

Board of Parks Commissioners
Tuesday, August 4, 2026 12:00 PM
Columbus Community Building/Community Room
2500 14 Street
Columbus, NE 68601

The Mayor and City Council reserve the right to go into closed session as per Section 84-1410 of the Nebraska Revised Statutes. A current agenda is on file at City Hall, 2500 14 Street, Columbus, Nebraska. For more information, call 402-562-4224 or visit our website at www.columbusne.us.

1. Statement of compliance with Open Meetings Act.

...4-1407. Act, how cited.

Sections 84-1407 to 84-1414 shall be known and may be cited as the Open Meetings Act.

Source: Laws 2004, LB 821, § 34.

84-1408. Declaration of intent; meetings open to public.

It is hereby declared to be the policy of this state that the formation of public policy is public business and may not be conducted in secret.

Every meeting of a public body shall be open to the public in order that citizens may exercise their democratic privilege of attending and speaking at meetings of public bodies, except as otherwise provided by the Constitution of Nebraska, federal statutes, and the Open Meetings Act.

Source: Laws 1975, LB 325, § 1; Laws 1996, LB 900, § 1071; Laws 2004, LB 821, § 35.

Annotations

- Nebraska's public meetings laws do not apply to school board deliberations pertaining solely to disputed adjudicative facts. *McQuinn v. Douglas Cty. Sch. Dist. No. 66*, 259 Neb. 720, 612 N.W.2d 198 (2000).
- The primary purpose of the public meetings law is to ensure that public policy is formulated at open meetings. *Marks v. Judicial Nominating Comm.*, 236 Neb. 429, 461 N.W.2d 551 (1990).
- The public meetings law is broadly interpreted and liberally construed to obtain the objective of openness in favor of the public, and provisions permitting closed sessions must be narrowly and strictly construed. *Grein v. Board of Education of Fremont*, 216 Neb. 158, 343 N.W.2d 718 (1984).
- Although a committee was a subcommittee of a natural resources district board, it was not subject to the Open Meetings Act because there was never a quorum of board members in attendance and the committee did not hold hearings, make policy, or take formal action on behalf of the board. *Koch v. Lower Loup NRD*, 27 Neb. App. 301, 931 N.W.2d 160 (2019).
- A county board of equalization is a public body whose meetings shall be open to the public. *Wolf v. Grubbs*, 17 Neb. App. 292, 759 N.W.2d 499 (2009).

84-1409. Terms, defined.

For purposes of the Open Meetings Act, unless the context otherwise requires:

(1)(a) Public body means (i) governing bodies of all political subdivisions of the State of Nebraska, (ii) governing bodies of all agencies, created by the Constitution of Nebraska, statute, or otherwise pursuant to law, of the executive department of the State of Nebraska, (iii) all independent boards, commissions, bureaus, committees, councils, subunits, or any other bodies created by the Constitution of Nebraska, statute, or otherwise pursuant to law, (iv) all study or advisory committees of the executive department of the State of Nebraska whether having continuing existence or appointed as special committees with limited existence, (v) advisory committees of the bodies referred to in subdivisions (i), (ii), and (iii) of this subdivision, and (vi) instrumentalities exercising essentially public functions; and

(b) Public body does not include (i) subcommittees of such bodies unless a quorum of the public body attends a subcommittee meeting or unless such subcommittees are holding hearings, making policy, or taking formal action on behalf of their parent body, except that all meetings of any subcommittee established under section 81-15,175 are subject to the Open Meetings Act, (ii) entities conducting judicial proceedings unless a court or other judicial body is exercising rulemaking authority, deliberating, or deciding upon the issuance of administrative orders, and (iii) the Judicial Resources Commission or subcommittees or subgroups of the commission;

(2) Meeting means all regular, special, or called meetings, formal or informal, of any public body for the purposes of briefing, discussion of public business, formation of tentative policy, or the taking of any action of the public body; and

(3) Virtual conferencing means conducting or participating in a meeting electronically or telephonically with interaction among the participants subject to subsection (2) of section 84-1412.

Source: Laws 1975, LB 325, § 2; Laws 1983, LB 43, § 1; Laws 1989, LB 429, § 42; Laws 1989, LB 311, § 14; Laws 1992, LB 1019, § 124; Laws 1993, LB 635, § 1; Laws 1996, LB 1044, § 978; Laws 1997, LB 798, § 37; Laws 2004, LB 821, § 36; Laws 2007, LB296, § 810; Laws 2011, LB366, § 2; Laws 2021, LB83, § 11; Laws 2022, LB922, § 12.

Annotations

- A township is a political subdivision, and as such, a township board is subject to the provisions of the public meetings laws. *Steenblock v. Elkhorn Township Bd.*, 245 Neb. 722, 515 N.W.2d 128 (1994).
- A county agricultural society is a public body to which the provisions of the Nebraska public meetings law are applicable. *Nixon v. Madison Co. Ag. Soc'y*, 217 Neb. 37, 348 N.W.2d 119 (1984).
- Failure by a public governing body, as defined under section 84-1409, R.R.S.1943, to take and record a roll call vote on an action, as required by section 84-1413(2), R.S.Supp.,1980, grants any citizen the right to sue for the purpose of having the action declared void. In this case such failure could not be later corrected by a nunc pro tunc order because there was no showing that a roll call vote on the disputed action was actually taken, and even if it was the record showed it was not recorded until over a year later. Sections 23-1301, R.R.S.1943, and 23-1302, R.R.S.1943, make it the duty of the county clerk to record proceedings of the board of county commissioners. *State ex rel. Schuler v. Dunbar*, 208 Neb. 69, 302 N.W.2d 674 (1981).
- Although a committee was a subcommittee of a natural resources district board, it was not subject to the Open Meetings Act because there was never a quorum of board members in attendance and the committee did not hold hearings, make policy, or take formal action on behalf of the board. *Koch v. Lower Loup NRD*, 27 Neb. App. 301, 931 N.W.2d 160 (2019).
- Although the Open Meetings Act does not define "subcommittee," a subcommittee is generally defined as a group within a committee to which the committee may refer business. *Koch v. Lower Loup NRD*, 27 Neb. App. 301, 931 N.W.2d 160 (2019).
- The Open Meetings Act does not require policymakers to remain ignorant of the issues they must decide until the moment the public is invited to comment on a proposed policy. By excluding nonquorum subgroups from the definition of a public body, the Legislature

has balanced the public's need to be heard on matters of public policy with a practical accommodation for a public body's need for information to conduct business. *Koch v. Lower Loup NRD*, 27 Neb. App. 301, 931 N.W.2d 160 (2019).

- As an administrative agency of the county, a county board of equalization is a public body. *Wolf v. Grubbs*, 17 Neb. App. 292, 759 N.W.2d 499 (2009).
- The electors of a township at their annual meeting are a public body under the Open Meetings Act. *State ex rel. Newman v. Columbus Township Bd.*, 15 Neb. App. 656, 735 N.W.2d 399 (2007).
- The meeting at issue in this case was a "meeting" within the parameters of subsection (2) of this section because it involved the discussion of public business, the formation of tentative policy, or the taking of any action of the public power district. *Hansmeyer v. Nebraska Pub. Power Dist.*, 6 Neb. App. 889, 578 N.W.2d 476 (1998).
- Informational sessions in which the governmental body hears reports are briefings. *Johnson v. Nebraska Environmental Control Council*, 2 Neb. App. 263, 509 N.W.2d 21 (1993).

84-1410. Closed session; when; purpose; reasons listed; procedure; right to challenge; prohibited acts; chance meetings, conventions, or workshops.

(1) Any public body may hold a closed session by the affirmative vote of a majority of its voting members if a closed session is clearly necessary for the protection of the public interest or for the prevention of needless injury to the reputation of an individual and if such individual has not requested a public meeting. The subject matter and the reason necessitating the closed session shall be identified in the motion to close. Closed sessions may be held for, but shall not be limited to, such reasons as:

(a) Strategy sessions with respect to collective bargaining, real estate purchases, pending litigation, or litigation which is imminent as evidenced by communication of a claim or threat of litigation to or by the public body;

(b) Discussion regarding deployment of security personnel or devices;

(c) Investigative proceedings regarding allegations of criminal misconduct;

(d) Evaluation of the job performance of a person when necessary to prevent needless injury to the reputation of a person and if such person has not requested a public meeting;

(e) For the Community Trust created under section 81-1801.02, discussion regarding the amounts to be paid to individuals who have suffered from a tragedy of violence or natural disaster; or

(f) For public hospitals, governing board peer review activities, professional review activities, review and discussion of medical staff investigations or disciplinary actions, and any strategy session concerning transactional negotiations with any referral source that is required by federal law to be conducted at arms length.

Nothing in this section shall permit a closed meeting for discussion of the appointment or election of a new member to any public body.

(2) The vote to hold a closed session shall be taken in open session. The entire motion, the vote of each member on the question of holding a closed session, and the time when the closed session commenced and concluded shall be recorded in the minutes. If the motion to close

passes, then the presiding officer immediately prior to the closed session shall restate on the record the limitation of the subject matter of the closed session. The public body holding such a closed session shall restrict its consideration of matters during the closed portions to only those purposes set forth in the motion to close as the reason for the closed session. The meeting shall be reconvened in open session before any formal action may be taken. For purposes of this section, formal action shall mean a collective decision or a collective commitment or promise to make a decision on any question, motion, proposal, resolution, order, or ordinance or formation of a position or policy but shall not include negotiating guidance given by members of the public body to legal counsel or other negotiators in closed sessions authorized under subdivision (1)(a) of this section.

(3) Any member of any public body shall have the right to challenge the continuation of a closed session if the member determines that the session has exceeded the reason stated in the original motion to hold a closed session or if the member contends that the closed session is neither clearly necessary for (a) the protection of the public interest or (b) the prevention of needless injury to the reputation of an individual. Such challenge shall be overruled only by a majority vote of the members of the public body. Such challenge and its disposition shall be recorded in the minutes.

(4) Nothing in this section shall be construed to require that any meeting be closed to the public. No person or public body shall fail to invite a portion of its members to a meeting, and no public body shall designate itself a subcommittee of the whole body for the purpose of circumventing the Open Meetings Act. No closed session, informal meeting, chance meeting, social gathering, email, fax, or other electronic communication shall be used for the purpose of circumventing the requirements of the act.

(5) The act does not apply to chance meetings or to attendance at or travel to conventions or workshops of members of a public body at which there is no meeting of the body then intentionally convened, if there is no vote or other action taken regarding any matter over which the public body has supervision, control, jurisdiction, or advisory power.

Source: Laws 1975, LB 325, § 3; Laws 1983, LB 43, § 2; Laws 1985, LB 117, § 1; Laws 1992, LB 1019, § 125; Laws 1994, LB 621, § 1; Laws 1996, LB 900, § 1072; Laws 2004, LB 821, § 37; Laws 2004, LB 1179, § 1; Laws 2006, LB 898, § 1; Laws 2011, LB390, § 29; Laws 2012, LB995, § 17.

Annotations

- There is no absolute discovery privilege for communications that occur during a closed session. *State ex rel. Upper Republican NRD v. District Judges*, 273 Neb. 148, 728 N.W.2d 275 (2007).
- If a person present at a meeting observes a public meetings law violation in the form of an improper closed session and fails to object, that person waives his or her right to object at a later date. *Wasikowski v. Nebraska Quality Jobs Bd.*, 264 Neb. 403, 648 N.W.2d 756 (2002).
- The public interest mentioned in this section is that shared by citizens in general and by the community at large concerning pecuniary or legal rights and liabilities. *Grein v. Board of Education*, 216 Neb. 158, 343 N.W.2d 718 (1984).
- Hearing in closed executive session was contrary to this section since there was no showing of necessity or reason under subdivision (1)(a), (b), or (c), but did not result in reversal of board decision. *Simonds v. Board of Examiners*, 213 Neb. 259, 329 N.W.2d 92

(1983).

- Negotiations for the purchase of land need not be conducted at an open meeting but the deliberations of a city council as to whether an offer to purchase real estate should be made should take place in an open meeting. *Pokorny v. City of Schuyler*, 202 Neb. 334, 275 N.W.2d 281 (1979).
- Public meeting law was not violated where the Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska voted to hold a closed session to consider the university president's resignation, and also discussed the appointment of an interim president during such session. *Meyer v. Board of Regents*, 1 Neb. App. 893, 510 N.W.2d 450 (1993).

84-1411. Meetings of public body; notice; method; contents; when available; right to modify; duties concerning notice; virtual conferencing authorized; requirements; emergency meeting without notice; appearance before public body; applicability of section.

(1)(a) Except as provided in subsection (9) of this section, each public body shall give reasonable advance publicized notice of the time and place of each meeting as provided in this subsection. Such notice shall be transmitted to all members of the public body and to the public.

(b)(i) Except as provided in subdivision (1)(b)(ii) of this section, in the case of a public body described in subdivision (1)(a)(i) of section 84-1409 or such body's advisory committees, such notice shall be given by:

(A)(I) Publication in a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction that is finalized for printing prior to the time and date of the meeting, (II) posting on such newspaper's website, if available, and (III) posting on a statewide website, if available, established and maintained as a repository for such notices by a majority of Nebraska newspapers. Such notice shall be placed in the newspaper and on the websites by the newspaper; or

(B)(I) Posting to the newspaper's website, if available, and (II) posting to a statewide website, if available, established and maintained as a repository for such notices by a majority of Nebraska newspapers if no edition of a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction is to be finalized for printing prior to the time and date of the meeting. Such notice shall be placed in the newspaper and on the websites by the newspaper.

(ii) In the case of the governing body of a city of the second class or village, any advisory committee of such governing body, or the governing body of a rural or suburban fire protection district, such notice shall be given by:

(A)(I) Publication in a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction that is finalized for printing prior to the time and date of the meeting, (II) posting on such newspaper's website, if available, and (III) posting on a statewide website, if available, established and maintained as a repository for such notices by a majority of Nebraska newspapers. Such notice shall be placed in the newspaper and on the websites by the newspaper;

(B)(I) Posting to the newspaper's website, if available, and (II) posting on a statewide website, if available, established and maintained as a repository for such notices by a majority of Nebraska newspapers if no edition of a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction is to be finalized for printing prior to the time and date of the meeting. Such notice shall be placed in the newspaper and on the websites by the newspaper; or

(C) Posting written notice in three conspicuous public places in such city, village, or district.

Such notice shall be posted by the public body in the same three places for each meeting.

(iii) In the case of a public body not described in subdivision (1)(b)(i) or (ii) of this section, such notice shall be given by a method designated by the public body.

(iv) In case of refusal, neglect, or inability of the newspaper to publish the notice, the public body shall (A) post such notice on its website, if available, (B) request the newspaper submit a post on a statewide website, if available, established and maintained as a repository for such notices by a majority of Nebraska newspapers, and (C) post such notice in a conspicuous public place in such public body's jurisdiction. The public body shall keep a written record of such posting pursuant to subdivision (1)(b)(iv)(A) and (C) of this section and a written record of the request to the newspaper pursuant to subdivision (1)(b)(iv)(B) of this section. The record of such posting shall be evidence that such posting was done as required and shall be sufficient to fulfill the requirement of publication.

