellent Condition)
Grill + (Excellent Condition)

Rating Key

+ Excellent Condition
0 Good Condition
- Needs Improvement

Waterfall Park



Waterfall Park



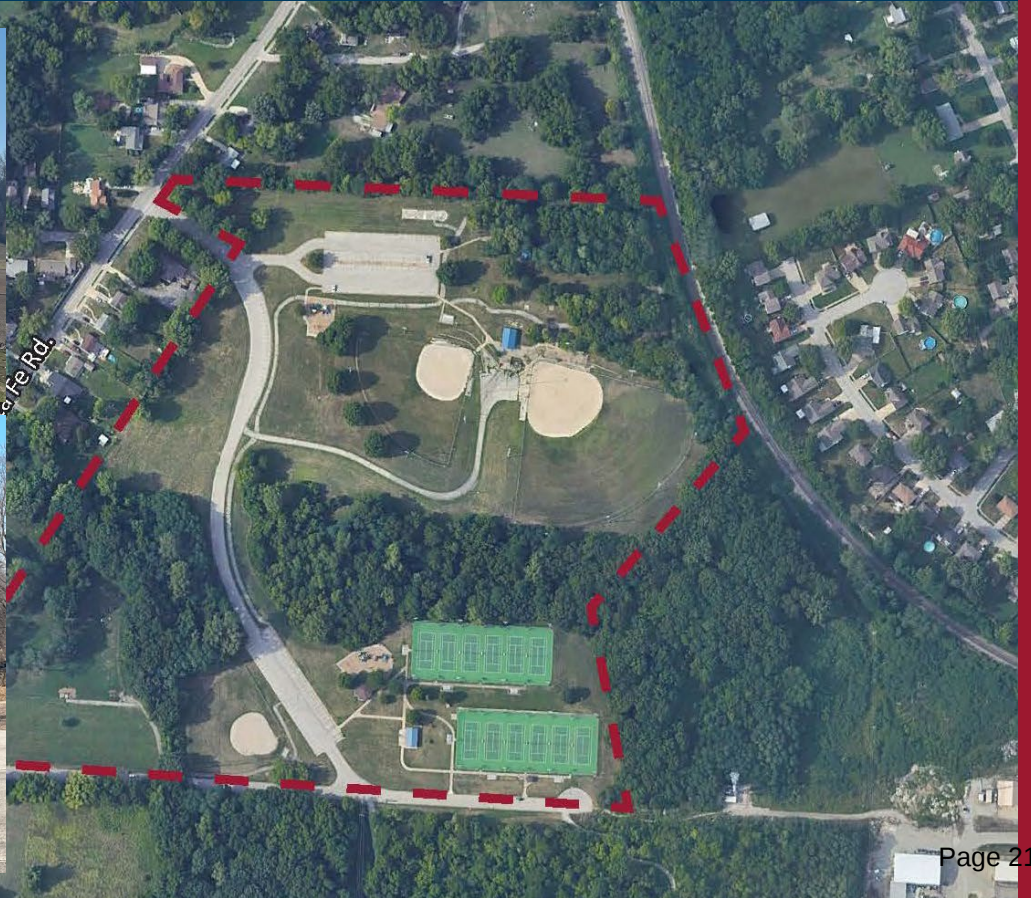
Picnic Shelters 0 (Good Condition)
Picnic Tables 0 (Good Condition)
Playgrounds + (Excellent Condition)
Restrooms 0 (Good Condition)
Signage 0 (Good Condition)
Walking Path 0 (Good Condition)

Cornhole 0 (Good Condition)
Grill 0 (Good Condition)
Fishing Pier - (Needs Improvement)

Rating Key

+ Excellent Condition
0 Good Condition
- Needs Improvement

Santa Fe Trail Park



Santa Fe Trail Park



Tennis Court 0 (Good Condition)
BBQ Grills - (Needs Improvement)
Picnic Shelters 0 (Good Condition)
Picnic Tables 0 (Good Condition)
Playground 1 (Baseball) 0 (Good Condition)
Playground 2 (Tennis) -
(Needs Improvement)

