

GAZEBO EXPRESS

YOUR COMMUNITY NEWS AND EVENT SOURCE FOR THE TOWN OF HIGHLAND • AUGUST 2020

BACK ON TRACK HIGHLAND



[HIGHLAND UPDATE]

As the number of positive COVID-19 cases continue to rise in Indiana, Gov. Eric Holcomb extended Stage 4.5 through August 27. Turn to the back page to learn what's open and what's closed in Lake County as well as Town of Highland guidelines.

[MASK MANDATE]

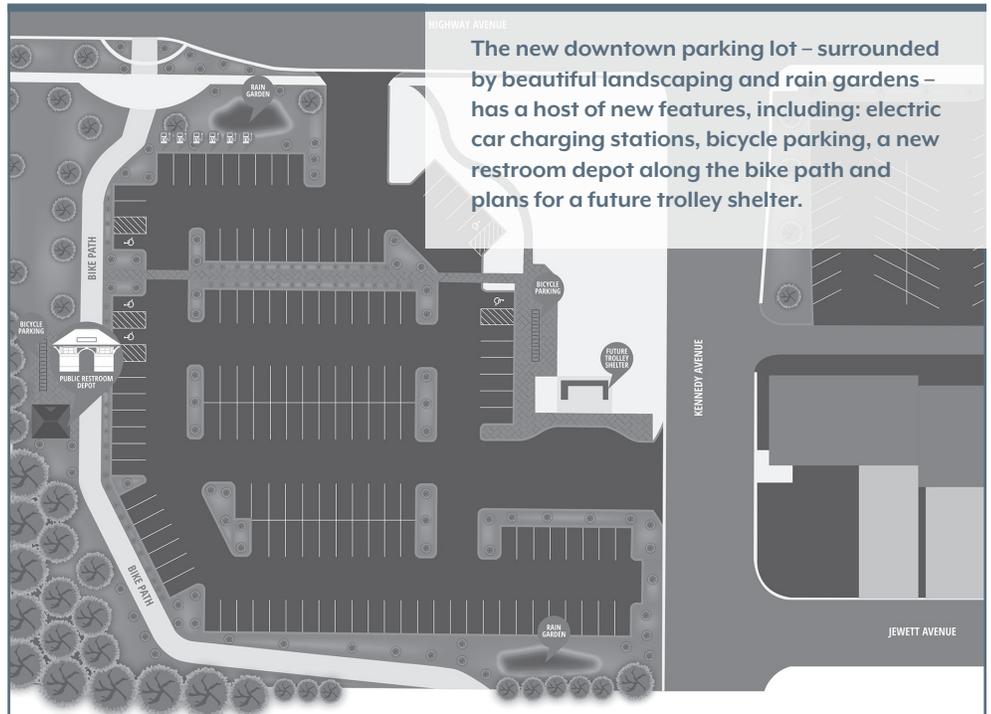
Gov. Eric Holcomb issued a state mandate that anyone living in or visiting Indiana – ages 8 and older – must wear a mask in public. Face coverings for children ages 2 -7 are strongly recommended.

If you are not wearing a mask, and a store or restaurant says it requires customers to wear face coverings, they can refuse to let you shop or eat in their establishment.

[CANCELLATIONS]

As things are rapidly changing, please check highland.in.gov for the latest Highland updates and cancellations.

Turn to the back page to learn more. >>



Contractor: Grimmer Construction | Bid: \$ 751,366.04

Municipal parking lot project will bring host of new amenities to downtown

After nearly two years of planning, it's all systems go to reconstruct and upgrade the downtown municipal lot.

Redevelopment Commission President George Georgeff said the completed project will be a gathering place for people visiting merchants, eating dinner or just strolling the downtown.

"Grimmer Construction, which came in significantly under other bidders, put shovels in the ground in July and should be finished before the end of the year," Georgeff said. "We're hoping the weather cooperates."

