



## One year later - Independence responds to COVID-19

On March 13, 2020, Mayor Eileen Weir declared a State of Emergency in response to the growing concerns around the COVID-19 virus. Over the last year, everyone has been challenged. From requests to stay at home, to virtual schooling, to grocery shortages, to lost jobs or the transition to working remotely, 2020 was no normal year.

The citizens of Independence immediately began asking how they could help. In the month of April, hundreds of homemade masks were donated - helping volunteers, school groups and first responders in a time when personal protective equipment was hard to find.

Volunteers took it a step further, helping deliver food to school children, boxed meals to our seniors and food boxes at distribution sites across the City. In one year, nearly 2 million pounds of food was distributed to families in need.

The City of Independence led Eastern Jackson County in creating the Utility Assistance Program, which provided more than \$2 million of assistance to families across our community by helping with utility payments. This effort was made possible with CARES Act funds.

The City also utilized CARES Act funds to provide saliva-based COVID-19 testing for free to the region. Between the end of October and December, more than 8,000 tests were conducted just as cases reached their peak in the State of Missouri.

In December, the world began preparing for COVID-19 vaccines. Independence received recognition as a Local Public Health Authority at the beginning of December and immediately began the process to receive and distribute vaccines as soon as they were available.

Beginning on March 3, the City set up its first COVID-19 vaccine clinic and in the first three weeks more than 4,000 people received COVID-19 vaccines at the Independence Center. Vaccine clinics continue at this location and further opportunities will be shared with the public on the City's Facebook, Nextdoor and Twitter pages as vaccine is available.

All adults in Missouri are eligible to receive a vaccine on April 9. To find regional vaccine providers and lists, visit [indep.us/vaccines](http://indep.us/vaccines).

This clinic has been possible with the help of the Medical Reserve Corps of Kansas City which is made up of 1,700 regional volunteers, more than 200 of which have a medical background. Learn more about them and how you can get involved at [mrckc.org](http://mrckc.org).

Throughout the last year, City departments have adapted to ensure staff could maintain vital services for citizens, businesses and visitors. Building hours and access were modified, crews were split into shifts to limit the potential for outbreaks and many staff began working from home where possible. Look for updates on city services and hours as changes are announced.

Due to financial and health concerns, Adventure Oasis was not opened for the 2020 season. With modified operations, the local water park will reopen on May 29. Look for details to come in the next few weeks on hours and safety guidelines. Follow the Adventure Oasis Facebook page for the latest, [facebook.com/adventureoasis](https://facebook.com/adventureoasis).

Mayor Weir celebrated the accomplishments of 2020 and our community's resiliency in her annual State of the City. You can watch it on the City's YouTube Channel here, [youtu.be/HA\\_QeyDRtmQ](https://youtu.be/HA_QeyDRtmQ).

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CityScene is published by the City Manager's Office, located at 111 E. Maple Ave., Independence, MO, 64050.

For information, call (816) 325-7086.

# Upcoming events and programs

## Fitness classes

Check out the Parks/Recreation/Tourism website for details on upcoming fitness classes! We are following local guidelines including social distancing and requiring masks to be worn at all times while in the facilities. Come join us for a socially distanced workout with friends at the Sermon Center or Truman Memorial Building.

Find updated information on classes available here, [bit.ly/3hr8GwI](https://bit.ly/3hr8GwI)

## Winter and Farmers' Market

Mark your calendars for the final Winter Farmers' Market of the season on April 3 at the Independence Uptown Market, 211 W. Truman Rd. The hours will be 9 AM to 1 PM.

The regular Farmers' Market Season will begin on May 1. Follow the Independence Uptown Market Facebook page, [facebook.com/IndependenceUptownMarket](https://facebook.com/IndependenceUptownMarket), for updates and details related to vendors at these events.

## Uptown Garden Faire

The 2nd Annual Uptown Garden Faire, will take place Saturday, April 24, from 8 AM – 2 PM

This is a garden market with exhibitors, demonstrations of concrete leaf-making, food, and an Arbor Day celebration at 11 AM with a raffle with prizes. Independence will be celebrating its 21st year as a Tree City USA. This celebration of plants is sponsored in part by the Independence Tree Commission. The event is free. Masks are required.

For vendor registration please call the Truman Memorial building at 816-325-7843. Vendor spots are \$20 per 10x10 space.

## Celebrating 22 years as Tree Line City

The City of Independence has earned the recognition as a 2021 Tree Line USA on behalf of the Arbor Day Foundation. This is the 22 consecutive year that the Independence Power and Light department has received this recognition.

Tree Line USA is a national program recognizing public and private utilities for practices that protect and enhance America's

## Virtual Victorian May Day Picnic

Enjoy a picnic from the comfort of your living room! The Vaile Victorian Society will provide snacks plus an online program of crafts, trivia and a video tour of the Vaile Mansion grounds on Sunday, May 2, at 2 p.m. Picnic baskets will be available for pickup on May 1, delivery available with a small fee. Cost of baskets is \$35 for one person, \$60 for two.

