

# CityScene



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www.independencemo.org  
City of Independence, MO

## Independence Athletic Complex

The new 1.5-mile walking trail at the Independence Athletic Complex has opened. Also open for use at the new park are a picnic shelter and restroom facilities.



After much anticipation, Independence Athletic Complex is open for walking and picnicking use. The new neighborhood park space is open daily from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. with restrooms available from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. The 165-acre complex sits atop the GeoSpace Center, a 4.4 million square foot subsurface complex of office, warehouse and light manufacturing space.

Parks and Recreation Director Eric Urfer said the athletic complex is not only a unique use of land, but is also a much needed asset for the Independence community. "This park is definitely a difference maker," Urfer said.

The project cost approximately \$7 million to design and construct and is funded by way of the Parks and Recreation Sales Tax initiative approved in 2002 by the residents of Independence.

The complex, located at 17800 N. Salisbury Road, is one-half mile east of M-291 and features:

- One shelter for approximately 100 people
- One large playground
- More than one mile of walking trails



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## Construction Advances On Little Blue Parkway

Heavy construction equipment has been busy this summer in eastern Independence, working to build the next leg of the Little Blue Parkway, a connector road that will link four major roadways: 40 Highway, I-70, M-78 (23rd Street) and 24 Highway.

The Little Blue Parkway was on the drawing board for more than 30 years as a key transportation improvement. Then in the 1990s the first phase was built from 40 Highway to 39th Street. The work now underway will extend it from 39th Street to R.D. Mize Road.

Public Works Director John Powell said the road will ease traffic by improving north and south access to the City east of M-291.

"It is part of an ongoing effort to improve traffic flow throughout the City," Powell said.

The roadway will be a four-lane, divided street with sidewalks along one side and a bicycle/pedestrian path along the other side. Little Blue Parkway is expected to be open by fall 2009.

The entire stretch to 24 Highway should be completed by late 2010 and will have intersections at Necessary, Truman and Bundschu Roads. The total estimated

See Little Blue Parkway, Page 2

**Independence Heritage Festival**  
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
**Saturday, September 27**  
**McCoy Park**  
**800 N. Bess Truman Parkway**

## Little Blue From Page 1

cost of the seven-mile roadway is \$50 million.

The latest federal highway legislation in 2005 provided more than \$30 million in funds to build the project. These funds are administered by the Missouri Department of Transportation. The City must provide a local match of at least 20 percent.

Radmacher Brothers Excavating has the \$19,495,881.79 construction contract for this phase, from 39th Street to R.D. Mize Road, which was started in July.

This phase of the project is the most complex and costly. It includes a new bridge over the railroad, new bridge over Crackerneck Creek, a large culvert at the North Fork of Crackerneck Creek, a large amount of fill material, and extensive soil stabilization measures.

In addition, 37th Terrace will be extended to connect to the new road along the north side of the hospital. There will be a new traffic signal at the R.D. Mize Road intersection. A new 24-inch diameter water main is being installed along the side of the street.

Powell said work is also underway



Crews recently installed the support structure for the bridge that will take the Little Blue Parkway over the railroad tracks.

on the remaining phases. This includes drawing construction plans, obtaining easements, and acquiring the needed environmental permits.

## Susan Paxton Block Award Nominations Due

The City of Independence is looking to honor excellence in public service.

Anyone can nominate a City employee, volunteer or elected official who has demonstrated outstanding public service, valor, and job performance with leadership for the seventh annual Susan Paxton Block Distinguished Public Service Award.

Nomination forms are due Friday, August 29 and are available from Judy Forrester, Junior Service League (JSL) immediate past president. Completed forms should be mailed to the JSL at 3122 South Chrysler, Independence, MO 64052. Mrs. Block was a member and past president of the JSL. Forms are also available from City department directors and Chamber of Commerce, 210 W. Truman Road.

The late Bill Paxton, father of the late Councilmember Block, established the award to honor her memory and recognize individuals who demonstrate excellence while conducting City business. Mrs. Block represented the third council district from 1992 until her death November 11, 1996.

“Susie Block was one of those people

you liked the first time you met her,” said Mayor Don Reimal in remembering his friend and colleague. “She was a good friend and formidable opponent, always on top of the situation and never afraid to say what needed to be said. She never lost sight of the need of the people she served and what was best for the City she loved. I count myself very fortunate to have known and served with her. She was one of the best.”

A selection committee, comprised of local service club presidents, will select the recipient. Retiring City Clerk Bruce Lowrey received the award last year.

The award is \$1,000 plus a sterling silver medallion and a sterling silver lapel pin. Proceeds come from the memorial fund established by Paxton.

The award will be announced and given to a selected City government employee, public official or volunteer at the Monday, Sept. 22 City Council meeting at City Hall, 111 East Maple. September 24 was Councilmember Block’s birth date.

For more information, call Forrester at 346-1363.

## Bingham-Waggoner Estate Fundraiser Next Month

Volunteers at the historic Bingham-Waggoner Estate, 313 W. Pacific, last summer discovered a rare and valuable baseball game while cleaning a third floor bedroom of the mansion.