Restrooms -
(Needs Improvement)
Signage 0 (Good Condition)
Walking Path 0 (Good Condition)
Dog Park 0 (Good Condition)
Skate Park 0 (Good Condition)

Rating Key

+ Excellent Condition
0 Good Condition
- Needs Improvement

Historic Facility Management Plan



Goal:

Ensure the long-term sustainability of these nine historic sites as community assets

Understand Operations

- Review costs, revenues, visitor stats, and volunteer/staff perspectives



Assess Facilities

- Location and infrastructure assets
- Maintenance needs, repairs, and capital improvements



Plan for the Future

- Develop funding strategies and explore ownership/management structures

Deliverable:

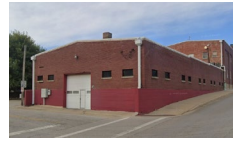
A Strategic Management Plan that stands alone *and* integrates into the Parks & Recreation Master Plan

Site Locations

**National Frontier
Trails Museum**



**76 Fire Co Museum
(Old Fire Station 1)**



**Chicago & Alton
Train Depot**



**1827 Log Cabin
Courthouse**



**Bingham-Waggoner
Estate**



**Missouri Model
Railroad Museum**



**Pioneer Spring
Cabin**



Vaile Mansion



Truman Depot



Sites at a Glance

Site	2024 Visitation	Maintenance and Repairs Costs	Strategic Implications
Chicago & Alton Train Depot	1,862	N/A	- Underutilized asset - Needs integration with nearby sites and business models to increase revenue
Missouri Model Railroad Museum	1,681	\$2,672,565	- Deferred maintenance a significant risk - Manage volunteer reliability for long-term sustainability
National Frontier Trails Museum	28,797	\$1,921,433	A key driver for downtown visitation
76 Fire Company Museum	N/A	\$900,000	- Underutilized asset - Potential for redevelopment or shared use to make it a productive asset
Pioneer Spring Cabin	N/A	\$700,000 (Relocation costs)	- Underutilized asset - Low-cost opportunity to add value within the Trails complex
1827 Log Courthouse	N/A	\$1,058,250	- Underutilized asset - High-priority preservation challenge - Requires significant capital planning
Bingham-Waggoner Estate	5,659	\$4,319,438	- Strong earned-revenue model, but lacks public funding - Vulnerable to major capital needs
Vaile Mansion	11,332	\$2,235,885	Opportunity for visitation and revenue
Truman Depot	N/A	N/A (Recently remodeled with TAP funds)	- Active Amtrak stop but no passenger amenities - Opportunity as tourist gateway