Reserve your basket before April 16 through [vailemansion.org](https://vailemansion.org) or by mailing a check to: The Vaile Victorian Society  
PO Box 316  
Independence, MO 64051-0316

For questions, call (816) 392-7785 or email [vailemansion@gmail.com](mailto:vailemansion@gmail.com).

## Virtual Truman 5K

To Kick off Truman Day, the City of Independence is offering a FREE Virtual 5K. The Virtual Truman Trot is a great opportunity to encourage physical activity and celebrate the life of Harry S. Truman. You can run or walk the 5K at home, in a local park, or even at a gym. T-shirts can be purchased for \$10. Registrations for the race will close on April 20th to ensure packets arrive before May 7th. You can begin to enter your race times on May 7th, and this will remain open through the end of May. Get signed up today for free and see where your 5K time stack up against your friends, family, and community. Register here [indep.us/trumantrot5k21](https://indep.us/trumantrot5k21).

## Adventure Oasis opens for 2021

The Adventure Oasis Water Park will open on May 29. Follow them on Facebook for details on safety guidelines at [facebook.com/adventureoasis](https://facebook.com/adventureoasis).

urban forests. A collaboration of the Foundation and the National Association of State Foresters, it promotes the dual goals of delivering safe and reliable electricity while maintaining healthy community trees.

For more details about our tree trimming programs at IPL please visit our website at [Tree Trimming - City of Independence, Missouri](https://TreeTrimming-CityofIndependence.Missouri)

## Palmer Center Reopening April 5

The Independence Palmer Center will reopen with modified hours and class options on April 5. Further updates on times and programs will be shared as they are made available.

The temporary hours that the Palmer Center will be open while using the gymnasium only are:

- Monday 9-1
- Tuesday 9-5
- Wednesday 10:30-11:30 until 4/23 then 9:00 – 10:00
- Thursday 9-5
- Friday 9-1

The schedule/hours open to the public may be adjusted as needed to accommodate class schedules.

Participants will need to check in at the reception desk, have their temperature taken, have their membership card, pickleball pass, or access pass card swiped, and pay the class fee if applicable. If they do not currently have a membership card or pass of any type, a new access pass will be issued.

All members/participants must sign an updated waiver, if they have not already done so at Sermon Center or Truman Memorial Building.

Pickleball will be for members only initially.

Masks will be required at all times, including while exercising and playing pickleball.

Classes and pickleball play will be on a first-come, first-serve basis until capacity (24 participants) is reached. If there are more than 24 people for pickleball, they may wait on the patio if the weather is nice, or in the dining room (socially distanced) if the weather is not ideal for waiting outdoors.

Capacity for all areas cannot exceed 50%, and social distancing must be maintained at all times. Spots for social distancing have been marked for fitness classes, and can accommodate 24 participants. Participants will need to bring their own water/water bottle, as drinking fountains will not be available.

The fitness room and nutrition site are not opening at this time. Look for updates on these programs to come.

All City of Independence Covid-19 guidelines must be followed. Failure to observe the rules/guidelines may result in Pickleball games/programs being shut down.



# City staff checking for illicit discharges

Municipal Services employees, with the Water Pollution Control Division, routinely walk Independence streams and tributaries looking for illegal discharges that may be carried by the storm system to local streams. Illegal discharges are discharges that are not storm water, but that can be detected in the storm drains. These typically come from businesses or homes, which are illegally dumping liquids into the storm system. The city teams look for these discharges, as well as trash and debris, while they are walking the streams and creeks. Pictures are taken, and GPS locations are obtained, for areas where illegal discharges and dumping are found. Staff will then contact the owner of the property to clean up the trash and stop the discharge.

City ordinance prohibits illicit discharges. Detecting and eliminating illicit discharges helps to protect our local waterways and the fish and wildlife they support. Storm sewers flow into streams, rivers and lakes,

so anything that enters the storm sewer system ultimately will be released into the waterways we use for wading, fishing and other recreation.

To report spills, illicit discharges, and storm water quality problems, call Municipal Services, 325-7727. For more info call (816) 325-7711 or visit [indep.us/municipalservices](http://indep.us/municipalservices).



# Latest COVID-19 Information

You can find the latest COVID-19 information including regional resources, vaccine sign-up lists and the City of Independence Health Department Safer Independence Guidelines at [indep.us/covid19](http://indep.us/covid19).

While vaccines are an exciting step forward, it is important we all continue to take steps to limit the spread of COVID-19 and the variants that are being discovered across the globe. Continue to wear masks, wash your hands regularly, and wait socially distanced from those around you when in public (including outdoor spaces).

Testing is also very important. You can find a list of regional testing locations available each week at the Prepare Metro KC regional testing calendar here [bit.ly/2Kq5dCv](https://bit.ly/2Kq5dCv).

It's been a long year but together we've done great things. Thank you for helping keep our community safe!



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**IPDJOB.COM**



Independence, Missouri  
**POLICE DEPARTMENT**

# Explore our community walking trails

Walking is great exercise and a wonderful way to explore our community. Did you know there are several guided walking trails in Independence? To encourage everyone to get out and explore, we are kicking off a challenge between now and June 30, 2021. Walk four trails, share your pictures and you will then earn a sticker for walking to put on your vehicle, water bottle or other favorite item to let others know you Explored Independence!