Redevelopment Director Kathy DeGuilio-Fox said the amenities will improve the downtown overall and make the business corridor more walkable.

"This project will provide a much needed boost to our downtown," she said. "The Commissioners continue to add new businesses as they work to make our downtown attractive to guests and citizens alike."

Please note: No parking will be allowed in the downtown municipal lot while construction is underway.

BACK ON TRACK: HIGHLAND

[ACPFIM DESIGNATION]

Clerk-Treasurer Michael Griffin earned the Advanced Certified Public Funds Investment Manager certification in June. The program — offered through the Association of Public Treasurers of the United States and Canada — takes a deeper look into analysis and investment strategy to help public finance officers gain a more thorough knowledge of investment policy objectives and the tools needed to achieve them.



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NEWS TIP? STORY IDEA?

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[HIGHLAND POLICE DEPARTMENT]



TAKING CARE OF OUR OWN: Since police have been thrown into the national spotlight, there's been an outpouring of support for the Highland Police Department. From PPE and gift cards to snacks and lunches, countless residents and businesses have shown their love for Highland's finest. Thank you ... Children and parents from the Parrish-Lincoln neighborhood (above left) for the Gatorade, candy bars, chips, granola and energy bars; Thomas Kia for the PPE and face shields (top right); Theresa and Mel Loden for the thank you cards with McDonald's gift cards (bottom right); Crowel Insurance for the generous monetary donation; Thorton Dental for McDonald's gift cards; and Kolas Christian Bookstore for the wonderful lunch at Traditions. "We can't thank our community enough," Police Chief Pete Hojnicky said. "It's moments like these that tug at our heartstrings and remind us that our community appreciates our efforts. It truly makes Highland a wonderful place to work – and call home."

Public meeting to detail additional appropriations

The Town Council will conduct a public hearing electronically at 6:30 p.m. Aug. 10 to consider funding projects in excess of the 2020 budget.

"These purchases are absolutely necessary to continue building our roads and keeping our first responders safe," Town Council President Mark Schocke said. "COVID-19 supplies and equipment are becoming an added expense for every community as we work to keep our employees safe."

Up for consideration is:

- » \$85,000 to purchase additional personal protective equipment and other COVID-19 supplies.

- » \$19,890 to purchase fire suppression equipment.
- » \$1,792,656 to participate in this year's Community Crossings Grant. Nearly half of the appropriation — \$750,000 — is slated to be reimbursed by the state.

Since the state's Community Crossings Grant program began four years ago as a way to spur repairs of local roads and streets, Highland has tapped the program. Community Crossings pays 50 percent of approved road construction projects up to \$1 million per year. Last year, Highland invested \$899,478 in the program.

[HIGHLAND PUBLIC WORKS]



Knesek takes the helm at public works

Mark Knesek, second in command at public works since 2016, has become the new chief at the department that keeps the town's roads, sewers, water utility and solid waste humming.

Council President Mark Schocke said the council found the ideal candidate for retiring Director John Bach in their own backyard.

"We knew it would be tough to replace John," Schocke said.

"John made it easy. He hired Mark away from our neighbor Munster. Together, the two of them worked to ensure that whenever John retired, it would be a seamless transition."

Like Bach, Knesek began his career in public works while still in high school. In short order, he was hired by the Munster Water Department, where he worked for 37 years and became the utility superintendent.

As public works director, Knesek said his priorities are to:



Clerk-Treasurer Michael Griffin administers the oath of office to Mark Knesek, who becomes the fourth public works director in the town's history. [Josh Carlascio photos]

- Keep Highland streets in great shape through high-level participation in the Indiana Community Crossings program.
- Complete a massive sewer interceptor project to move sanitary water more efficiently from the south side of town north to the river.
- Continue exemplary service with snow removal and branch pick up.
- Minimize water service disruptions.

[CENSUS 2020]

U.S. census workers are now visiting households throughout Lake County that have not responded to the census.