(c) In addition to a method of notice required by subdivision (1)(b)(i) or (ii) of this section, such notice may also be provided by any other appropriate method designated by such public body or such advisory committee.

(d) Each public body shall record the methods and dates of such notice in its minutes.

(e) Such notice shall contain an agenda of subjects known at the time of the publicized notice or a statement that the agenda, which shall be kept continually current, shall be readily available for public inspection at the principal office of the public body during normal business hours. Agenda items shall be sufficiently descriptive to give the public reasonable notice of the matters to be considered at the meeting. Except for items of an emergency nature, the agenda shall not be altered later than (i) twenty-four hours before the scheduled commencement of the meeting or (ii) forty-eight hours before the scheduled commencement of a meeting of a city council or village board scheduled outside the corporate limits of the municipality. The public body shall have the right to modify the agenda to include items of an emergency nature only at such public meeting.

(2)(a) The following entities may hold a meeting by means of virtual conferencing if the requirements of subdivision (2)(b) of this section are met:

(i) A state agency, state board, state commission, state council, or state committee, or an advisory committee of any such state entity;

(ii) An organization, including the governing body, created under the Interlocal Cooperation Act, the Joint Public Agency Act, or the Municipal Cooperative Financing Act;

(iii) The governing body of a public power district having a chartered territory of more than one county in this state;

(iv) The governing body of a public power and irrigation district having a chartered territory of more than one county in this state;

(v) An educational service unit;

(vi) The Educational Service Unit Coordinating Council;

(vii) An organization, including the governing body, of a risk management pool or its advisory committees organized in accordance with the Intergovernmental Risk Management Act;

- (viii) A community college board of governors;
- (ix) The Nebraska Brand Committee;
- (x) A local public health department;
- (xi) A metropolitan utilities district;
- (xii) A regional metropolitan transit authority; and
- (xiii) A natural resources district.

(b) The requirements for holding a meeting by means of virtual conferencing are as follows:

(i) Reasonable advance publicized notice is given as provided in subsection (1) of this section, including providing access to a dial-in number or link to the virtual conference;

(ii) In addition to the public's right to participate by virtual conferencing, reasonable arrangements are made to accommodate the public's right to attend at a physical site and participate as provided in section 84-1412, including reasonable seating, in at least one designated site in a building open to the public and identified in the notice, with: At least one member of the entity holding such meeting, or his or her designee, present at each site; a recording of the hearing by audio or visual recording devices; and a reasonable opportunity for input, such as public comment or questions, is provided to at least the same extent as would be provided if virtual conferencing was not used;

(iii) At least one copy of all documents being considered at the meeting is available at any physical site open to the public where individuals may attend the virtual conference. The public body shall also provide links to an electronic copy of the agenda, all documents being considered at the meeting, and the current version of the Open Meetings Act; and

(iv) Except as otherwise provided in this subdivision, subsection (1) of section 70-1014, subsection (2) of section 70-1014.02, or subsection (4) of section 79-2204, no more than one-half of the meetings of the state entities, advisory committees, boards, councils, organizations, or governing bodies are held by virtual conferencing in a calendar year. In the case of (A) an organization created under the Interlocal Cooperation Act that sells electricity or natural gas, (B) an organization created under the Municipal Cooperative Financing Act, (C) a governing body of a risk management pool and any advisory committee of such governing body, or (D) any advisory committee of any state entity created in response to the Opioid Prevention and Treatment Act, such organization, governing body, or committee may hold more than one-half of its meetings by virtual conferencing if such organization holds at least one meeting each calendar year that is not by virtual conferencing.

(3) Virtual conferencing, emails, faxes, or other electronic communication shall not be used to circumvent any of the public government purposes established in the Open Meetings Act.

(4) The secretary or other designee of each public body shall maintain a list of the news media requesting notification of meetings and shall make reasonable efforts to provide advance notification to them of the time and place of each meeting and the subjects to be discussed at that meeting.

(5) When it is necessary to hold an emergency meeting without reasonable advance public notice, the nature of the emergency shall be stated in the minutes and any formal action taken in

such meeting shall pertain only to the emergency. Such emergency meetings may be held by virtual conferencing. The provisions of subsection (4) of this section shall be complied with in conducting emergency meetings. Complete minutes of such emergency meetings specifying the nature of the emergency and any formal action taken at the meeting shall be made available to the public by no later than the end of the next regular business day.

(6) A public body may allow a member of the public or any other witness to appear before the public body by means of virtual conferencing.

(7)(a) Notwithstanding subsections (2) and (5) of this section, if an emergency is declared by the Governor pursuant to the Emergency Management Act as defined in section 81-829.39, a public body the territorial jurisdiction of which is included in the emergency declaration, in whole or in part, may hold a meeting by virtual conferencing during such emergency if the public body gives reasonable advance publicized notice as described in subsection (1) of this section. The notice shall include information regarding access for the public and news media. In addition to any formal action taken pertaining to the emergency, the public body may hold such meeting for the purpose of briefing, discussion of public business, formation of tentative policy, or the taking of any action by the public body.

(b) The public body shall provide access by providing a dial-in number or a link to the virtual conference. The public body shall also provide links to an electronic copy of the agenda, all documents being considered at the meeting, and the current version of the Open Meetings Act. Reasonable arrangements shall be made to accommodate the public's right to hear and speak at the meeting and record the meeting. Subsection (4) of this section shall be complied with in conducting such meetings.

(c) The nature of the emergency shall be stated in the minutes. Complete minutes of such meeting specifying the nature of the emergency and any formal action taken at the meeting shall be made available for inspection as provided in subsection (5) of section 84-1413.

(8) In addition to any other statutory authorization for virtual conferencing, any public body not listed in subdivision (2)(a) of this section may hold a meeting by virtual conferencing if:

(a) The purpose of the virtual meeting is to discuss items that are scheduled to be discussed or acted upon at a subsequent non-virtual open meeting of the public body;

(b) No action is taken by the public body at the virtual meeting; and

(c) The public body complies with subdivisions (2)(b)(i) and (ii) of this section.

(9) This section does not apply to a meeting of the Nebraska Power Review Board or a public power district, a public power and irrigation district, an electric membership association, an electric cooperative company, a municipality having a generation and distribution system, or a registered group of municipalities if such meeting is subject to section 70-1034.

Source: Laws 1975, LB 325, § 4; Laws 1983, LB 43, § 3; Laws 1987, LB 663, § 25; Laws 1993, LB 635, § 2; Laws 1996, LB 469, § 6; Laws 1996, LB 1161, § 1; Laws 1999, LB 47, § 2; Laws 1999, LB 87, § 100; Laws 1999, LB 461, § 1; Laws 2000, LB 968, § 85; Laws 2004, LB 821, § 38; Laws 2004, LB 1179, § 2; Laws 2006, LB 898, § 2; Laws 2007, LB199, § 9; Laws 2009, LB361, § 2; Laws 2012, LB735, § 1; Laws 2013, LB510, § 1; Laws 2017, LB318, § 1; Laws 2019, LB212, § 5; Laws 2020, LB148, § 3; Laws 2021, LB83, § 12; Laws 2022, LB742, § 1;

Laws 2022, LB908, § 1; Laws 2022, LB922, § 13; Laws 2024, LB287, § 74;
Laws 2024, LB399, § 4; Laws 2024, LB1370, § 8; Laws 2025, LB521, § 82.

Operative Date: May 31, 2025

Cross References

- **Emergency Management Act**, see section 81-829.36.
- **Intergovernmental Risk Management Act**, see section 44-4301.
- **Interlocal Cooperation Act**, see section 13-801.
- **Joint Public Agency Act**, see section 13-2501.
- **Municipal Cooperative Financing Act**, see section 18-2401.
- **Opioid Prevention and Treatment Act**, see section 71-2485.

Annotations

- Under subsection (1) of this section, the Legislature has imposed only two conditions on the public body's notification method of a public meeting: (1) It must give reasonable advance publicized notice of the time and place of each meeting and (2) it must be recorded in the public body's minutes. *City of Elkhorn v. City of Omaha*, 272 Neb. 867, 725 N.W.2d 792 (2007).
- An emergency is "(a)ny event or occasional combination of circumstances which calls for immediate action or remedy; pressing necessity; exigency; a sudden or unexpected happening; an unforeseen occurrence or condition." *Steenblock v. Elkhorn Township Bd.*, 245 Neb. 722, 515 N.W.2d 128 (1994).
- An agenda which gives reasonable notice of the matters to be considered at a meeting of a city council complies with the requirements of this section. *Pokorny v. City of Schuyler*, 202 Neb. 334, 275 N.W.2d 281 (1979).
- When notice is required, a notice of a special meeting of a city council posted in three public places at 10:00 p.m. on the day preceding the meeting is not reasonable advance publicized notice of a meeting as is required by this section. *Pokorny v. City of Schuyler*, 202 Neb. 334, 275 N.W.2d 281 (1979).
- Teacher waived right to object to lack of public notice in board of education employment hearing by voluntary participation in the hearing without objection. *Alexander v. School Dist. No. 17*, 197 Neb. 251, 248 N.W.2d 335 (1976).
- A county board of commissioners and a county board of equalization are not required to give separate notices when the notice states only the time and place that the boards meet and directs a citizen to where the agendas for each board can be found. *Wolf v. Grubbs*, 17 Neb. App. 292, 759 N.W.2d 499 (2009).
- A county board of equalization is a public body which is required to give advanced publicized notice of its meetings. *Wolf v. Grubbs*, 17 Neb. App. 292, 759 N.W.2d 499 (2009).
- Notice of recessed and reconvened meetings must be given in the same fashion as the original meeting. *Wolf v. Grubbs*, 17 Neb. App. 292, 759 N.W.2d 499 (2009).
- True notice of a meeting is not given by burying such in the minutes of a prior board proceeding. *Wolf v. Grubbs*, 17 Neb. App. 292, 759 N.W.2d 499 (2009).
- An agenda notice which merely stated "work order reports" was an inadequate notice under this section because it did not give interested persons knowledge that plans for a 345 kv transmission line through the district was going to be discussed and voted upon at the meeting. Inadequate agenda notice under this section meant there was a substantial

violation of the public meeting laws; however, later actions by the board of directors cured the defects in notice, and such actions were in substantial compliance with the statute. *Hansmeyer v. Nebraska Pub. Power Dist.*, 6 Neb. App. 889, 578 N.W.2d 476 (1998).

84-1412. Meetings of public body; rights of public; public body; powers and duties.

(1) Subject to the Open Meetings Act, the public has the right to attend and the right to speak at meetings of public bodies, and all or any part of a meeting of a public body, except for closed sessions called pursuant to section 84-1410, may be videotaped, televised, photographed, broadcast, or recorded by any person in attendance by means of a tape recorder, a camera, video equipment, or any other means of pictorial or sonic reproduction or in writing. Except for closed sessions called pursuant to section 84-1410, a public body shall allow members of the public an opportunity to speak at each meeting.

(2) It shall not be a violation of subsection (1) of this section for any public body to make and enforce reasonable rules and regulations regarding the conduct of persons attending, speaking at, videotaping, televising, photographing, broadcasting, or recording its meetings, including meetings held by virtual conferencing.

(3) No public body shall require members of the public to identify themselves as a condition for admission to the meeting nor shall such body require that the name of any member of the public be placed on the agenda prior to such meeting in order to speak about items on the agenda. The body shall require any member of the public desiring to address the body to identify himself or herself, including an address and the name of any organization represented by such person unless the address requirement is waived to protect the security of the individual.

(4) No public body shall, for the purpose of circumventing the Open Meetings Act, hold a meeting in a place known by the body to be too small to accommodate the anticipated audience.

(5) No public body shall be deemed in violation of this section if it holds its meeting in its traditional meeting place which is located in this state.

(6) No public body shall be deemed in violation of this section if it holds a meeting outside of this state if, but only if:

(a) A member entity of the public body is located outside of this state and the meeting is in that member's jurisdiction;

(b) All out-of-state locations identified in the notice are located within public buildings used by members of the entity or at a place which will accommodate the anticipated audience;

(c) Reasonable arrangements are made to accommodate the public's right to attend, hear, and speak at the meeting, including making virtual conferencing available at an in-state location to members, the public, or the press, if requested twenty-four hours in advance;

(d) No more than twenty-five percent of the public body's meetings in a calendar year are held out-of-state;

(e) Out-of-state meetings are not used to circumvent any of the public government purposes established in the Open Meetings Act; and

(f) The public body publishes notice of the out-of-state meeting at least twenty-one days before the date of the meeting in a legal newspaper of statewide circulation.

(7) Each public body shall, upon request, make a reasonable effort to accommodate the public's right to hear the discussion and testimony presented at a meeting.

(8) Public bodies shall make available at the meeting or the instate location for virtual conferencing as required by subdivision (6)(c) of this section, for examination and copying by members of the public, at least one copy of all reproducible written material to be discussed at an open meeting, either in paper or electronic form. Public bodies shall make available at least one current copy of the Open Meetings Act posted in the meeting room at a location accessible to members of the public. At the beginning of the meeting, the public shall be informed about the location of the posted information.

Source: Laws 1975, LB 325, § 5; Laws 1983, LB 43, § 4; Laws 1985, LB 117, § 2; Laws 1987, LB 324, § 5; Laws 1996, LB 900, § 1073; Laws 2001, LB 250, § 2; Laws 2004, LB 821, § 39; Laws 2006, LB 898, § 3; Laws 2008, LB962, § 1; Laws 2021, LB83, § 13; Laws 2024, LB43, § 21.

Annotations

- To preserve an objection that a public body failed to make documents available at a public meeting as required by subsection (8) of this section, a person who attends a public meeting must not only object to the violation, but must make that objection to the public body or to a member of the public body. *Stoetzel & Sons v. City of Hastings*, 265 Neb. 637, 658 N.W.2d 636 (2003).

84-1413. Meetings; minutes; roll call vote; secret ballot; when; agenda and minutes; required on website; when.

(1) Each public body shall keep minutes of all meetings showing the time, place, members present and absent, and the substance of all matters discussed.

(2) Any action taken on any question or motion duly moved and seconded shall be by roll call vote of the public body in open session, and the record shall state how each member voted or if the member was absent or not voting. The requirements of a roll call or viva voce vote shall be satisfied by a public body which utilizes an electronic voting device which allows the yeas and nays of each member of such public body to be readily seen by the public.

(3) The vote to elect leadership within a public body may be taken by secret ballot, but the total number of votes for each candidate shall be recorded in the minutes.

(4) The minutes of all meetings and evidence and documentation received or disclosed in open session shall be public records and open to public inspection during normal business hours.

(5) Minutes shall be written or kept as an electronic record and shall be available for inspection within ten working days or prior to the next convened meeting, whichever occurs earlier, except that cities of the second class and villages may have an additional ten working days if the employee responsible for writing or keeping the minutes is absent due to a serious illness or emergency.

(6) Beginning July 31, 2022, the governing body of a natural resources district, the city council of a city of the metropolitan class, the city council of a city of the primary class, the city council of a city of the first class, the county board of a county with a population greater than twenty-five thousand inhabitants, and the school board of a school district shall make available

on such entity's public website the agenda and minutes of any meeting of the governing body. The agenda shall be placed on the website at least twenty-four hours before the meeting of the governing body. Minutes shall be placed on the website at such time as the minutes are available for inspection as provided in subsection (5) of this section. This information shall be available on the public website for at least six months.