Estimates are outdated and need adjusted based on current market costs

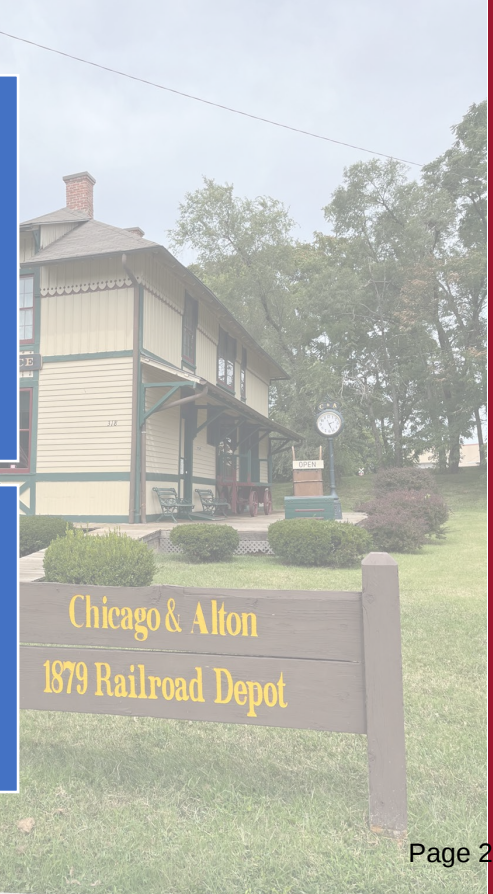
Putting the Puzzle Together

What we are Learning

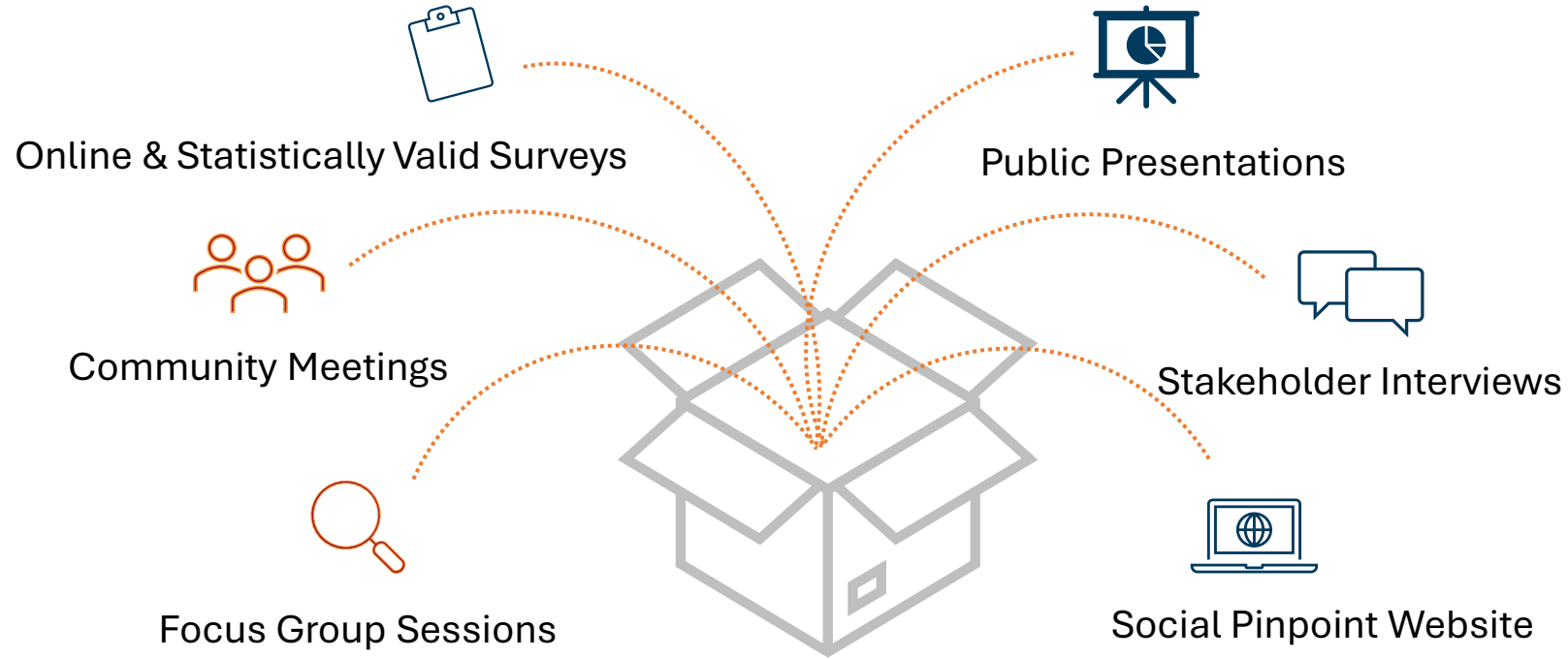
- How other cities manage similar attractions
- Management structures under a conservancy or nonprofit
- Management under an arm of CVB
- Funding strategies through different tax and fundraising structures
- Marketing campaigns
- Attraction Bundling strategies

Who We've Talked to

- Springfield (Illinois) Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Little Rock Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Visit Independence
- Lafayette Park Conservancy
- Forest Park Forever conservancy
- *More to come*



Community Engagement



Purpose of the Statistically Valid Survey



To gather objective feedback to help determine priorities for parks, trails, recreation facilities, programs, museums, and historic sites