We encourage you to share pictures of an interesting aspect of each trail you walk. You may see your pictures featured in upcoming posts regarding the trails on our City website or social media.

Once you've walked 4 trails in a category, between April 1 and June 30, 2021, email us at [parks@indepmo.org](mailto:parks@indepmo.org), with EXPLORE INDEPENDENCE in the subject line and list the trails you have walked or stop by the front desk at George Owens Nature Park.

Find a full list of the trails under each category, a place to share your photos and more information on the challenge at [indep.us/walkingtrails](http://indep.us/walkingtrails).



# Looking at roads in a new way

Like municipalities across the country, the City of Independence is closely reviewing the way we provide services to our citizens. One of the most visible and commonly requested services is street maintenance. For the last few years, the City has used a "one-size-fits-all" approach in the annual mill and overlay project. This would annually address 50-60 of the 1,200 lane miles in our City with new mill and overlay between May and October. This is an expensive program, and while sometimes these roads do need to be ground down (mill) and new asphalt put down (overlay), that is not always the most effective approach.



This new approach will allow the City to deploy the most appropriate, cost effective maintenance solution as each condition dictates in a more data-driven decision model. This includes a variety of maintenance techniques to seal the roadway and will allow staff to address between 80 and 100 lane miles per year.

As we shift to this new program, approximately 15 to 20 lane miles will receive a mill and overlay this year and another 80 to 100 lane miles will be sealed—essentially doubling the amount of treated lane miles annually. This work will be shared with the neighborhoods impacted on the City's social media

pages as work is scheduled throughout the construction season.

In the meantime, citizens are encouraged to continue to report street concerns, including potholes, via the City's IndepNow app or on the City's action center at [indep.us/actioncenter](http://indep.us/actioncenter). Potholes are generally addressed within 24 hours and crews can fill more than 100 each day.

Beginning this year, the Municipal Services department will deploy a series of intermediate maintenance solutions to begin exploring options that would be a good fit for our street network and community. This builds upon the pavement condition index (PCI) that was implemented several years ago, where the different streets were scored on their condition and expected rate of deterioration then placed in an order to be addressed.

## CITY COUNCIL

Mayor Eileen Weir (816) 325-7027  
City Council Office (816) 325-7022

Online at [indep.us/citycouncil](http://indep.us/citycouncil).  
Email at [citycouncil@indepmo.org](mailto:citycouncil@indepmo.org).

### Councilmembers

John Perkins	District 1
Brice Stewart	District 2
Mike Steinmeyer	District 3
Daniel Hobart	District 4
Karen DeLuccie	At-Large
Mike Huff	At-Large

### City Manager

Zachary Walker (816) 325-7170

## Numbers to Know

Animal Shelter	325-7207
Adopt-a-Street	325-7602
Barking Dogs	325-7213
Building Permits	325-7401
Business/Liquor Licenses	325-7079
City Council Office	325-7022
City Manager's Office	325-7170
COVID-19 Questions	325-7121
Crime Stoppers Tips	474-8477
Drop-Off Depot/Trash	325-7600
Drugs	325-6272
Graffiti	257-7824
Health Department	325-7019
Human Resources	325-7390
Mayor's Office	325-7027
Municipal Court	325-7230
Continuances	325-7236
City Prosecutor	325-7222
Neighborhood Watch	325-7643
Parks & Recreation	325-7370
Park Vandalism	325-7208
Police Non-Emergency	325-7300
Fire Non-Emergency	325-7123
Potholes	325-7624
Report Power Outage	325-7550
Risk Management	325-7061
Street Lights	325-7535
Stormwater Pollution	325-7727
Utilities	
Customer Service	325-7930
Pay by Phone	325-SERV
Payment Assistance	254-4100
Weeds, Trash	325-7193
Zoning questions	325-7421

## CITY7 City of Independence Government Access Television

### City Council Meetings

Live meetings: 6 p.m. on Mondays  
Replays: 9 a.m. on Mon., Wed., Fri.  
1 p.m. on Sun.

### Planning Commission Meetings

Live meetings: 6 p.m. on 2nd & 4th Tues./month  
Replays: 10 a.m. on Tues. and Thurs.  
1 p.m. on Sat.

Learn more at [indep.us/city7](http://indep.us/city7)

## Regional Animal Shelter

Help them find a forever home.  
Adopt a homeless pet.

21001 E. Hwy. 78, Independence  
Call (816) 325-7207 to set up an appointment today.

**Always spay or neuter.**



## Where can I...

Pay my Jackson Co. property taxes:  
Historic Truman Courthouse  
112 W. Lexington, Suite 114  
Phone: (816) 881-3232

Apply for a marriage license:  
Historic Truman Courthouse  
112 W. Lexington, Suite 30  
Phone: (816) 881-4608

Pay a ticket issued by the City:  
Independence City Hall  
111 E. Maple  
Phone: (816) 325-7230