The 1893 “Zimmer’s Base Ball Game,” which features color pictures of famous baseball players of the day, includes a small bat that hits a wooden ball into the field to score strikes, hits and home runs.

Estate Board Member Steve Schreiber believes estate owner William Waggoner purchased the game for his children at the 1893 Chicago World Fair. Only 10 other copies of the game exist today, two of which are on display at the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, N.Y.

The game first went on limited display in June at the Trails Breakfast and the July Antique and Craft Fair. Those who attend the annual Pig Pickin’ Chicken Lickin’ Feast from 4 to 7 p.m. Saturday, September 20 can see the game by taking a guided tour of the estate.

Tours are \$5 for adults, \$4.50 for seniors and \$2 for children ages 6-16. Also on display on all three floors of the historic home are dozens of full-size and miniature antique quilts made by the Nimble Thimbles Quilt Guild.

After touring the home, visitors can head downstairs and outside under the walnut trees to the annual Pig Pickin’ Chicken Lickin’ Feast. Fill your plate with roast pork and fried chicken, German potato salad and other fare in keeping with this year’s German theme.

There will be live music and a silent auction with a wedding ring pattern 1940s era handmade quilt, an anniversary clock, an assortment of paintings, photographs and prints and other items.

Tickets for the feast are \$12 for adults and \$5 for children 10 and younger. Reservations to 461-3491 are required.

The Bingham has added a Halloween Party to its annual calendar. The estate is hosting a “Halloween Spooktacular” for adults from 6 to 9 p.m. Saturday, October 25. Highlights include a “haunted mansion” tour, dancing with a D. J., a best costume contest and a chili dinner. Guests can also bid on mystery packages in a “blind” auction. Cost is \$15 per person with advance reservations.

For a list of all special events during the year, go to [www.bwestate.org](http://www.bwestate.org).

# Groundbreaking for New Fire Station 3

The Independence Fire Department held a ground breaking ceremony in mid-June for a new Fire Station 3. It will be the third station since 2004 to be rebuilt, replacing those that were built in the 1950s. The new station will be constructed at the same location as the old Fire Station 3 at 10219 Winner Road.

Fire Chief Sandra Schiess said old Fire Station 3 officially closed June 10 to make way for construction. The new station is being built with funds from the Public Safety Sales Tax. Construction will take about one year.

“Citizens in Station 3’s response area will not experience an interruption of service,” Chief Schiess said. “Extensive planning was done by Fire Department staff to relocate the response personnel from Fire Station 3 to the new Fire Station 4, located at 202 W. 23rd Street, to insure calls for service during this period will be handled without delay by the closest available unit.”

Replacement Fire Station 3 will be about 8,500 square feet. Total cost including demolition of the old building, design, land and construction is projected at just under \$3.2 million. While the new station

The City broke ground for the new Fire Station 3 in June. Digging in were, from left, Joe Williams, WBI architect; Fire Chief Sandra Schiess; Assistant Fire Chief Steve Bailey; Bill Simms, City Property manager; Councilmember Jim Page; Mayor Don Reimal; Councilmember Marcie Gragg; Tom Weir, Public Safety Tax Oversight Committee chairperson; Lloyd Briggs, Public Safety Tax Oversight Committee; Kurt Westhoff, Jenkins & Associates president; and Donna Pittman, Public Safety Tax Oversight Committee.



is being built at the same location, one tract of land immediately south of the old facility was purchased to make room for the larger floor plan.

Fire Station 3 is the third and final station replacement promised citizens when voters approved the Fire Safety Tax in 2004. Replacement Fire Station 7 at 2206 Hub Drive opened in March 2006 and the new Fire Station 4 opened in early June.

“The Fire Safety Tax has allowed for modernization of the Independence Fire

Department with new trucks, equipment, facilities and training,” Chief Schiess said. “The citizens are getting what they were promised and the firefighters have the facilities and equipment to go with the dedication they have shown to serving this community.”

## Public Input Open Forum on City’s Transit System

The City will sponsor two open forums to share recommended changes to the transit system in Independence. The forums will be from 3 to 5 p.m. Thursday, September 4, and 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, September 6 in Conference Room D on the lower level of City Hall, 111 East Maple Avenue. Conference Room D is across the hall from the City Council Chambers.

The public is invited to attend either of the two open forums and share their thoughts on the changes proposed to take effect January 2009 as the City of Independence continues to experience increased costs and decreased federal funding for the transit system.

For more information check the City’s Web site at [www.independencemo.org](http://www.independencemo.org) for updates or call Mary Hunt of the Community Development Department at 325-7418.