To assist in the City taking a resident-driven approach to recreation planning



To develop priorities for investment based on our Priority Investment Ratings Analysis

Methodology

Survey Description

- Six-page survey

Method of Administration

- By mail and online to a random sample of households in the City

Sample Size

- 802 completed surveys

Margin of Error

- $\pm 3.5\%$ at the 95% level of confidence

What to Know

82% of respondents have visited a City park or facility in the past year

61% of respondents have visited a City-owned museum in the past year

65% of respondents have participated in a program or event offered by the City in the past year

Besides the City of Independence, Jackson County Parks and Rec along with Blue Springs Park and Recreation are the primary recreation providers in the area – primarily used for parks and trails

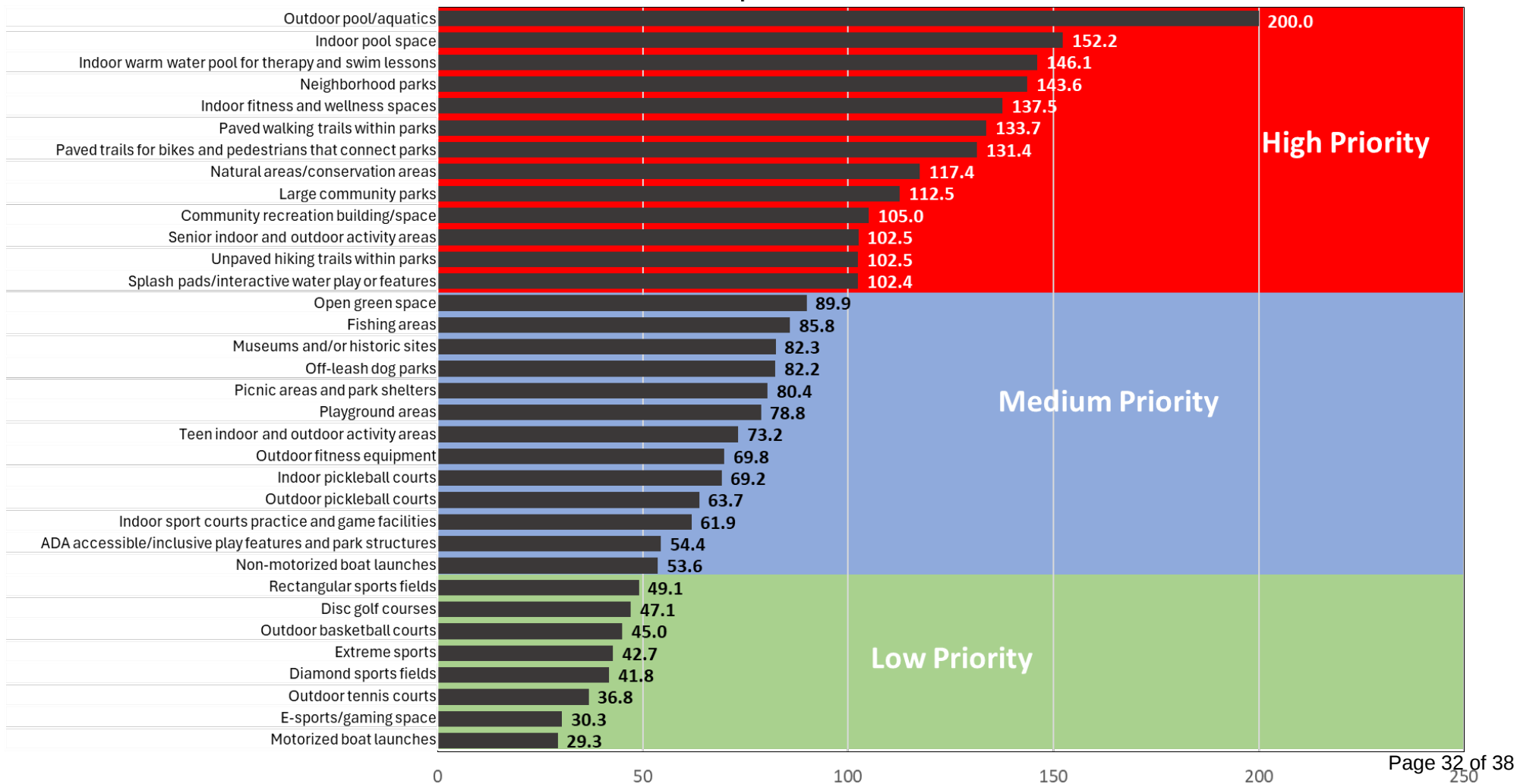
2025 Importance-Satisfaction Rating

Independence, Missouri

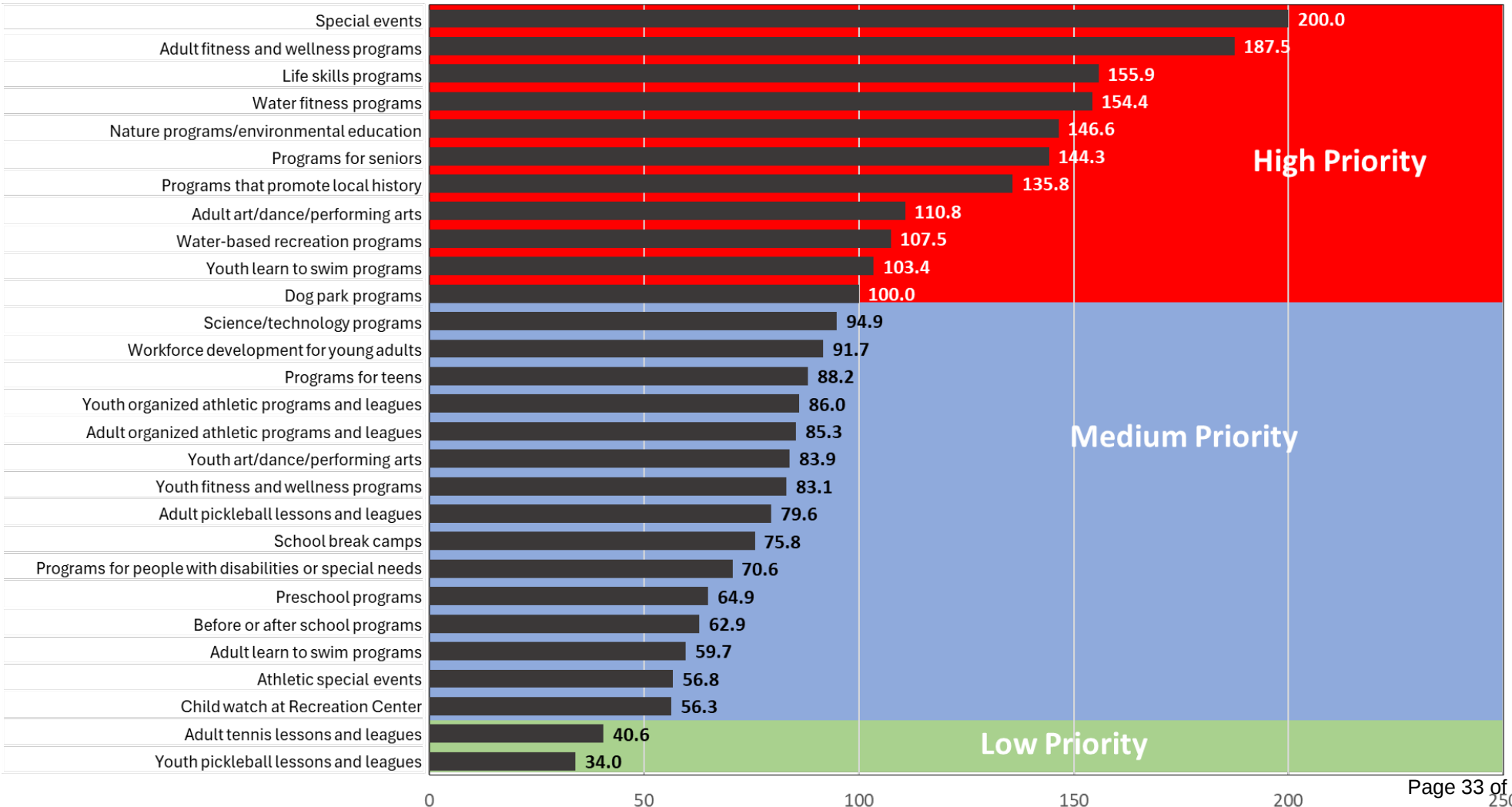
Major Categories of Services

Category of Service	Most Important %	Most Important Rank	Satisfaction %	Satisfaction Rank	Importance-Satisfaction Rating	I-S Rating Rank
Availability of information about programs/facilities	36%	2	27%	9	0.2650	1
Maintenance of parks	38%	1	31%	6	0.2626	2
Security in city parks and on trails	34%	3	30%	7	0.2352	3
Quality of programs for adults	18%	5	18%	13	0.1494	4
Variety of different types of parks in the city	18%	6	21%	11	0.1399	5
Quality of programs for families with children	17%	7	22%	10	0.1314	6
Variety of programs offered by the city	15%	8	17%	15	0.1286	7