Residents still have three ways to respond before an in-person visit:

1. Respond online at my2020census.gov.
2. Call 844-330-2020.
3. Fill out and mail in paper questionnaire.

[IDENTIFYING WORKERS]

- ✓ Visits are conducted by U.S. Census Bureau personnel, not the Town of Highland.
- ✓ Census takers can be easily identified by a valid government ID badge with their photograph, a U.S. Department of Commerce watermark, and an expiration date on the badge.

[WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT]

- ✓ Census workers will be wearing masks and other necessary PPE and will be trained in proper COVID-19 safety protocols.
- ✓ If no one is home when the census taker visits, the census taker will leave a notice of their visit with information about how to respond online, by phone or by mail.
- ✓ If the census taker who visits your home does not speak your language, you may request a return visit from a census taker who does speak your language.
- ✓ If you have questions about your visit or want to confirm a worker's identification, call the Chicago Regional Census Center at (312) 579-1500.

BACK ON TRACK: HIGHLAND

[BACK ON TRACK STAGE 4.5]

As the number of COVID-19 cases continue to climb, Highland and communities throughout the state will remain in Stage 4.5 through August 27. Here's a look at the guidelines for all Hoosiers:

- Hoosiers 65 and older and those with known high-risk medical conditions should adhere to social distancing guidelines and remain cautious at work and in their communities.
- Continue remote work as needed.
- Face coverings are required in public.
- Social gatherings up to 250 people may take place following the CDC social distancing guidelines.
- Indoor and outdoor nursing home and assisted living visitation resumes following guidelines.
- Hospital visitations encouraged with precautions.

RESTRICTIONS THAT CONTINUE

- Dining room food service may operate at up to 75% capacity as long as social distancing is observed.
- Bars and nightclubs may operate at 50% capacity adhering to social distancing guidelines.
- Venues, movie theaters, bowling alleys, as well as cultural, entertainment and tourism sites may operate at 50% capacity while social distancing.
- Amusement parks, water parks and like facilities may operate at 50% capacity. Reservations are urged to limit the number of people at any one time.
- Gyms, fitness centers and other workout facilities continue operations with restrictions.
- Personal services continue with restrictions.

WHAT REMAINS OPEN

- Parimutuel horse racing as well as county and state fair racing may begin with 50% spectator capacity.
- Fairs, festivals and other similar outdoor events may open with restrictions.
- Youth overnight camps may open.
- Conventions may resume following state guideline. Masks are highly recommended for all participants.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Gov. Eric Holcomb will continue monitoring the COVID-19 crisis and update Indiana's Back on Track reopening plans during his weekly press conferences. Visit the Town of Highland website – highland.in.gov – for the latest updates.



[MASK MANDATE]

Gov. Eric Holcomb has signed an executive order requiring everyone – ages 8 and older – to wear masks in public. Face coverings are also recommended for children between ages 2 and 7. The mandate, which applies to anyone living in or visiting Indiana, will remain in effect until further notice.

Everyone – 2 years of age and older – must wear a mask at Lincoln Community Center, except when: (1) actively exercising; (2) or there is a physical, medical or health-related reason as provided by a doctor. Visit highlandparks.org for details.

[HIGHLAND PARKS & RECREATION]

Looking for something to do while safely social distancing? Highland Parks and Recreation has a few classes and concerts to consider:

SECOND SUNDAYS AT MAIN SQUARE PARK

Grab a comfy lawn chair and head to Main Square Park August 9 for an acoustic performance from pop-rock duo Nawty Lite from noon to 1:15 p.m. and headliner Soundz of Santana from 1:30-3 p.m.

PEBBLE ART CLASS

Learn how to create a personalized masterpiece out of pebbles at our August 20 art class from 6:30-9 p.m. at Lincoln Center. Supplies are included. Fee is \$30/\$35. Deadline to register is August 13.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Learn more about Parks & Recreation programs and events at highlandparks.org or call (219) 838-0114.