Source: Laws 1975, LB 325, § 6; Laws 1978, LB 609, § 3; Laws 1979, LB 86, § 9; Laws 1987, LB 663, § 26; Laws 2005, LB 501, § 1; Laws 2009, LB361, § 3; Laws 2015, LB365, § 2; Laws 2016, LB876, § 1; Laws 2021, LB83, § 14; Laws 2022, LB742, § 2.

Annotations

- Under prior law, if a person present at a meeting observes and fails to object to an alleged public meetings laws violation in the form of a failure to conduct rollcall votes before taking actions on questions or motions pending, that person waives his or her right to object at a later date. *Hauser v. Nebraska Police Stds. Adv. Council*, 264 Neb. 944, 653 N.W.2d 240 (2002).
- Subsection (2) of this section does not require the record to state that the vote was by roll call, but requires only that the record show if and how each member voted. Neither does the statute set a time limit for recording the results of a vote, after which no corrections of the record can be made. If no intervening rights of third persons have arisen, a board of county commissioners has power to correct the record of the proceedings had at a previous meeting so as to make them speak the truth, particularly where the correction supplies some omitted fact or action and is done not to contradict or change the original record but to have the record show that a certain action was taken or thing done, which the original record fails to show. *State ex rel. Schuler v. Dunbar*, 214 Neb. 85, 333 N.W.2d 652 (1983).
- Failure by a public governing body, as defined under section 84-1409, R.R.S.1943, to take and record a roll call vote on an action, as required by section 84-1413(2), R.S.Supp.,1980, grants any citizen the right to sue for the purpose of having the action declared void. In this case such failure could not be later corrected by a nunc pro tunc order because there was no showing that a roll call vote on the disputed action was actually taken, and even if it was the record showed it was not recorded until over a year later. Sections 23-1301, R.R.S.1943, and 23-1302, R.R.S.1943, make it the duty of the county clerk to record proceedings of the board of county commissioners. *State ex rel. Schuler v. Dunbar*, 208 Neb. 69, 302 N.W.2d 674 (1981).
- There is no requirement that a public body make a record of where notice was published or posted. *Wolf v. Grubbs*, 17 Neb. App. 292, 759 N.W.2d 499 (2009).

84-1414. Unlawful action by public body; declared void or voidable by district court; when; duty to enforce open meeting laws; citizen's suit; procedure; violations; penalties.

(1) Any motion, resolution, rule, regulation, ordinance, or formal action of a public body made or taken in violation of the Open Meetings Act shall be declared void by the district court if the suit is commenced within one hundred twenty days of the meeting of the public body at which the alleged violation occurred. Any motion, resolution, rule, regulation, ordinance, or formal action of a public body made or taken in substantial violation of the Open Meetings Act shall be voidable by the district court if the suit is commenced more than one hundred twenty days after but within one year of the meeting of the public body in which the alleged violation occurred. A suit to void any final action shall be commenced within one year of the action.

(2) The Attorney General and the county attorney of the county in which the public body ordinarily meets shall enforce the Open Meetings Act.

(3) Any citizen of this state may commence a suit in the district court of the county in which the public body ordinarily meets or in which the plaintiff resides for the purpose of requiring compliance with or preventing violations of the Open Meetings Act, for the purpose of declaring an action of a public body void, or for the purpose of determining the applicability of the act to discussions or decisions of the public body. It shall not be a defense that the citizen attended the meeting and failed to object at such time. The court may order payment of reasonable attorney's fees and court costs to a successful plaintiff in a suit brought under this section.

(4) Any member of a public body who knowingly violates or conspires to violate or who attends or remains at a meeting knowing that the public body is in violation of any provision of the Open Meetings Act shall be guilty of a Class IV misdemeanor for a first offense and a Class III misdemeanor for a second or subsequent offense.

Source: Laws 1975, LB 325, § 9; Laws 1977, LB 39, § 318; Laws 1983, LB 43, § 5; Laws 1992, LB 1019, § 126; Laws 1994, LB 621, § 2; Laws 1996, LB 900, § 1074; Laws 2004, LB 821, § 40; Laws 2006, LB 898, § 4.

Annotations

- The Legislature has granted standing to a broad scope of its citizens for the very limited purpose of challenging meetings allegedly in violation of the Open Meetings Act, so that they may help police the public policy embodied by the act. *Schauer v. Grooms*, 280 Neb. 426, 786 N.W.2d 909 (2010).
- Any citizen of the state may commence an action to declare a public body's action void. *City of Elkhorn v. City of Omaha*, 272 Neb. 867, 725 N.W.2d 792 (2007).
- The reading of ordinances constitutes a formal action under subsection (1) of this section. *City of Elkhorn v. City of Omaha*, 272 Neb. 867, 725 N.W.2d 792 (2007).
- If a person present at a meeting observes a public meetings law violation in the form of an improper closed session and fails to object, that person waives his or her right to object at a later date. *Wasikowski v. Nebraska Quality Jobs Bd.*, 264 Neb. 403, 648 N.W.2d 756 (2002).
- Under the Public Meetings Act, a county lacks capacity to maintain an action to declare its official conduct "void" for noncompliance with the act. *County of York v. Johnson*, 230 Neb. 403, 432 N.W.2d 215 (1988).
- When a petitioner under this section is successful in the district court, that court may allow attorney fees. *Tracy Corp. II v. Nebraska Pub. Serv. Comm.*, 218 Neb. 900, 360 N.W.2d 485 (1984).
- Informal discussions between the Tax Commissioner and the State Board of Equalization in which instructions were clarified, with such clarification leading to the amendment of hearing notices, did not constitute a public meeting subject to the provisions of this section. *Box Butte County v. State Board of Equalization and Assessment*, 206 Neb. 696, 295 N.W.2d 670 (1980).
- The right to collaterally attack an order made in contravention of the Public Meeting Act must occur within a period of one year as is specifically provided by this section. *Witt v. School District No. 70*, 202 Neb. 63, 273 N.W.2d 669 (1979).
- Statutory change, requiring "publicized notice" for board of education employment hearings, occurring between dates meeting scheduled and conducted, held not to void

proceedings. *Alexander v. School Dist. No. 17*, 197 Neb. 251, 248 N.W.2d 335 (1976).

- Voiding an entire meeting is a proper remedy for violations of the Open Meetings Act. Once a meeting has been declared void pursuant to Nebraska's public meetings law, board members are prohibited from considering any information obtained at the illegal meeting. *Wolf v. Grubbs*, 17 Neb. App. 292, 759 N.W.2d 499 (2009).
- Actions by the board of directors were merely voidable under this section, and not void. Pursuant to subsection (3) of this section, the plaintiffs were awarded partial attorney fees because they were successful in having the court declare that the board of directors was in substantial violation of the statute, even though the plaintiffs did not get the relief requested of having the board's actions declared void. *Hansmeyer v. Nebraska Pub. Power Dist.*, 6 Neb. App. 889, 578 N.W.2d 476 (1998).

2. Minutes of July 7, 2026, meeting.

BOARD OF PARKS COMMISSIONERS
July 7, 2026

A regular meeting of the Board of Parks Commissioners of the City of Columbus, Nebraska, was convened in open and public session on July 7, 2026, at 12 p.m. in the Columbus Community Building, Community Room, 2500 14 Street, Columbus, Nebraska. Notice of this meeting was given in advance thereof by publication in the Columbus Telegram on July 1, 2026, with a copy of the proof of publication being on file in the office of the city clerk. Availability of the agenda was communicated in the advance notice to the mayor, members of the city council, and members of the Board of Parks Commissioners. All proceedings hereafter shown were taken while the convened meeting was open to the public.

- 1. Statement of compliance with open meetings act.** Chair Brezenski announced that a copy of the Open Meetings Act is posted in the meeting room. Present were members Araceli Esquivel, Jon Brezenski, Brad Hansen, Tina Pelan, Gary Puetz, Bruce Schmidt, Lynn Sjuts, and Stacy Smith. Member Nick Larson was absent. City staff members included Assistant City Clerk Linda Nickeson, Park and Recreation Director Sydney Mroczek, Park Superintendent Tom Ek, and Park and Recreation Coordinators Alondra Castillo and Jake Novicki.
- 2. Minutes of May 5, 2026, meeting.** The minutes were approved as presented with a motion by Sjuts and a second by Smith. Esquivel, Brezenski, Hansen, Pelan, Puetz, Schmidt, Sjuts, and Smith voted "Aye" and none voted "Nay". Larson was absent.
- 3. Park and Recreation Director report.** Mroczek reviewed the report and noted that permission was granted by the City Council for staff to apply for a grant to construct a connectivity trail within west Pawnee Park. Ek confirmed that the new Sertomaland playground sign is ready to be installed.
- 4. Adjournment.** The meeting adjourned at 12:11 p.m.

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
: Linda Nickeson

3. Canned beer only permit for the fall 2026 adult softball league at Gerrard Park.



Accountability - Dedication
Honesty - Integrity - Respect

MEMORANDUM

DATE: 07/22/2026
TO: Board of Park Commissioners
FROM: Sydney Mroczek, Parks and Recreation Director
RE: Canned Beer Only Permit

RECOMMENDATION:

To approve the "Canned Beer Only" permit for the Park and Recreation Adult Fall Softball League for the 2026 Season.

DISCUSSION:

The Columbus Parks and Recreation staff and the adult softball players at Gerrard Park are good stewards of the canned beer privilege and would like to request continued use in the 2026 season. Staff will be present for all games and provides an atmosphere of safe and responsible drinking by adult softball players. We do have a Canned Beer Rule that is presented to all teams and players at the beginning of the season that states:

MINOR RULE:

Any minor who is on a team roster and is caught drinking at Gerrard Park will be suspended for one year from date from participating and being present at Gerrard Park or Park and Recreation Events. Law Enforcement will be contacted immediately regarding the incident. The entire team, including the minor who is caught drinking, will have the forfeit the rest of the season without a refund.

CANNED BEER ONLY:

Consumption of canned beer is restricted to within the confines of the softball complex. The softball complex is physically separated from the rest of the park by the outfield fences and borders between all the fields. Consumption of canned beer is not allowed in the dugout, parking lot, or outside the softball complex. Consumption of canned beer is not allowed by players or staff inside the concession stand. Any violation of the Canned Beer Rules will result in the offender being banned and the team will forfeit the next weeks games.

SIGNATURE:

Concurrence:

By: Jake Novicki

Signature:

By: Sydney Mroczek

Approved:

By: Betsy Eckhardt



City of Columbus Special Event Packet

APPLICATION PROCESS & PLANNING A SUCCESSFUL EVENT

A Special Event Application is required for events or activities using City-owned property, requiring the closure of a City streets/sidewalks/parking lots, or requiring traffic control. Applications must be submitted no less than **60 days prior** to the event. Permits are processed on a first come, first served basis. *For larger events requiring the coordination of numerous spectators, vendors, volunteers, etc., it is highly recommended that the Event Sponsor contact City staff at least four months or up to one year in advance of the event to reserve your dates in the requested space. Written Application along with all supporting documentation must then be submitted no less than 45 days prior to the event, or risk denial of your permit.* Some events may require approval from City Council. For events that would require the use of downtown venues in proximity to one another, it may be necessary for both event organizers to combine each separate event into one special event application for City of Columbus coordination purposes.

[Click here](#) to download the Special Event Packet.

Submit your completed application to:
City of Columbus
2500 14th St, Suite 3, P.O. Box 1677
Columbus, NE 68602
Email: eventpermit@columbusne.us
Phone: (402) 562-4232

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Completion of the application packet will help us to identify the scope of your event and the support services you may need. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the details of the organized event have been communicated thoroughly with City staff. Please coordinate with necessary City staff in advance of the event to make sure you are able to execute your tasks during the day and time of your event. The applicant should not expect City of Columbus staff to be present during the duration of the event. Topics for consideration with contact information for appropriate City staff are found on the **ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF CONTACT** (Pg 10).

Mandatory documentation is listed below. All applicable documentation must be turned in at the time of application submission along with all appropriate fees. **Please submit as much descriptive information as possible with your application.**

- Special Event Permit Application, signed and filled out in its entirety (Pg 6 – 7)
- Proof of Liability Insurance coverage (if required)
- **Additional forms and documentation as applicable to your event**

Upon review of the application, the Special Event Committee may approve the event or decide that the event will require formal approval by the Columbus City Council. Applicants may be required to attend a review meeting with the Special Event Committee prior to the event date to finalize the logistics.

DEFINITIONS

EVENT SPONSOR: The person or organization that initiates, plans and carries out a project or activity.

VENDOR: Any person, group, organization, or business selling or *providing* a product or service. Examples include *but are not limited to*: the sale of food or merchandise, inflatables, carnival rides, portable toilets, tents, certain types of live animal entertainment, vehicles on display, or other entity which the Special Event Committee deems to be considered a **vendor**.

VOLUNTEER: A person, group, or organization not selling or providing a product or service, who freely offers to take part in the event, including participants who host and organize activities at the event.

LIABILITY INSURANCE

The **Event Sponsor** must provide a Certificate of Liability Insurance (or a copy of the complete policy) demonstrating minimum coverage specifically covering the event as follows below. ***Verbiage must be included describing the event activities which will take place at the event.***

Further, if the event sponsor, vendor(s) or volunteer(s) make available any operations or activities as described below, a Certificate of Liability Insurance will be required listing that those specific activities are covered by the policy and that the City of Columbus is listed as additional insured on a primary, non-contributory basis. Insurance is required for any event which includes any of the following:

Amusement rides, carnivals or circuses, inflatables, skateboarding facilities, any motorized vehicles, dunking booths, firefighter water fights, haunted houses, animal racing, hot air balloons, liquor and alcohol sales and/or consumption, truck or tractor pulls, rodeos, or any other activity the Special Event Committee deems necessary,

MINIMUM LIABILITY INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS (Sample Certificate included at the end of Packet)

- Limit for each occurrence must be \$1,000,000
- Limit for damage to rented premises (each occurrence) \$100,000
- Limit for Personal & Adv Injury \$1,000,000
- General Aggregate Limit \$2,000,000
- Products – Comp/Op Aggregate Limit \$2,000,000
- The policy must include a waiver of subrogation in favor of the City of Columbus, NE.

ADDITIONAL \$2,000,000 UMBRELLA REQUIRED FOR:

- Any of the activities listed above which require the City of Columbus to be named as additional insured on a primary, non-contributory basis.

EXCEPTION: Typically, Liability Insurance coverage is not required for Neighborhood Block Parties, reservations of a shelter in a City Park, or weddings in a City Park. *Exclusions may apply.*

USAGE OF CITY PARKS AND HIKE/BIKE TRAILS

Columbus is home to over 400 acres of City Parks, and an extensive system of recreational trails for residents and visitors to enjoy. These parks and trails offer an abundance of availability to host races, runs, walks, etc. City staff strongly encourages applicants to consider the use of community trails and parks when planning special events. Community trails and parks offer safety to participants by allowing minimal interference caused by streets or traffic areas. Gatherings/picnics in City Parks do not typically require Liability Insurance unless additional entertainment is provided by the Event Sponsor, such as inflatables or petting zoos.