Maintenance of recreation centers	24%	4	52%	1	0.1145	8
The days and times that recreation programs are offered	8%	10	20%	12	0.0653	9
Fees charged for city recreation programs	10%	9	39%	3	0.0615	10
User friendliness of city website	8%	11	33%	5	0.0517	11
Available parking spaces at parks	5%	13	18%	14	0.0420	12
Lighting at sport courts and fields	5%	14	29%	8	0.0356	13
Ease of registering for classes offered by the city	5%	12	52%	2	0.0252	14
Ease of renting/reserving a city facility	3%	15	36%	4	0.0166	15

Priority Investment Rating: Top Priorities for Investment for Facilities And Amenities In the City of Independence



Priority Investment Rating: Top Priorities for Investment for Programs In the City of Independence



Additional Findings

92% of respondents believe it is important for the City to provide high quality parks and recreation programs and facilities

88% believe historic sites are important to the City

75% of respondents indicated they would be willing to support a general obligation bond to support improvements to parks and recreation facilities and programs

- Most support is for a new indoor recreation/community center with aquatics, park/playground improvements, and trail expansions and connections**

52% of respondents indicated they would want to see the City increase funding parks, recreation, trails and open spaces in the future – 26% indicated maintain existing levels



Next Steps:

- Develop Vision, Mission & Goals
- Strategic Action Plan
- Draft report and briefings
- Completion Winter 2026

Questions?





MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 8, 2025