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**Recycling Centers**

The City operates two recycling centers. Items accepted at the centers include paper, cardboard, paperboard, steel and aluminum cans, plastic, toner cartridges and dry cell batteries. The recycling centers and their operation days and times are:

**35th Street Recycling Center**  
 13600 E. 35th Street  
 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Fridays  
 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. Saturdays

**Vista Drive Recycling Center**  
 875 Vista Drive  
 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. Sundays  
 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Mondays



**City Drop-Off Depot**

8 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
 Second Saturday Of Each Month  
**March thru November!**

875 Vista Drive  
 325-7623  
 Truman Road  
 East of M-291,  
 One Mile North  
 On Vista Drive  
 Next to Animal Shelter



Trash: Cars, \$10;  
 Vehicles Larger Than Car, \$15;  
 Trailers 8 Feet or Longer, \$25  
 Brush: Limbs, Firewood, Bushes, Stumps. No Leaves or Grass: \$10 per load  
 Major Appliances: \$15 Each  
 Batteries & Lawnmowers: Free  
 Tires: Car, \$1; mounted Car, \$3;  
 Truck, \$4; Mounted Truck, \$10;  
 Farm/Tractor, \$15

Residential vehicles only, no commercial. No vehicles larger than a pick-up truck. Proof of residency required.

## Athletic Complex From Page 1

- Two restroom/concession buildings
- Eight soccer fields, two of which are lighted
- Three lighted softball fields
- Two lighted baseball fields
- Seven practice football areas, one of which is lighted
- An amphitheater for 1,000 people
- Ample parking

The primary need for such a facility was identified in the Parks and Recreation Open Space Master Plan. Throughout the design process architects, engineers, neighbors, athletic associations, recreation specialists, and park professionals worked together to develop the multi-sport, multi-field athletic complex. Urfer said this collaborative effort resulted in the multi-



faceted park designed to meet the sports needs of Independence citizens.

A grand opening celebration, originally scheduled but postponed due to inclement weather, will be held later this fall.

To reserve the shelter, call 325-7330. For more information about future leagues and programs at the Complex, contact Jeremy Rogers, recreation supervisor, at 325-7839.

## Tax Abatement Program Still an Option

Tax abatement continues to be available for the Northwest Independence area. This revitalization program, the Fairmount-Carlisle 353 Redevelopment Plan, gives property owners tax relief for repairing their homes.

The tax abatement area is comprised of the Fairmount and Carlisle neighborhoods and portions of the Mt. Washington and Bundschu neighborhoods.

The area is bounded generally on the far west along Brookside Avenue; the northern boundary of the City and along the boundary with the City of Sugar Creek; along U.S. Highway 24; and south along a line just west of Forest Avenue and along Truman Road.

Program participants are freed of property taxes for the first 10 years and receive 50 percent abatement for the following 15 years if they invest a specified amount in upgrading their property.

In 2007, there were 36 properties ap-

CITY COUNCIL	
Mayor	
Don Reimal	325-7027
City Council Office	325-7022
Councilmembers	
Marcie Gragg	District 1
Will Swoffer	District 2
Myron Paris	District 3
Jim Page	District 4
Jim Schultz	At Large
Lucy Young	At Large
City Manager	
Robert Heacock	325-7170

proved for abatement. In 2008 to date, 74 are proceeding with repairs. Another 40 participants have applications pending.

To participate call Pat Robinson, Tax Abatement administrator, at 325-7426. City staff will assist residents in applying for the program.

## Twilight Special

5-8 p.m.

Monday - Thursday

**\$3 Off** Single Admission

**\$6 Off** Family of Four Admission



**Late Summer Hours**  
Noon - 6 p.m. Through August 18

**Park Open Weekends Only**  
Noon - 8 p.m. Begins August 23

**Labor Day Hours**  
11 a.m. - 6 p.m. September 1

**Closes for the Season**  
September 2

**Adventure Oasis Water Park**  
On Hub Drive, north of East 23rd Street  
**816-325-SWIM**

## IShare

**UTILITY ASSISTANCE**

**254-4100**



## Hot Line Directory



Barking Dogs	325-7213
Crime Stoppers Tips	474-8477
Drop-Off Trash	325-7623
Drugs	325-6272
Neighborhood Watch	325-7643
Potholes	325-7624
Report Power Outage	325-7550
Street Lights	325-7535
Storm Water Pollution	325-7727

## Watch City Meetings On Streaming Video

City Council meetings and study sessions are available as live and archived streaming video on the City's Web site, [www.independencemo.org](http://www.independencemo.org)

Each live City 7 TV broadcast is available online during the 6 p.m. Monday City Council meetings. An archive of the program is available on the site the next morning for viewing 24 hours a day. Archived videos are available for a few months following their posting. If you do not have a computer but would like to purchase a copy of a Council meeting call 325-7019.



## Watch City 7 TV

City of Independence  
Government Access Television

**City Council**  
6 p.m. Mondays\*  
10 a.m. Tuesdays  
7 p.m. Wednesdays  
2 p.m. Sundays

**Planning Commission**  
6:30 p.m. 2nd & 4th Tuesdays\*  
10 a.m. Wednesdays  
7 p.m. Thursdays

For more information:  
[www.City7.TV](http://www.City7.TV)  
\*Denotes live meeting, all others are rebroadcasts.