CITY PARKING LOTS/FACILITIES

The City strongly encourages the use of City-owned parking facilities rather than closing streets for downtown events. However, a request to close a City street and/or public right-of-way may be granted when no other reasonable alternative exists.

STREET CLOSURES

All street closures must be approved by Administration. It is the Event Sponsor's responsibility to communicate with all neighbors and property owners whom the street closure will affect, and obtain their signatures stating that they have no objection to the closure. Use **STREET CLOSURE REQUEST** (Pg 13).

It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide their own barricades. If they are to be used after dark, they must be lighted. For large public events requiring street closures, City staff may be able to provide barricade materials, dependent upon the season that the event occurs. Contact the Street Department at 402-562-4253 for availability or questions on barricades and cones.

The use of arterial streets is strongly discouraged. All activity shall be planned and carried out to allow the least possible inconvenience to the traveling public. City staff understands that the crossing of an arterial or collector street may be necessary. However, City staff from Public Works, Police, Parks, Engineering, and Administration will evaluate on a case by case situation should these uses be requested.

Neighborhood Block Parties that have requested street closure do not typically require Liability Insurance unless additional entertainment or services are set up in the street (including but not limited to: inflatables, musical band, commercial food stand).

CLOSURE OF FIVE (5) PARKING STALLS OR LESS

If your event includes only the closing of five parking stalls or less, a City of Columbus Special Event Application is not required. Instead, please contact the office of City Administration at 402-562-4232.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

All requirements of the Stormwater Management Plan must be followed including:

- Portable restroom facilities shall be properly staked and secured and not located within 50-feet of a stormsewer inlet or against a street or parking lot curb.
- Trash receptacles brought in on site must have provisions for a tarp or appropriate cover for after event hours to prevent rain or snow from entering.
- No dumping of any chemicals, cleaners, oils, or other grey waters into the stormsewer system or natural drainage ways.

If you have any questions, or if non-approved or accidental discharges occur to the stormsewer system or nature drainage ways, please contact the Engineering Department at 402-562-4309.

ELECTRICAL REQUIREMENTS

Electricity is available in Frankfort Square and several City parks. Fees will apply.

FEES

Possible fees may be incurred for certain services, as applicable. For the full City of Columbus fee schedule, see: <https://www.columbusne.us/99/Schedule-of-Fees>.

SANITATION and CLEANUP

The City provides a limited number of waste receptacles in the City parks and along the downtown sidewalks. Public use of City amenities is not to be impeded (i.e., covering City waste receptacles is prohibited). Additional waste receptacles or dumpsters are the sole responsibility of the applicant and must be placed on a hard surface such as asphalt or concrete.

The applicant is responsible for properly disposing of all waste and garbage throughout the event, and immediately upon conclusion of the event the area must be returned to a clean condition. As the Event Sponsor, if you set a standard of leaving the venue better than you found it, you will have a beneficial impact on the Columbus community and establish a good reputation for future events. *The Event Sponsor is responsible for all cleanup, and will be charged for any additional cleanup that is left to be done by the City.*

ALCOHOL PERMIT / SPECIAL DESIGNATED LICENSE

If the event involves the sale or use of alcohol, a Special Designated Liquor License, issued by Nebraska Liquor Control Commission pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. 53-124.11, is required. If the event involves the sale or use of alcohol in a Public Entertainment District an Entertainment Liquor License, issued by the Nebraska Control Commission is required pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. 53-132.17, is required.

Please contact the City Clerk's Office at (402) 562-4224 for the required timeline of submittals, as you will need to allow extra time for the approval process. Additional fees apply, and the license must include local approval by the City Council. *All alcohol vendors are required to check ID's and use bracelets or hand stamps to identify age of legal consumption.*

SAFETY AND SECURITY

The Event Sponsor is required to provide a detailed plan for crowd control and internal safety. It is the sole responsibility of the Event Sponsor to provide security, required by State law if alcohol is involved. The number and type of security personnel required will depend on expected attendance, location of the event, history of the event, nature of the event, street closures, and the amount and type of advertising used to promote the event. Please be aware that there are differences between certified law enforcement officers (authority and ability to arrest, enforce laws, discretion to use force) and private security (limited by law to observe, report and deter crime but not authorized to use force or make arrests). For more questions regarding event safety and security, please contact the Columbus Police Department at (402) 564-3201.

MARKETING/ADVERTISING/PROMOTION

Receipt of approval from all involved parties is strongly encouraged before the event is marketed, advertised, or promoted. Ensure that event materials such as handouts, websites, social media posts, etc., include details, maps, and parking options as described in this application, following approval by the City.

SIGNAGE

City of Columbus regulations prohibit placement of advertising signs on utility poles, traffic controllers, and traffic signs. It is also prohibited to place a sign, poster, or notice of any kind in the street right-of-way or on any other structure located in the right-of-way. Signs that are hung on utility poles, traffic signs, or traffic lights create a safety risk and also may cause damage. They also create a traffic hazard when placed on roadside corners by distracting drivers or blocking the view of motorists. Even small signs stuck into the ground are a potential traffic hazard if located in the right-of-way. A good standard is to keep signs behind the sidewalk or fifteen (15) feet from the roadside. *The use of spray paint or permanent marking paint is prohibited.* Sidewalk chalk is allowed.

According to Section 97.01(C) of the City Code, all signage is prohibited in the City Parks, except by authorization of the Board of Parks Commissioners, or in certain cases by the Public Property Director or the Park Superintendent.

Improper placement of signage will be removed by the City. All signage must be removed from City of Columbus property within four hours of the conclusion of the event.

AMPLIFIED SOUND

Amplified sound must be directed away from residences and may only be allowed during the hours of 7:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m., with the exception of July 4th and New Year's Eve, or by special approval

CHANGES AND CANCELLATIONS

All cancellations must be made in writing or emailed to eventpermit@columbusne.us. Cancellations should be received no later than seven (7) days prior to the proposed event date. The City understands that minor changes may occur prior to the event. We ask the applicant to submit all changes immediately, no less than 48 hours prior to the event.

The City reserves the right to cancel, delay, or relocate an event prior to or on the day of the event due to poor weather conditions that may cause excessive damage to City property. City staff recommends the applicant have plans in place to notify participants of changes or cancellations. The City is not responsible for any costs associated with the changes or cancellations.

VISIBILITY

City staff recommends that event organizers be easily identifiable during the event by using safety vests or specific colored shirts so that the event sponsor & volunteers can easily be located.

PARADES

All parade routes must be approved by the City of Columbus, and the City reserves the right to allow for alternate parade routes. Throwing, tossing or pitching of candy/food/materials/etc. directly from floats is prohibited. Participants of the parade are asked to walk alongside the float and throw, toss, or pitch candy/food/materials/etc. to the crowd.



City of Columbus Special Event Permit Application

Answer all questions completely. Inaccurate or incomplete responses may result in the denial of a permit.

For the protection of the City of Columbus and its assets, and for the overall success of the event in question, the City of Columbus Special Event Committee reserves the right to make exceptions to or to impose additional requirements to the policies stated herein, based on individual circumstances.

EVENT SPONSOR/APPLICANT/RESPONSIBLE PARTY INFORMATION		
1. NAME: Jake Novicki		2. TODAY'S DATE: 3.11.2026
3. ADDRESS:		4. EMAIL: jacobnovicki@columbusne.us
5. CITY: Columbus	6. STATE: Nebraska	7. ZIP CODE: 68601
8. DAY PHONE: 402-562-4240		9. CELL PHONE: 531-348-3606
10. COMPANY/ORGANIZATION NAME, IF APPLICABLE: City of Columbus, NE		
11. COMPANY ADDRESS/CITY/STATE/ZIP: 2500 14th Street, Suite 3 Columbus, NE 68601		12. COMPANY PHONE:
13. NAME OF ALTERNATE CONTACT PERSON:		14. ALTERNATE'S CELL PHONE:
EVENT INFORMATION		
15. EVENT NAME: Adult Slow Pitch Softball League		
16. EVENT LOCATION: Gerrard Park - Columbus, NE		
17. ESTIMATED # OF PARTICIPANTS: 25 Teams	18. ESTIMATED # OF SPECTATORS: N/A	
19. ACTUAL EVENT DATE(S): August 12th, 2026	20. ACTUAL EVENT TIME(S): 5pm-10pm	
21. EVENT SETUP DATE(S):	22. EVENT SETUP TIME(S):	
23. EVENT TEAR-DOWN DATE(S): September 30th, 2026	24. EVENT TEAR-DOWN TIME(S):	
25. ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS ATTACHED – Check as applicable: ☒ Checklist (Pg 8 – 9) ☒ Acknowledgement of Contact (Pg 10) ☐ Site Plan (Pg 11) ☐ List of Vendors (Pg 12) ☐ Street Closure Request Consent Form (Pg 13) ☐ Certificate(s) or Proof of Liability Insurance (see instructions on Pg 2)		
26. Please provide a <u>detailed description</u> of the event, using a separate sheet of paper if necessary. Adult Slow Pitch Softball League that begins Tuesday, May 19th and officially end on Wednesday, July 9th. Men's League is every Tuesday and Co-Ed is every Wednesday during this time frame.		



City of Columbus

Special Event Permit Application

APPLICANT ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I, the Event Sponsor, agree to indemnify and defend the City of Columbus, its officials, agents and employees (the "Indemnities") against any losses, costs, damages, liabilities, claims, suits, actions, causes of action and expenses resulting from, arising out of, or relating to any negligence or intentional misconduct by the applicant of the sponsoring organization, its officers, employees, or any person under its control in connection with this permit.

As applicable, I, or the organization acting as the Event Sponsor, have provided within this application, the required insurance which will cover all losses that may occur at the event, and to, by and between the Event Sponsor and the Volunteers. All Vendors have provided their own insurance, unless otherwise stated. (Per Definitions of Event Sponsor, Vendor, and Volunteer on Pg 2)

I affirm that all answers given and statements made on this application are complete and true to the best of my knowledge and beliefs. I have read and understand the terms and conditions outlined in this application. Failure to comply with the conditions of the special event application may result in revocation of current and future applications. I agree to be bound by the above terms as a condition to the issuance of the Special Event Permit.

The undersigned person, as the Applicant, does hereby agree and represent that he or she is legally capable to sign this application, and to lawfully bind the Applicant (and the Applicant's Organization, if applicable) as the Event Sponsor to the terms and conditions herein.

Jake Novicki

NAME OF APPLICANT

NAME OF ORGANIZATION

Jake Novicki
SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT

DATE

Before submitting your application, please make sure that the following steps have been completed. Have you:

- ☒ Signed and dated your application?
- ☒ Provided *all* documents and information as requested in this application?
- ☒ Submitted required Certificate(s) of Insurance?

Submit the completed application to:

City of Columbus
2500 14th St, Suite 3. PO Box 1677
Columbus, NE 68602
eventpermit@columbusne.us
Phone: (402) 562-4232

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Approved by Administration:

Approved by Parks & Recreation (if applicable):

Betsy Eckhardt
Director of General Services

07/22/2026
Date

Sydney Mroczek
Park and Recreation Director

07/22/2026
Date

Approved by Police Department (if applicable):

Approved by Public Works (if applicable):

[Signature]

Chief of Police

07/14/2026

Date

Public Works Director

Date



City of Columbus Special Event Packet CHECKLIST

PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY TO YOUR EVENT.

See ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CONTACT (Pg 10) for contact information of applicable City Departments.

NAME OF EVENT Adult Slow Pitch Softball League		
Reservation of a City Park for event (if Yes, check which one. Possible fees apply.) ☐ Frankfort Square ☐ Pawnee Park ☐ Bradshaw Park ☐ Centennial Park ☒ Gerrard Park ☐ Glur Park ☐ Wilderness Park ☐ Sunset Park ☐ Other small neighborhood park _____ (name of park) ☐ Public Entertainment District _____ (name of district)	YES X	NO
Description of Event: Coed Adult Slow Pitch Softball League that begins Wednesday, August 12th and officially end on Wednesday, September 30th. Coed is every Wednesday during this time frame.		
Reservation of a shelter within a City Park – fees apply		X
Wedding in a City Park – fee applies		X
Electricity – fees apply, payable at the City Clerk’s office		X
Participants in addition to Event Sponsor: Attach LIST OF VENDORS (Pg 12). <u>All must have the required Liability Insurance. See Pg 2</u>		X
Sale of Merchandise, Food, Beverages: Sales on street or parking lot requires Vendor Permit from the Police Department; Sales in City Park requires Concessionaire permit .		X
Parade: Attach requested route		X
Street Usage/Closure: If the event is in the street, street barricades are required. Signatures of affected residents/businesses are required. Use Street Closure Request Consent Form (Pg 13)		X
Neighborhood Block Party		X
Parking Space(s) blocked on City streets or Lots		X
Use of City-Owned Parking Lot		X
Tents: Show setup on Site Plan.		X



Alcohol served/sold: complete a Special Designated License Application (SDL). Contact City Clerk at (402) 562-4224 to learn about the required timeline of submittals. Additional fees apply, and the license must include local approval by the City Council. • Apply at the NE Liquor Control Commission https://lcc.nebraska.gov/special-designated-licenses • Fencing required. NLCC Title 237, Chapter 2, Section 013.03F requires 2 rows of fencing, placed 4' apart, unless waived by the Nebraska Liquor Control Commission. Orange plastic fencing is recommended. • Attach copy of SDL Application to this application. • Must check all ID and use bracelets or hand stamps during the event.	YES	NO
Alcohol NOT served/sold: (Bring Your Own Beverage – BYOB) • No glass containers allowed. • Personal serving size(s) only. • Event Sponsor responsible for monitoring underage drinking, waste pickup, providing bathroom facilities, etc.	X	
Fencing: Required for alcohol sales, per plan included on approved SDL.		X
Usage of bleachers, picnic tables or trash cans from Parks Department – fees apply		X
Usage of Sound System in Frankfort Square		X
Public Dance: Will require SDL if alcohol is served or sold.		X
Open Fires: Explain in detail		X
Occupation of City Park after 12:00 Midnight: Requires City Council approval		X
Bands or Amplified Music: Noise Ordinance enforced at 11:00 PM		X
Advertising/Promotion of event: Attach detailed plans. <i>Encouraged not to advertise until event approval is granted.</i>		X
Inflatable Devices: Show setup on Site Plan. Must have required <i>additional</i> Liability Insurance.		X
Live animal entertainment including: petting zoos, pony rides, and horse-drawn carriage rides Show setup on Site Plan, & provide clean up and disposal plan. Must have required <i>additional</i> Liability Insurance.		X
Carnival Rides: Show setup on Site Plan.		X
Powered Equipment: Attach list.		X
Spotlights or Lasers: Attach specifications.		X
Race or Competition: Attach detailed map. If street closure will be requested for race route, use Street Closure Request Consent Form (Pg 13)		X
Booths/Structures: Show setup on Site Plan. Attach additional specs as applicable.		X