TO: Mayor and Members of the City Council

FROM: Susanne Holland, City Clerk

SUBJECT: Boards and Commissions Report

Independence Arts Council

- A recommendation has been made to appoint Alan Voss to the Independence Arts Council.
- Staff requests direction to add a resolution to the next regular meeting, appointing this individual to the above board.
-

Independence Advisory Board of Health

- A recommendation has been made to appoint Joseph Keary to the Independence Advisory Board of Health.
- Staff requests direction to add a resolution to the next regular meeting, appointing this individual to the above board.

Tree Commission

- A recommendation has been made to reappoint Darla Eames and Tim O'Neill to the Tree Commission.
- Staff requests direction to add a resolution to the next regular meeting, appointing these individuals to the above board.



Independence Square Advisory Board

- A recommendation has been made to reappoint Trevor Tilton to the Independence Square Advisory Board.
- Staff requests direction to add a resolution to the next regular meeting, appointing this individual to the above board.

Personnel Board

- A recommendation has been made to appoint Erin Boatright to the Personnel Board.
- Staff requests direction to add a resolution to the next regular meeting, appointing this individual to the above board.

Japanese Sister City Committee

- A recommendation has been made to appoint Patric Koon to the Japanese Sister City Committee.
- Staff requests direction to add a resolution to the next regular meeting, appointing this individual to the above board.