Public Entertainment District Commons Area – fees apply, must currently hold a liquor license within a designated Public Entertainment District. (Those businesses that are not within the boundary of the Public Entertainment District must apply for an SDL to participate in a Commons Area event.) • On the site plan below, label the boundaries of the commons area requested, within a designated public entertainment district. • Provide a copy of current liquor license. • Apply to the NE Liquor Control Commission for a requisite entertainment district liquor license, and provide copy of application. • Follow all requirements set forth in Chapter 53 of the Nebraska Revised Statutes as to entertainment districts. • Upon receipt, provide a copy of entertainment district liquor license received from the NE Liquor Control Commission. • Designate the times, day for the sale and consumption of alcohol within the proposed commons area. (As required by State Statute: Food must be sold at all times which alcohol is being sold) • No glass containers allowed. • Comply with any and all conditions requirements, or restrictions that the City Administration or City Council has imposed on the Entertainment District use. • Must check all ID and use bracelets or hand stamps. • Must provide adequate restroom and waste disposal facilities.	YES	NO X
Other special/unique provision or information pertaining to the event which have not been addressed in this application – Please describe in detail:		



City of Columbus Special Event Packet Acknowledgment of Contact

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the details of their organized event have been communicated thoroughly with City Staff. **Prior to submittal of your special event permit application**, please coordinate with necessary City Staff in advance of the event to make sure you are able to execute your tasks during the day and time of your event. If City services are needed for an event, acknowledge below the date, point of contact and method in which you contacted applicable City department/s. *This form should be included with the Special Event Permit Application.*

For Services or Questions including, **Street Closures; Reservation of Frankfort Square; usage of Parking Lots; Parade Routes; Electricity; Insurance; Parking Stall Closure** – Please contact Administration:

Director of General Services, Betsy Eckhardt (email: betsy.eckhardt@columbusne.us)

Date Contacted: _____

Who was Contacted: _____

Method of Contact: ☒ Phone ☒ Email ☐ Personal Visit ☐ Other

For Services or Questions including **Reservation of City Parks (other than Frankfort Square), Concessionaires Permits, Rental of bleachers or picnic tables, usage of extra trash receptacles, usage of sound system in Frankfort Square** – Please contact the Park and Recreation Director:

Park and Recreation Director, Sydney Mroczek 402-562-4234 sydney.mroczek@columbusne.us

Date Contacted: _____

Who was Contacted: _____

Method of Contact: ☒ Phone ☒ Email ☐ Personal Visit ☐ Other

For Services or Questions including **Special Designated Liquor Licenses or special consideration of City Code by the City Council** – Please contact the City Clerk's Office:

402-562-4224 cclerk@columbusne.us

Date Contacted: _____

Who was Contacted: _____

Method of Contact: ☐ Phone ☐ Email ☐ Personal Visit ☐ Other

For Services or Questions including, **Traffic Control Materials (barricades, cones)** – Please contact the Street Department: 402-562-4253

Date Contacted: _____

Who was Contacted: _____

Method of Contact: ☐ Phone ☐ Email ☐ Personal Visit ☐ Other

For Services or Questions including **Safety, Security, Traffic Control Assistance, Vendor/Solicitors permits** – Please contact the Columbus Police Department: 402-564-3201

Date Contacted: _____

Who was Contacted: _____

Method of Contact: ☐ Phone ☐ Email ☐ Personal Visit ☐ Other

City of Columbus Special Event Packet



SITE PLAN

Draw a detailed site map, placing all tents, stages, activities, booths, portable toilets, gates, cooking equipment & fences, including the approximate sq. ft. area to be used. Attach additional sheets if necessary.

NAME OF EVENT:



*Sales on City street or parking lot **will require a Vendor Permit** from the Police Station

*Sales in a City Park **will require a Concessionaire Permit**, payable at the City Clerk's Office

[illegible]

City of Columbus
Special Event Packet
STREET CLOSURE REQUEST

CONSENT OF RESIDENTS/BUSINESSES AFFECTED BY EVENT

For use as applicable. City-Sponsored Events are exempt from completing the Consent Page

[illegible]

4. **Canned beer only permit for "Hayes Days" adult softball tournament at Gerrard Park, August 29, 2026.**



Accountability - Dedication
Honesty - Integrity - Respect

MEMORANDUM

DATE: 07/23/2026
TO: Board of Park Commissioners
FROM: Sydney Mroczek, Parks and Recreation Director
RE: Canned Beer Only Permit – Hayes Days Tournament

RECOMMENDATION:

To approve the "Canned Beer Only" permit for the Hayes Days Tournament on August 29th of 2026 at Gerrard Park.

DISCUSSION:

The Park and Recreation Staff and the adult softball players at Gerrard Park are good stewards of the canned beer privilege and would like to request continued use for the Hayes Days Tournament in August. Columbus Park and Recreation staff will be present for all games and provides an atmosphere of safe and responsible drinking by adult softball players. We do have a Canned Beer Rule that is presented to all teams and players at the beginning of the tournament that states:

MINOR RULE:

Any minor who is on a team roster and is caught drinking at Gerrard Park will be suspended for one year from date from participating and being present at Gerrard Park or Park and Recreation Events. Law Enforcement will be contacted immediately regarding the incident. The entire team, including the minor who is caught drinking, will have the forfeit the rest of the season without a refund.

CANNED BEER RULE:

Canned beer only. Consumption of canned beer is restricted to within the confines of the softball complex. The softball complex is physically separated from the rest of the park by the outfield fences and borders between all the fields. Consumption of canned beer is not allowed in the dugout, parking lot, or outside the softball complex. Consumption of canned beer is not allowed by players or staff inside the concession stand. Any violation of the Canned Beer Rules will result in the offender being banned.

SIGNATURE:

Concurrence:

By: Jake Novicki

Signature:

By: Sydney Mroczek

Approved:

By: Betsy Eckhardt



City of Columbus Special Event Permit Application

Answer all questions completely. Inaccurate or incomplete responses may result in the denial of a permit.

For the protection of the City of Columbus and its assets, and for the overall success of the event in question, the City of Columbus Special Event Committee reserves the right to make exceptions to or to impose additional requirements to the policies stated herein, based on individual circumstances.

EVENT SPONSOR/APPLICANT/RESPONSIBLE PARTY INFORMATION		
1. NAME: Tara Watchorn		2. TODAY'S DATE: 7/20/26
3. ADDRESS: 309 Centennial St		4. EMAIL: tarawatchorn@gmail.com
5. CITY: Columbus	6. STATE: NE	7. ZIP CODE: 68601
8. DAY PHONE: 402-659-8572		9. CELL PHONE:
10. COMPANY/ORGANIZATION NAME, IF APPLICABLE: Hayes Days Memorial Benefit		
11. COMPANY ADDRESS/CITY/STATE/ZIP: 309 Centennial St Columbus, NE 68601		12. COMPANY PHONE: 402-659-8572
13. NAME OF ALTERNATE CONTACT PERSON:		14. ALTERNATE'S CELL PHONE:
EVENT INFORMATION		
15. EVENT NAME: Hayes Days Memorial		
16. EVENT LOCATION: Gerrard Park		
17. ESTIMATED # OF PARTICIPANTS: 150-200	18. ESTIMATED # OF SPECTATORS: 50-100	
19. ACTUAL EVENT DATE(S): August 29, 2026	20. ACTUAL EVENT TIME(S): 8am-11pm	
21. EVENT SETUP DATE(S): August 28, 2026	22. EVENT SETUP TIME(S): Noon	
23. EVENT TEAR-DOWN DATE(S): August 30, 2026	24. EVENT TEAR-DOWN TIME(S): 3pm	
25. ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS ATTACHED – Check as applicable: ☒ Checklist (Pg 8 – 9) ☒ Acknowledgement of Contact (Pg 10) ☐ Site Plan (Pg 11) ☒ List of Vendors (Pg 12) ☐ Street Closure Request Consent Form (Pg 13) ☐ Certificate(s) or Proof of Liability Insurance (see instructions on Pg 2)		
26. Please provide a detailed description of the event, using a separate sheet of paper if necessary. We are running a memorial cancer benefit Co-ed softball tournament. All proceeds are donated to a local family going through a battle with cancer.		



City of Columbus

Special Event Permit Application

APPLICANT ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I, the Event Sponsor, agree to indemnify and defend the City of Columbus, its officials, agents and employees (the "Indemnities") against any losses, costs, damages, liabilities, claims, suits, actions, causes of action and expenses resulting from, arising out of, or relating to any negligence or intentional misconduct by the applicant of the sponsoring organization, its officers, employees, or any person under its control in connection with this permit.

As applicable, I, or the organization acting as the Event Sponsor, have provided within this application, the required insurance which will cover all losses that may occur at the event, and to, by and between the Event Sponsor and the Volunteers. All Vendors have provided their own insurance, unless otherwise stated. (Per Definitions of Event Sponsor, Vendor, and Volunteer on Pg 2)

I affirm that all answers given and statements made on this application are complete and true to the best of my knowledge and beliefs. I have read and understand the terms and conditions outlined in this application. Failure to comply with the conditions of the special event application may result in revocation of current and future applications. I agree to be bound by the above terms as a condition to the issuance of the Special Event Permit.

The undersigned person, as the Applicant, does hereby agree and represent that he or she is legally capable to sign this application, and to lawfully bind the Applicant (and the Applicant's Organization, if applicable) as the Event Sponsor to the terms and conditions herein.

Tara Watchorn
NAME OF APPLICANT

Tara Watchorn
SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT

Hayes Days Memorial
NAME OF ORGANIZATION

7/20/2026
DATE

Before submitting your application, please make sure that the following steps have been completed. Have you:

- ☐ Signed and dated your application?
- ☐ Provided *all* documents and information as requested in this application?
- ☐ Submitted required Certificate(s) of Insurance?

Submit the completed application to:

City of Columbus
2500 14th St, Suite 3. PO Box 1677
Columbus, NE 68602
eventpermit@columbusne.us
Phone: (402) 562-4232

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Approved by Administration:

Approved by Parks & Recreation (if applicable):

Director of General Services Date

Sydney Wroczek 07/23/2026
Park and Recreation Director Date

Approved by Police Department (if applicable):

Approved by Public Works (if applicable):

Chief of Police Date

Public Works Director Date



City of Columbus Special Event Packet CHECKLIST

PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY TO YOUR EVENT.

See ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CONTACT (Pg 10) for contact information of applicable City Departments.

NAME OF EVENT		
Reservation of a City Park for event (if Yes, check which one. Possible fees apply.) ☐ Frankfort Square ☐ Pawnee Park ☐ Bradshaw Park ☐ Centennial Park ☒ Gerrard Park ☐ Glur Park ☐ Wilderness Park ☐ Sunset Park ☐ Other small neighborhood park _____ (name of park) ☐ Public Entertainment District _____ (name of district)	YES	NO
Description of Event: We are running a memorial cancer benefit Co-ed softball tournament. All proceeds are donated to a local family going through a battle with cancer.		
Reservation of a shelter within a City Park – fees apply		X
Wedding in a City Park – fee applies		X
Electricity – fees apply, payable at the City Clerk’s office		X
Participants in addition to Event Sponsor: Attach LIST OF VENDORS (Pg 12). <u>All must have the required Liability Insurance. See Pg 2</u>	X	
Sale of Merchandise, Food, Beverages: Sales on street or parking lot requires Vendor Permit from the Police Department; Sales in City Park requires Concessionaire permit .		X
Parade: Attach requested route		X
Street Usage/Closure: If the event is in the street, street barricades are required. Signatures of affected residents/businesses are required. Use Street Closure Request Consent Form (Pg 13)		X
Neighborhood Block Party		X
Parking Space(s) blocked on City streets or Lots		X
Use of City-Owned Parking Lot		X
Tents: Show setup on Site Plan.		X



Alcohol served/sold: complete a Special Designated License Application (SDL). Contact City Clerk at (402) 562-4224 to learn about the required timeline of submittals. Additional fees apply, and the license must include local approval by the City Council. • Apply at the NE Liquor Control Commission https://lcc.nebraska.gov/special-designated-licenses • Fencing required. NLCC Title 237, Chapter 2, Section 013.03F requires 2 rows of fencing, placed 4' apart, unless waived by the Nebraska Liquor Control Commission. Orange plastic fencing is recommended. • Attach copy of SDL Application to this application. • Must check all ID and use bracelets or hand stamps during the event.	YES	NO
Alcohol NOT served/sold: (Bring Your Own Beverage – BYOB) • No glass containers allowed. • Personal serving size(s) only. • Event Sponsor responsible for monitoring underage drinking, waste pickup, providing bathroom facilities, etc.	X	
Fencing: Required for alcohol sales, per plan included on approved SDL.		X
Usage of bleachers, picnic tables or trash cans from Parks Department – fees apply		X
Usage of Sound System in Frankfort Square		X
Public Dance: Will require SDL if alcohol is served or sold.		X
Open Fires: Explain in detail		X
Occupation of City Park after 12:00 Midnight: Requires City Council approval		X
Bands or Amplified Music: Noise Ordinance enforced at 11:00 PM		X
Advertising/Promotion of event: Attach detailed plans. <i>Encouraged not to advertise until event approval is granted.</i>	X	
Inflatable Devices: Show setup on Site Plan. Must have required <i>additional</i> Liability Insurance.		X
Live animal entertainment including: petting zoos, pony rides, and horse-drawn carriage rides Show setup on Site Plan, & provide clean up and disposal plan. Must have required <i>additional</i> Liability Insurance.		X
Carnival Rides: Show setup on Site Plan.		X
Powered Equipment: Attach list.		X
Spotlights or Lasers: Attach specifications.		X
Race or Competition: Attach detailed map. If street closure will be requested for race route, use Street Closure Request Consent Form (Pg 13)		X
Booths/Structures: Show setup on Site Plan. Attach additional specs as applicable.		X



Public Entertainment District Commons Area – fees apply, must currently hold a liquor license within a designated Public Entertainment District. (Those businesses that are not within the boundary of the Public Entertainment District must apply for an SDL to participate in a Commons Area event.) • On the site plan below, label the boundaries of the commons area requested, within a designated public entertainment district. • Provide a copy of current liquor license. • Apply to the NE Liquor Control Commission for a requisite entertainment district liquor license, and provide copy of application. • Follow all requirements set forth in Chapter 53 of the Nebraska Revised Statutes as to entertainment districts. • Upon receipt, provide a copy of entertainment district liquor license received from the NE Liquor Control Commission. • Designate the times, day for the sale and consumption of alcohol within the proposed commons area. (As required by State Statute: Food must be sold at all times which alcohol is being sold) • No glass containers allowed. • Comply with any and all conditions requirements, or restrictions that the City Administration or City Council has imposed on the Entertainment District use. • Must check all ID and use bracelets or hand stamps. • Must provide adequate restroom and waste disposal facilities.	YES	NO X
Other special/unique provision or information pertaining to the event which have not been addressed in this application – Please describe in detail:		



City of Columbus Special Event Packet Acknowledgment of Contact

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the details of their organized event have been communicated thoroughly with City Staff. **Prior to submittal of your special event permit application**, please coordinate with necessary City Staff in advance of the event to make sure you are able to execute your tasks during the day and time of your event. If City services are needed for an event, acknowledge below the date, point of contact and method in which you contacted applicable City department/s. *This form should be included with the Special Event Permit Application.*

For Services or Questions including, **Street Closures; Reservation of Frankfort Square; usage of Parking Lots; Parade Routes; Electricity; Insurance; Parking Stall Closure** – Please contact Administration:

Director of General Services, Betsy Eckhardt (email: betsy.eckhardt@columbusne.us)

Date Contacted: _____

Who was Contacted: _____

Method of Contact: ☐ Phone ☐ Email ☐ Personal Visit ☐ Other

For Services or Questions including **Reservation of City Parks (other than Frankfort Square), Concessionaires Permits, Rental of bleachers or picnic tables, usage of extra trash receptacles, usage of sound system in Frankfort Square** – Please contact the Park and Recreation Director:

Park and Recreation Director, Sydney Mroczek 402-562-4234 sydney.mroczek@columbusne.us

Date Contacted: 3/19/2026

Who was Contacted: Jake Novicki

Method of Contact: ☒ Phone ☐ Email ☐ Personal Visit ☐ Other

For Services or Questions including **Special Designated Liquor Licenses or special consideration of City Code by the City Council** – Please contact the City Clerk's Office:

402-562-4224 cclerk@columbusne.us

Date Contacted: _____

Who was Contacted: _____

Method of Contact: ☐ Phone ☐ Email ☐ Personal Visit ☐ Other

For Services or Questions including, **Traffic Control Materials (barricades, cones)** – Please contact the Street Department: 402-562-4253

Date Contacted: _____

Who was Contacted: _____

Method of Contact: ☐ Phone ☐ Email ☐ Personal Visit ☐ Other

For Services or Questions including **Safety, Security, Traffic Control Assistance, Vendor/Solicitors permits** – Please contact the Columbus Police Department: 402-564-3201

Date Contacted: _____

Who was Contacted: _____

Method of Contact: ☐ Phone ☐ Email ☐ Personal Visit ☐ Other

City of Columbus Special Event Packet



SITE PLAN

Draw a detailed site map, placing all tents, stages, activities, booths, portable toilets, gates, cooking equipment & fences, including the approximate sq. ft. area to be used. Attach additional sheets if necessary.

NAME OF EVENT:



*Sales in a City Park **will require a Concessionaire Permit**, payable at the City Clerk's Office

Page 13
February 2020

City of Columbus
Special Event Packet
STREET CLOSURE REQUEST

CONSENT OF RESIDENTS/BUSINESSES AFFECTED BY EVENT

For use as applicable. City-Sponsored Events are exempt from completing the Consent Page

[illegible]

7TH ANNUAL

HAYES DAYS

MEMORIAL

CO-ED SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT

IN MEMORY OF
Blaine Hayes

SATURDAY
AUGUST 29, 2026

GERRARD PARK
COLUMBUS, NE



Adam began testing in December 2025 and was diagnosed with thyroid cancer with metastasis to the trachea and cervical spine.

He underwent a major surgery to remove his thyroid and reconstruct his trachea.

He went through extensive radiation 5 days a week and will have upcoming radioactive iodine treatment as well as multiple more scans to see how treatment is working.

LET'S RALLY TOGETHER
FOR THE BICE FAMILY!

★ TEAM ENTRY ★

\$250

EARLY
REGISTRATION!

EARLY REGISTRATION DEADLINE:
JULY 24, 2026

\$300

REGULAR
ENTRY!

REGISTRATION DEADLINE:
AUGUST 21, 2026

★ ASA/USA BATS ONLY ★
TO REGISTER YOUR TEAM OR DONATE, CONTACT:
TARA WATCHORN
(402) 659-8572

MORE THAN A TOURNAMENT...

#CAN'T
STOP
THE TRAIN

THIS YEAR'S BENEFIT RECIPIENT

Adam Bice



Adam, Owen, Isaac, Kari

A DAY FULL OF:



COMPETITIVE
CO-ED SOFTBALL



3 GAME GUARANTEE
1ST PLACE PAYOUT



HUGE SILENT
AUCTION & RAFFLES



DELICIOUS FOOD
& CONCESSIONS



GREAT VIBES &
COMMUNITY SPIRIT



ALL PROCEEDS
INCLUDING CONCESSIONS
GO TO THE FAMILY!



WANT TO DONATE
RAFFLE OR AUCTION
ITEMS?

WE'D LOVE
YOUR SUPPORT!

SAVE YOUR
BEER & POP TABS!

TABS WILL BE COLLECTED AND DONATED
TO THE HAYES FAMILY AS THEY MAKE A
LARGE ANNUAL DONATION TO THE
RONALD McDONALD HOUSE!



IT'S FAMILY.

5. Presentation of the Columbus Urban Forestry Management Plan.



COLUMBUS URBAN FORESTRY

Management Plan

Inventory results and recommendation for
adoption

Sydney Mroczek & Betsy Eckhardt | July 2026

PARK BOARD + CITY COUNCIL



The plan turns inventory data into a management framework



A complete GPS-based inventory now supports safety, maintenance, planting and budgeting decisions.

3,766

Trees inventoried on city-owned properties and in parks

77+

Tree species represented across the inventory

100%

Coverage of parks and city-owned property

2026

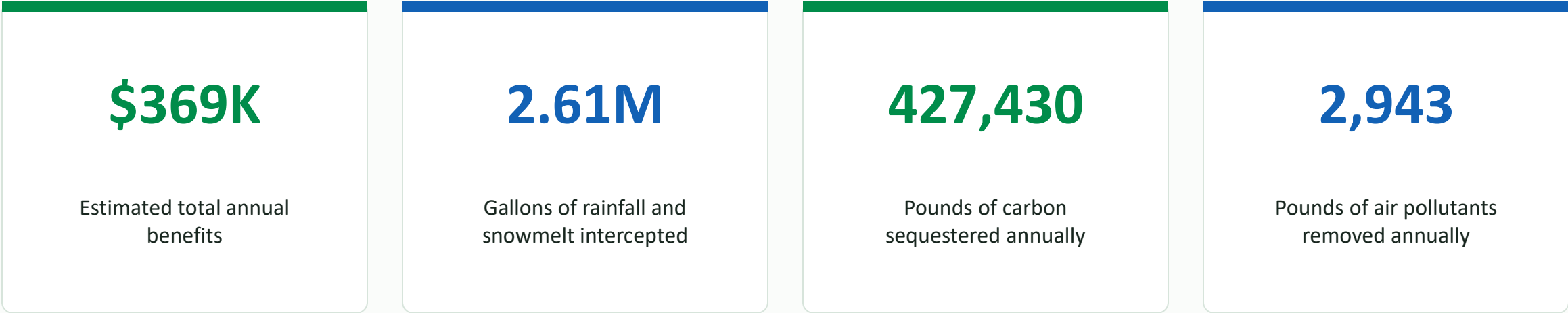
Baseline year for an updateable GIS inventory

A shared, defensible baseline for annual work planning

Columbus’s public trees return measurable value every year



Benefits vary by species, size, health and location; the average is approximately \$98 per tree.

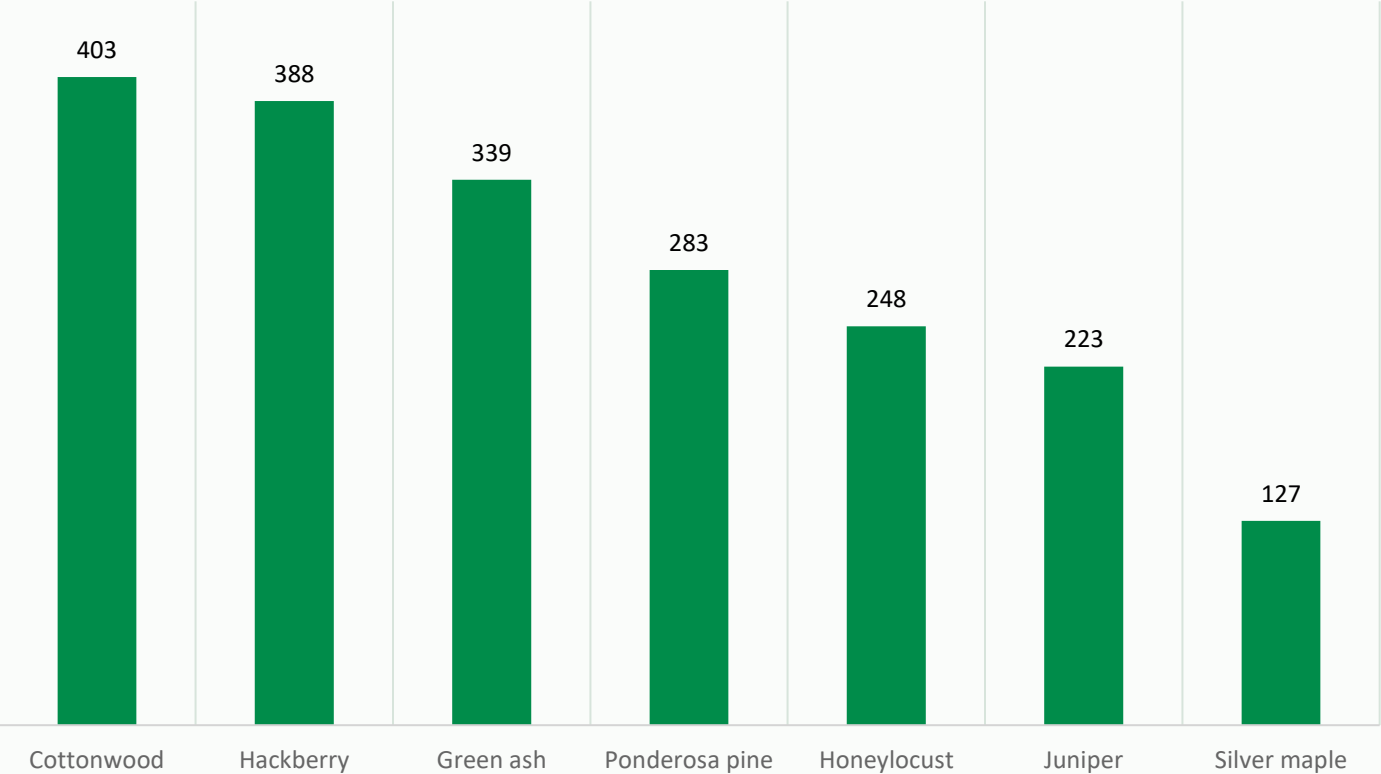


The urban forest is public infrastructure—providing environmental and community value while it grows.

A few species make up a large share of the public forest



Cottonwood, hackberry and green ash together account for roughly 30% of inventoried trees.



Why diversity matters

Diversity reduces the risk that one pest, disease or weather event causes widespread canopy loss.

PLANNING TARGET

No genus above 20%
No single species above 10%

The canopy is older than the ideal replacement curve

Most trees should be in smaller size classes so natural mortality does not create a sudden canopy gap.



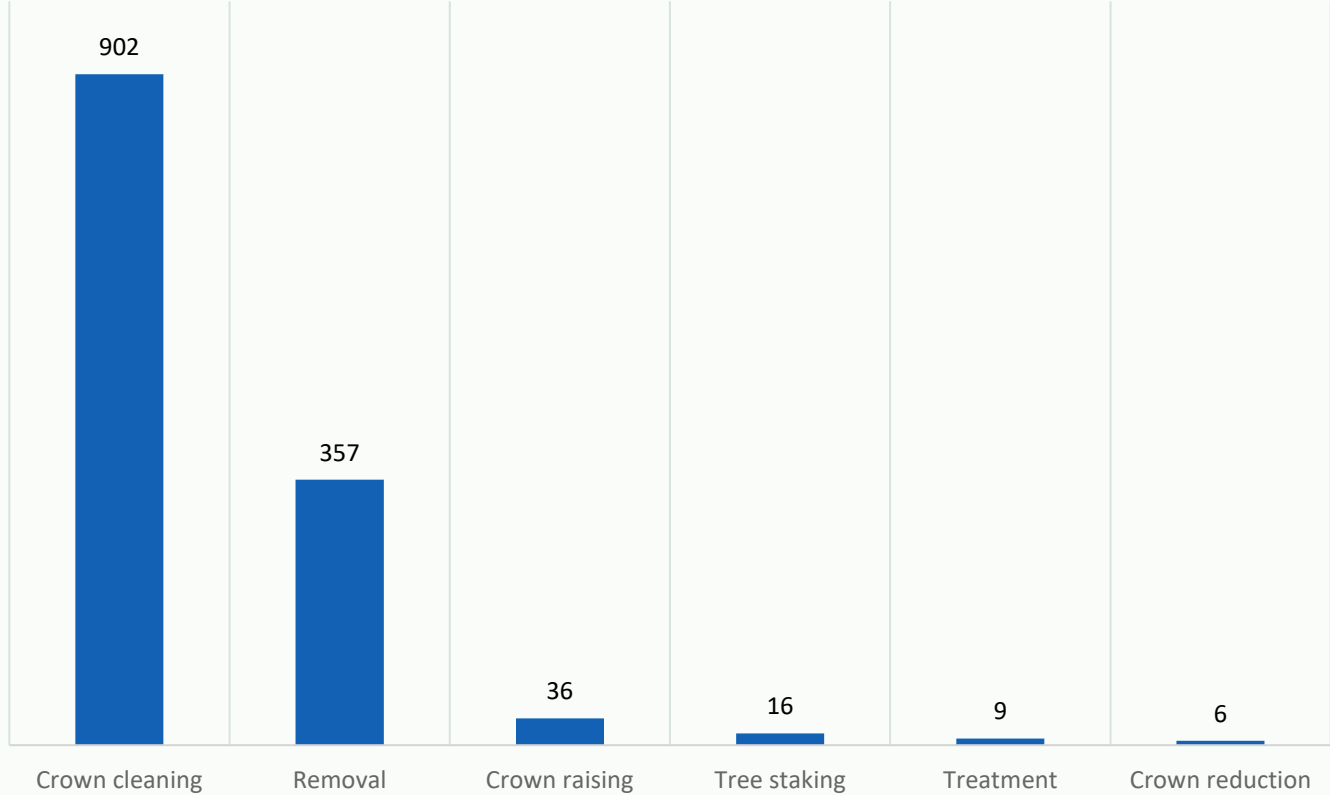
What this finding means

- Plant every year—not only after emergencies.
- Favor long-lived species that diversify the canopy.
- Plan for continuing removal and replacement costs.

Maintenance demand is significant



Approximately 35% of inventoried trees need some type of management.



CURRENT CONDITION

84% of foliage is fair or good
86% of wood condition is fair or good

Routine care extends tree life and reduces future emergency work.

Risk management begins with hazardous trees



City ownership and field conditions should be verified before any removal.

357

Trees identified for eventual removal

96

Dead or dying trees needing immediate attention

65

Dead or dying trees over 18 inches in diameter

1–2

Recommended new trees for each tree removed

First priority: address dead, dying and hazardous trees—then phase remaining removals through annual work plans.

Emerald ash borer requires proactive monitoring and replacement



Hazardous trees come first, followed by ash trees showing symptoms or poor condition.



339

Ash trees in the public inventory

124

Ash trees showing possible EAB symptoms

103

Ash trees among recommended removals

Annual monitoring helps Columbus replace canopy deliberately instead of reacting after widespread loss.

New planting must improve canopy diversity

Choose long-lived, site-appropriate trees and avoid increasing already overrepresented species.

PRIORITIZE

- Long-lived, site-appropriate species
- Genera and species currently underrepresented
- One to two trees for each removal
- Annual planting and monitoring

AVOID INCREASING

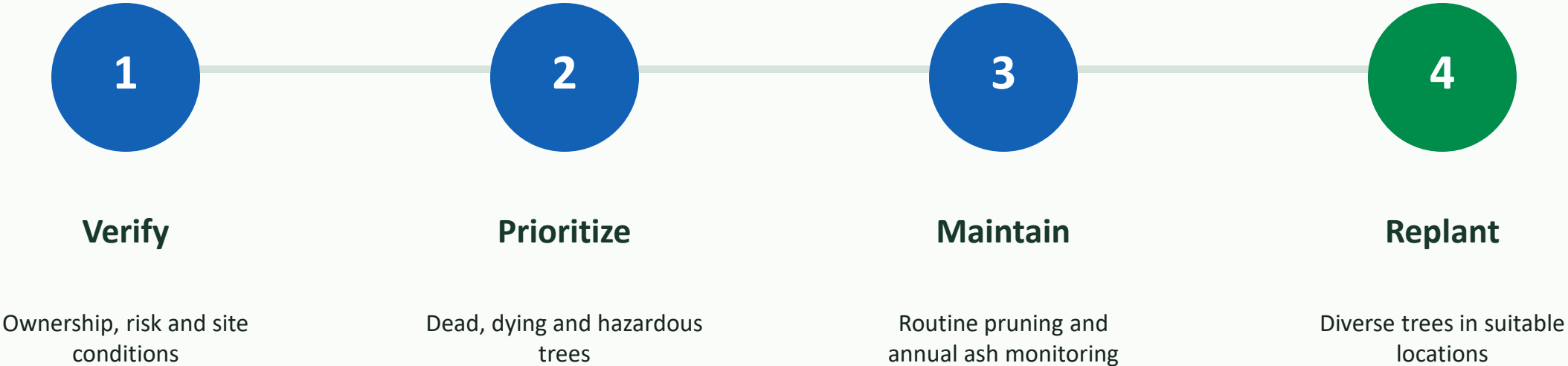
Cottonwood • hackberry • ash
Poplars • non-approved elms • box elder
Willow • pear • mulberry • tree of heaven
Other nuisance species restricted by ordinance



Adoption establishes a repeatable management cycle



Annual budgets will determine the pace; the plan provides a shared framework for staff and policymakers.



6. Approved, prohibited, and restricted tree species list for the City of Columbus.



Accountability - Dedication
Honesty - Integrity - Respect

MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 21, 2026
TO: Tara Vasicek, City Administrator
FROM: Sydney Mroczek, Parks and Recreation Director
RE: Approved, Prohibited, and Restricted Tree Species Lists

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend approval of the proposed Approved, Prohibited, and Restricted Tree Species Lists. The proposed lists establish standards for future tree planting and support the implementation of the City's updated tree ordinance and Urban Forestry Management Plan.

DISCUSSION:

The proposed tree species lists identify tree species appropriate for planting on public property while limiting or prohibiting species that are invasive, susceptible to pests and diseases, structurally weak, or otherwise unsuitable for long-term urban forest management. The lists promote species diversity, improve the resilience of the City's tree canopy, and provide staff with consistent guidance when selecting trees for future planting projects.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None.

SIGNATURE:

Concurrence: Betsy Eckhardt, Director of General Services

By: Betsy Eckhardt

Signature: Sydney Mroczek, Park and Recreation Director

By: _____

Approved: Tara Vasicek, City Administrator

By: _____

City of Columbus Recommended Public Tree List

Purpose

This tree list guides tree selection on City-owned property and within the public right-of-way. It promotes species diversity, long-term canopy health, and resilience to insects, diseases, and environmental stressors. The list shall be adopted by resolution and reviewed periodically.

Species not listed may be approved by the Director of Parks and Recreation (or designee) if appropriate for the planting site and consistent with the City's urban forestry goals.

Acceptable Trees

- Large Canopy Trees: Bur Oak, Swamp White Oak, Red Oak, Chinkapin Oak, Kentucky Coffeetree, American Linden, Sycamore, Bald Cypress, Tuliptree (where appropriate)
- Medium Trees: Red Maple, Sugar Maple, Freeman Maple cultivars, Ginkgo (male cultivars only), London Planetree
- Ornamental Trees: Serviceberry, Eastern Redbud, American Hornbeam, Japanese Tree Lilac, Disease-resistant Crabapple cultivars
- Approved Elm Cultivars: Accolade®, American, Patriot, Princeton, New Horizon, Triumph™, Valley Forge
- Honeylocust (thornless, seedless cultivars)
- Ponderosa Pine
- Eastern White Pine
- Blue Spruce (limited)
- Norway Maple (phase down over time)
- Silver Maple (limited use only)
- Red Pine

Restricted Trees

- Hackberry
- Juniper
- Ponderosa Pine
- Silver Maple
- Eastern Cottonwood

Prohibited Trees

- All Ash species
- Tree of Heaven
- Russian Olive
- All Poplar species
- Boxelder
- All Willow species

- Mulberry
- Siberian Elm
- Chinese Elm
- Non-approved Elm species
- Bradford/Callery Pear and related cultivars
- Horse Chestnut
- Buckeye
- Pecan
- Most Cypress species (except Bald Cypress where appropriate)

Recommended Ordinance Language – Species Diversity

The City shall strive to maintain species diversity so that no single species comprises more than 10% of the public tree population and no single genus comprises more than 20% of the public tree population. Tree selection shall be made with these diversity goals in mind.

Implementation Notes

- Evergreen trees should not be prohibited outright. Appropriate evergreen species may be approved where suitable.
- Species lists should be reviewed periodically and updated by resolution to reflect new research, pests, diseases, and urban forestry best practices.

7. Amendment to Chapter 96 of Columbus City Code regarding trees.



Accountability - Dedication
Honesty - Integrity - Respect

MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 21, 2026
TO: Tara Vasicek, City Administrator
FROM: Sydney Mroczek, Parks and Recreation Director
RE: Proposed Revision to the City Tree Ordinance

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend approval of the proposed amendments to Chapter 96 of the Columbus City Code regarding tree regulations. The revisions modernize the City's tree ordinance and align it with current urban forestry best practices and the Columbus Urban Forestry Management Plan.

DISCUSSION:

Chapter 96 of the Columbus Municipal Code was originally adopted in 1999 and has received only limited revisions over the past 25 years. The proposed updates are intended to modernize the ordinance while maintaining its original purpose of protecting and enhancing the City's public trees. The revisions incorporate current industry best practices, including references to International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) standards, ANSI A300 Tree Care Standards, and Nebraska Extension guidance. The ordinance also establishes updated planting standards, clarifies tree maintenance responsibilities, strengthens public safety provisions related to hazardous trees, updates species selection through an approved tree list adopted by resolution, and refines registration requirements for contractors working on public trees.

These updates also support the implementation of the City's Urban and Community Forestry Grant (Grant No. 23-DG-11021600-051). As the City continues to invest in tree planting, inventory management, and long-term canopy preservation, having a modern ordinance provides clear guidance for staff, contractors, and residents while helping ensure sustainable management of Columbus' urban forest.

The attached document is presented in redline format to allow the Board to easily identify the proposed revisions prior to consideration by the Public Property Committee.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None.

SIGNATURE:

Concurrence: Betsy Eckhardt, Director of General Services

By: Betsy Eckhardt

Signature: Sydney Mroczek, Park and Recreation Director

By: _____

Approved: Tara Vasicek, City Administrator

By: _____

CHAPTER 96: TREES

Section

- 96.01 Definitions
- 96.02 Tree species to be planted
- 96.03 Distances and clearance for planting
- 96.04 Public tree care
- 96.05 Permit required to plant, remove a street tree
- 96.06 Compensatory payments
- 96.07 Tree topping and trimming
- 96.08 Tree trimming compliance
- 96.09 Clearance over streets and walkways
- 96.10 Diseased tree removal on public land
- 96.11 Registration and insurance requirements
- 96.12 Family dwelling tree requirements
- 96.13 Enforcement official; rights and duties
- 96.14 Violations

§ 96.01 DEFINITIONS.

For the purpose of this chapter, the following definitions shall apply unless the context clearly indicates or requires a different meaning.

BOULEVARD Right of Way ~~city-owned land, dedicated easements, and airspace specifically reserved for public infrastructure, transportation and utilities.~~

~~City property between street, curb, sidewalk and island areas within city streets and cul-de-sacs.~~ **Community Arborist:** International Society of Arboriculture ("ISA") Certified Arborist designated by the Park and Recreation Department.

ISA Certified Arborist. An individual who maintains a current International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Certified Arborist credential or successor certification recognized by the City. ~~COMMUNITY ARBORIST. A person designated by the Parks Department with input of the Tree Board.~~

PARK TREES. Trees, shrubs, bushes and all other woody vegetation in public parks.

~~**PRIVATE COMMUNITY FOREST.** All trees within city boundaries but not owned by the city.~~

PUBLIC COMMUNITY FOREST. All street and park trees and other trees owned by the city as a total resource.

PARKS DEPARTMENT. The official (public employee) city representative and, as such, is responsible for the administration of the community forestry program.

STREET TREES. Trees, shrubs, bushes and all other woody vegetation on land lying between the private property lines on either side of all streets and avenues, as well as island areas within city streets or cul-de-sacs within the city.

(Prior Code, § 96.01) (Ord. 99-03, passed 2-1-1999; Ord. 01-25, passed 4-2-2001)

§ 96.02 TREE SPECIES TO BE PLANTED.

~~(A) The city shall maintain an extensive list of desirable shade or overstory trees, desirable ornamental or understory trees and desirable evergreen trees for planting in public areas. Each list will provide four recommended classes of trees, with Class I being the most desirable and Class IV the least desirable. The purpose of this listing will be to maintain diversity in the total tree population. The lists shall be available to residents of the city upon request to aid in the selection of trees for private and public properties. The list of recommended and desirable trees shall be updated periodically to reflect new developments or species that will affect the population of the community forest. This list shall be set by resolution.~~

(A) Approved Tree Species. The City shall maintain an Approved Tree Species List for trees planted on public property. The list shall include recommended shade, ornamental, and evergreen tree species selected based on diversity, climate suitability, pest and disease resistance, mature size, and overall urban performance. The list shall be reviewed periodically by the Parks and Recreation Director or designee and may be amended by resolution of the City Council to reflect current urban forestry best practices. The Approved Tree Species List, as amended from time to time, shall be available to the

public upon request.

(B) Prohibited Tree Species and Restricted Tree Species.

The Parks and Recreation Department, in consultation with the Community Arborist and other qualified forestry professionals as needed, shall maintain a list of prohibited tree species and restricted tree species for planting within public rights-of-way and other public properties.

The prohibited and restricted species list may include species determined to be:

1. Invasive or potentially invasive;
2. Highly susceptible to significant insect or disease threats;
3. Poorly adapted to local soil, climate, or site conditions;
4. Structurally weak or prone to failure;
5. Detrimental to public infrastructure or utility systems; or
6. Inconsistent with the City's urban forestry objectives related to canopy diversity, resilience, and long-term sustainability.

The prohibited and restricted species list shall be adopted ~~and amended~~ by resolution of the City Council and may be ~~amended and~~ updated periodically ~~in consideration of~~as new research, pest threats, environmental conditions, ~~or~~ urban forestry best practices emerge, ~~and general public impute~~. Restricted tree species may be ~~appro9ved~~ on a case by case basis by the Director of Parks and Recreation (or designee) if appropriate for the planting site and consistent with the City's urban forestry goals.

No person shall plant a restricted species within a public right-of-way or on other public property without ~~prior~~ written authorization from the Parks and Recreation Department.

~~(A) Subsequent to the enactment of this chapter, it shall be unlawful for any person to plant on city right-of-way any Cottonwood (except seedless), Pin Oak, Silver Maple, Siberian Elm, Black Locust, Hawthorn or White Poplar. Tree inventories show an overabundance of these tree species. Silver Maple and Siberian Elm are weak wooded and subject to wind and ice damage. Siberian Elm attract elm leaf beetles. Pin Oak is not adapted to the city's soil type and tends to be chlorotic and weak. Black Locust propagates suckers and is thorny. Seeded Cottonwood are a nuisance because of the litter. White Poplar attract bores and become weak and are short lived. Due to the reasons stated above, it is suggested that these trees not be planted on private property. An exemption can be made for Quail Run and Van Berg Golf Courses and some areas of the entire park system as determined by the Park Superintenden~~

~~(B) — t.~~

(C) Diversity of Tree Species. The City shall strive to maintain species diversity that no single species comprised more than 10% of the public tree population and no single genus comprises more than 20% of the public tree population. Tree selection shall be made with these diversity goals in mind.

~~(C)~~ D. Trees existing on public or private property prior to enactment ~~and/or amendment~~ of this chapter shall not be subject to removal under

the provisions of this section.

(Prior Code, § 96.02) (Ord. 99-03, passed 2-1-1999; Ord. 01-25, passed 4-2-2001) Penalty, see § 10.99

§ 96.03 DISTANCES AND CLEARANCE FOR PLANTING.

(A) Street trees may be planted in the boulevard-right-of-way where there is eight feet or more between the edge of the sidewalk and the curb or the street. Street trees shall be planted no closer than four feet from a sidewalk, driveway or street. It is suggested that private trees not be planted any closer than four feet from a private drive or sidewalk. As the tree grows, its roots may push up the sidewalk or drive.

(B) No street tree shall be planted closer than 30 feet from any street corner, measured from the point of the nearest intersection of curbs or curb lines.

(C) No street tree shall be planted closer than 25 feet from another street tree.

(D) No street tree shall be planted closer than ten feet from any fire hydrant.

(E) Special-Written permission must be obtained from the holder of the easement when planting street trees within ten feet of any point on a line on the ground immediately below any overhead utility wire or above any underground cable.

(Prior Code, § 96.03) (Ord. 99-03, passed 2-1-1999; Ord. 01-25, passed 4-2-2001) Penalty, see § 10.99

96.04 Tree Planting Standards and Tree Care

(A) All trees planted within publicthe rights-of-way, public parks, and other public properties shall be installed in accordance with accepted arboricultural practices and current Nebraska Extension, International Society of Arboriculture (ISA), and ANSI A300 standards.

(B) Root Flare.

Trees shall be planted so that the root flare, where the trunk widens and transitions to the root system, remains visible and above finished grade following installation.

(C) Planting Hole.

Planting holes shall be dug at least two times the width of the root ball and only deep enough to allow the root flare to remain above surrounding grade. Soil beneath the root ball shall remain firm to prevent settling.

(D) Mulching.

Organic mulch shall be placed around newly planted trees in a ring extending beyond the root ball where practical. Mulch shall not exceed four inches in depth and shall be kept away from direct contact with the trunk.

(E) Watering.

Newly planted trees shall receive adequate water during the establishment period to maintain healthy growth and survival. Watering schedules shall be adjusted based upon weather conditions, soil moisture, and species requirements.

(F) Staking.

Trees may be staked when necessary due to site conditions, tree size, or wind exposure. Stakes and support materials shall be removed within one year of planting unless otherwise recommended by a qualified arborist.

(G) Planting Standards Updates.

The Parks and Recreation Department may adopt and periodically update tree planting specifications, planting details, and maintenance standards consistent with current arboricultural best practices.

§ 96.04 PUBLIC TREE CARE.

(H) Public Tree Care

(A) 1. The city shall have the right to plant, prune, maintain and remove trees, plants and shrubs within the right-of-way or bounds of all streets, alleys, lanes, squares and any public grounds as may be necessary to ensure the public safety.

The city may remove, or cause or order to be removed, any tree on public property, or part thereof, which is in an unsafe condition or which by reason of its nature is injurious to electric power lines or other public improvements or is seriously affected with any fatal disease.

2. The City may remove, cause to be removed, or order the removal of any tree or portion thereof located on public property when the tree:

a. 4-Is dead, dying, diseased or infested with insects or pests;

b. 2-Is determined to present an unreasonable risk to public safety due to structural defects, instability, storm damage, root failure, excessive decay, or other hazardous conditions;

c. ~~3-Interferes with public infrastructure, utilities, or public improvements and cannot be reasonably mitigated through pruning or other management practices; or~~

(B) d. ~~4-Has been determined by the Community Arborist, Park and Recreation Department, or qualified arboricultural professional to pose an imminent risk of failure or injury to persons or property.~~

~~(C)~~ 3. The adjoining property owners shall have the right to perform normal tree care on all street trees.

~~(D)~~ 4. Infected or diseased trees, or parts thereof, in a dead or dying condition on public lands shall be removed as warranted by the ~~State Forester or the Forester's designee~~Community Arborist and disposed of by the Public Works Department within a reasonable amount of time of the discovery that the conditions exist. The cost thereof shall be borne by the city without being assessed to the adjoining property owner.

(Prior Code, § 96.04) (Ord. 99-03, passed 2-1-1999; Ord. 01-25, passed 4-2-2001)

§ 96.05 PERMIT REQUIRED TO PLANT, REMOVE A STREET TREE.

(A) No person shall plant or remove a street tree without first obtaining a permit from the Public Works Department and paying the required fee. The owner of the property shall be responsible to obtain the necessary permit required for each occurrence at a specific property. Permits shall be valid for six months from the date of issuance. In case of a house moving, the tree service shall be responsible to obtain a permit to prune street trees along the route on which the house is to be moved. ~~Tree trimming or pruning must be done in accordance with~~All tree pruning, removal, and maintenance activities shall conform to the most current ~~Nebraska Guide #G91-1035~~ ANSI A300 Tree Care Standards and applicable ISA Best Management Practices.

(B) For the purpose of house moving, the tree service must trim or prune just ahead as the building is being moved. If the work is not satisfactory in the opinion of the city, the city may make necessary corrections and assess the cost to the tree service. The tree service may then also be suspended from doing work on street trees for any given length of time. The tree service shall also be responsible for obtaining permission from the property owner if a tree on private property needs to be pruned because of the moving.

(C) Tree services are responsible to check with and verify that the owner has the required permits for planting or removal of street trees, whichever may be the case before work begins. Fees required for any permits will be set by resolution.

(Prior Code, § 96.05) (Ord. 99-03, passed 2-1-1999; Ord. 01-25, passed 4-2-2001) Penalty, see § 10.99

§ 96.06 COMPENSATORY PAYMENTS.

No person shall remove any street tree without replacing ~~the tree~~ with a tree ~~or trees listed as Class I or II in~~ in the vicinity of the removed tree, which may include private property, or in another location in the city if no suitable location exists in the vicinity. Replacement tree size must be of one and one-half inch caliper or greater and must be replaced in the following time frame. If a tree is removed after November 15, it must be replaced by May 15 of the following year. If the tree is removed after May 15, it must be replaced by November 15 of the same year. Waivers for tree size or species are obtainable from the Public Works Department. If a person does not wish to plant back or in another location, he or she shall make compensatory payment to the city. The compensatory payments shall be paid to the City Clerk's office and used solely for the purpose of enhancing the community forest. The compensatory payment amount shall be set by resolution. A tree can be planted in a private yard if planting on the city right-of-way or making a compensatory payment is not desired.

(Prior Code, § 96.06) (Ord. 99-03, passed 2-1-1999; Ord. 01-25, passed 4-2-2001) Penalty, see § 10.99

§ 96.07 TREE TOPPING AND TRIMMING.

It shall be unlawful as a normal practice for any person or city department to top any street, park or other tree on public property. **TOPPING, ROUNDING OFF or POLLARDING** is defined as the systematic cutting back of limbs within the tree's crown to such a degree as to remove the normal canopy and disfigure the tree. Trees severely damaged by storms or other causes, certain trees under utility wires or other obstructions where other pruning practices are impractical may be exempted from this section at the determination of the ~~Public Works Department~~ Community Arborist.

(Prior Code, § 96.07) (Ord. 99-03, passed 2-1-1999; Ord. 01-25, passed 4-2-2001) Penalty, see § 10.99

§ 96.08 TREE TRIMMING COMPLIANCE.

All trimming or pruning of street trees must be done in accordance with ~~Nebraska Guide #G91-1035~~ ANSI A300 Tree Care Standards and ISA Best Management Practices. If work on street trees is not satisfactory in the opinion of the city, the city may make necessary corrections and assess the cost to the tree service or individual. A suspension from doing work on street trees may also apply for any given length of time.

(Prior Code, § 96.08) (Ord. 99-03, passed 2-1-1999; Ord. 01-25, passed 4-2-2001) Penalty, see § 10.99

§ 96.09 CLEARANCE OVER STREETS, ~~AND WALKWAYS~~, AND PERSONAL PROPERTY.

(A) Clearance over walkways and personal property shall be the responsibility of the abutting property owners. A clearance of no less than eight feet shall be maintained over walkways, and a clearance of no less than 14 feet shall be maintained over streets and alleys. Property owners are responsible to maintain the eight-foot height on street and private trees over walkways so that they will not inhibit the passage of pedestrians. This is to ensure safety of persons using the sidewalks. Property owners should report any infractions of street trees that abut their property to the Director of Public Works who will evaluate the situation and take appropriate action at city expense. It shall be the duty of the city to trim any trees to the 13 feet above the streets height so that they will not inhibit the passage of vehicles.

(B) It shall be the duty of the utility company to trim any trees within or in close proximity to utility lines.

(C) If any trees are permitted by the owners of the adjacent premises to grow untrimmed in violation of the provisions of this section, it shall be the duty of the Public Works Department to notify the owner in writing to trim the trees within the time and manner to be specified in the notice. If any person so notified shall neglect or refuse to comply with the notice, the Public Works Department shall forthwith cause the trees to be trimmed at the expense of the city and the costs thereof assessed against the property.

(Prior Code, § 96.09) (Ord. 99-03, passed 2-1-1999; Ord. 01-25, passed 4-2-2001) Penalty, see § 10.99

§ 96.10 DISEASED TREE REMOVAL ON PUBLIC LAND.

The city shall have the right and responsibility to cause to be removed any tree within the city limits that is diseased or dead on public land. All trees that have been designated for removal due to disease or infestation shall be properly disposed of at a site determined by the city. All trees which require burning as prescribed by the State Forester as a proper means of disposal shall be burned by the city in accordance with relevant state law.

(Prior Code, § 96.10) (Ord. 99-03, passed 2-1-1999; Ord. 01-25, passed 4-2-2001)

§ 96.11 REGISTRATION AND INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS.

(A) Persons engaged in the business or occupation of pruning, treating or removing any tree or trees inside the city limits must be registered with the City Clerk's office by April 1 of each year. Registration may be obtained at any time during the year upon meeting application requirements. Each person in the business of tree work must show evidence of minimum liability insurance as set by resolution and the city be named as an additional insured. A copy of the certificate of liability insurance must be on file with the City Clerk's office and kept current. No registration is required by any public employee(s) doing such work in the pursuit of his, her or their public service endeavors. Whenever an individual plans to fell a tree onto the street or block the street for any tree work, the individual shall make a request to the ~~City Administrator~~ Parks and Recreation Department and shall notify the Fire, Public Works and Police Departments 24 hours prior to breaking any street and as to how long the street will be blocked and shall notify the Fire and Police Departments as to when the street is open. Traffic cones, which shall be fluorescent in nature regardless of color, or proper visible barricades are required for public safety.

(B) Prior to performing work on public trees within the City of Columbus, tree service companies shall maintain registration with the City Clerk's Office, provide proof of required liability insurance, and ensure that tree work on public trees is performed or directly supervised by an International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Certified Arborist ~~. Prior to doing work within the city limits, persons in the tree business must be registered with the City Clerk's office. Evidence of liability insurance and certification of attendance at a city approved tree care workshop or seminar by a representative of the tree service company must be provided to the City Clerk's office prior to April 1 of each year.~~ Fees for the registrations will be as set by resolution.

(Prior Code, § 96.11) (Ord. 99-03, passed 2-1-1999; Ord. 01-25, passed 4-2-2001) Penalty, see § 10.99

§ 96.12 FAMILY DWELLING TREE REQUIREMENTS.

In construction of new single-family dwellings, it is suggested to plant at least one ~~one~~ and one-half inch caliper ~~Class I or~~ ~~Class II~~ tree per residence. In construction of multiple-family dwellings, it is suggested to plant at least two one and one-half inch caliper Class I or II trees per lot. Trees cannot be planted in public right-of-way of any street type less than eight feet in width as measured from the back of curb to the property line. Trees on public property cannot be planted within four feet of the back of curb, street edge, sidewalk or trail or within any visual clearance zone. Trees on private property shall be planted a distance of not less than four feet from public sidewalks or trails and shall be in compliance with all other provisions of this chapter.

(Prior Code, § 96.12) (Ord. 99-03, passed 2-1-1999; Ord. 01-25, passed 4-2-2001) Penalty, see § 10.99

§ 96.13 ENFORCEMENT OFFICIAL; RIGHTS AND DUTIES.

The ~~Public Works~~Park and Recreation Department is charged with enforcement of this chapter.

(Prior Code, § 96.13) (Ord. 99-03, passed 2-1-1999; Ord. 01-25, passed 4-2-2001)

§ 96.14 VIOLATIONS.

Imposition of any penalty for a violation of this chapter shall not be construed as a waiver of the right of the city to collect the costs of removal of the tree in accordance with the provisions of this chapter.

(Prior Code, § 96.14) (Ord. 99-03, passed 2-1-1999; Ord. 01-25, passed 4-2-2001)

8. Park and Recreation Director report.



COLUMBUS PARKS AND RECREATION

Director's Report | August 2026

SUMMARY

Key Accomplishments

Sertomaland Playground was officially opened

Tree inventory was completed

City Council approved the quote for 137 Trees and Centennial Court Resurfacing

DIVISION UPDATES

Parks Maintenance

COMPLETED PROJECTS	Reconstruction of Gruenther Park (reseeded grass and new monkey bars) Fixed the East Shed roof Filled in potholes around East Pawnee Park for DTRA Watering all trees on 23 rd Street Spraying round-up throughout parks
CURRENTLY IN PROGRESS	Ordering the 6 trees from Earl May (Grant 25-6553-0123-032) Drive in Theater
UPCOMING PROJECTS	Preparing for football season
CHALLENGES	Weather, specifically the heat and no rain Keeping the mowers running

Recreation and Programming

COMPLETED PROJECTS	Sports: summer Adult Softball League Tryouts for Mariners, Outlaws, Havoc and Blue Lightening Rec: Summer camp, movie in the park, babysitting clinic, crafternoon
CURRENTLY IN PROGRESS	Registration for Fall Adult Softball League (4 teams) Will begin planning next year's Beats and Eats
UPCOMING PROJECTS	Fall Adult Softball League – August 12 – September 30 Hayes Days Benefit Tournament – August 29
CHALLENGES	Handling situations that's arise out at Adult Softball League Finding new and better ways to reach the community to boost registration



COLUMBUS PARKS AND RECREATION

Director's Report | August 2026

Aquatics

COMPLETED PROJECTS	Ordered a new mat for the bottom of the pirate ship slide Worlds Largest Swim Lesson Activity
CURRENTLY IN PROGRESS	Refilling of the Aquatic Center pool Hiring for the new positions Working on getting ready to close the Plunge and open the Aquatic Center
UPCOMING PROJECTS	LB759 Update
CHALLENGES	Weather, and helping staff push through the final weeks of the summer

Aquatic Center Numbers	July 2026	July 2025
Aquatic Center attendance	978	996
Aquatic Center memberships	404	429
Pawnee Plunge attendance	19,208	17,433
Pawnee Plunge memberships	1,337	1,210

Golf Maintenance

COMPLETED PROJECTS	Tree grant removal plan
CURRENTLY IN PROGRESS	Tree replacement plan
UPCOMING PROJECTS	Water management to keep turf healthy Mowing will be reduced to help eliminate stress
CHALLENGES	Irrigation issues with the well intake hole Repairing golf carts Inefficiency of some irrigation heads



COLUMBUS PARKS AND RECREATION

Director's Report | August 2026

Golf League Participation	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
QUAIL RUN LEAGUES (489 total)	Men's Scramble (112)	Behlen (54) Ladies (44)	Senior Men (55) Men's (112)	Men's (112)	
VANBERG LEAGUES (203 total)	Men's (85)	GNO (31)			Ladies Scramble (24) Couples (64)

Lesson Programs	Participants
Juniors	145
Get Golf Ready	24
Individual	425

Tournament and Outing Participation

The tournament program at Quail Run currently includes 77 players across 8 events, while VanBerg hosts 2 events in the fall with over 100 players.

There are 56 total outings scheduled, 38 events have between 40 – 144 players and 18 events have between 30-40 players.

ONE EVENT HAS 218 PARTICIPANTS!

CAPTIAL IMPROVEMENT UPDATES

Project	Status	Current Update	Next Milestone
Sertomaland Playground	Complete	Construction is complete and the playground is open to the public.	Complete closeout and monitor warranty items.
Centennial Park Court Resurfacing	In progress	A quote proposal was approved for the resurfacing project. Will have pre-construction meeting soon.	Complete selection and establish the construction schedule.
Tree Inventory / Planting Plan	In progress	The inventory is complete. Working on removal and replacement plans.	Prioritize locations and develop the implementation plan.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS, EVENTS AND DATES IN PARKS AND REC



COLUMBUS PARKS AND RECREATION

Director's Report | August 2026

Date	Program / Event	Location / Note
August 4	National Night Out	Frankfort Square
August 6-9	Columbus Days	Frankfort Square
August 7	Plunge closed for the season	Pawnee Plunge Waterpark
August 12	First night of Fall Softball League	Gerrard Park
August 14	Movie in the Park	Glur Park
August 16	Puppies at the Plunge	Pawnee Plunge Waterpark
August 22	Art in the Park	Pawnee Park East Shelter
August 27	Slime Night	Community Building: Creativity Corner

FALL BROCHURE WILL BE RELEASING THE FIRST WEEK OF AUGUST!

9. Adjournment.