

Highland Parks & Recreation

\$3.3 million earmarked for park improvements

Expanding the number of pickle ball courts and adding lights at Meadows Park as well as bumping up the number of soccer fields on land the town owns at Sheppard Park are just a few of the dozen major projects planned to accommodate the wants and needs of Highland residents throughout the town. **Here are the highlights:**

[SOLAR LIGHTS]

After installing a demo solar light on the bike path near Kennedy Avenue, the Park Board is eager to choose a vendor and install earth-friendly orbs along the entirety of the trail from 45th Street to the Little Calumet River. Parks and Recreation Superintendent Alex Brown said next steps will be to complete engineering and send it to NIPSCO – which owns the property – for final approval.

[BENCHES & TABLES]

As part of the park routine maintenance and equipment replacement plan, the board continues to replace aging picnic tables and swapping old wood benches with their recycled plastic cousins.

[OVERALL UPGRADES]

In addition to replacing Homestead and Markley park playgrounds, which have both outlived their useful life, the parks will invest in repaving the parking lot at Sharp Athletic Complex and resurfacing portions of the bike trail. A second Hawk Light will be installed in 2023 near the Ridge Road overpass to keep pedestrians and bike riders safe.

[NEW DOG PARK]

Tail wagers – and their owners – will delight in the town's first dedicated dog park. Already on the drawing board, the design, engineering and approvals from property-owner NIPSCO are expected to be completed next year, with construction in 2023.

[LEAF COLLECTION]

Leaf collection begins **Monday, October 11** and ends **Friday, December 3**. The insert in this issue contains dates for leaf pickup in your neighborhood.



[FALL CLEANUP]

If getting rid of excess stuff has been on your to-do list, let the purging begin. Republic Waste Services will schedule extra crews **Tuesday, October 12** to collect additional trash and unwanted items as part of fall cleanup day. Construction debris, concrete, household hazardous waste, paint, pool chemicals and leaves are **NOT** included.

[DRUG TAKE BACK]

Turn in unused or expired medications to the authorities instead of flushing or throwing them out. No needles are accepted. Highland Police will be participating with the Drug Enforcement Agency as a drop-off site for medications from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. **Saturday, October 23**. The Highland Police Department is located at 3315 Ridge Road. Please note: All medications will be incinerated by the DEA, so you do not have to remove labels. **QUESTIONS?** Call Ken Balon at (219) 838-3184.





[NO BURNING LEAVES]

Open burning of leaves, twigs or other yard waste is prohibited within the corporate limits of the Town of Highland. According to Title 12.15.050 of the Highland Municipal Code, “No person shall openly burn or ignite refuse, garbage or rubbish.” The law was created in 2000 to keep residents and structures safe. **INFO:** Visit highland.in.gov/MunicipalCode to learn more.



WARD 1
BERNIE ZEMEN
 bzemen@comcast.net
 (219) 781-1056



WARD 2
MARK HERAK
 mherak@highland.in.gov
 (219) 838-0126



WARD 3
MARK SCHOCKE
 mschocke@highland.in.gov
 (219) 207-2075



WARD 4
TOM BLACK
 tblack@highland.in.gov
 (219) 301.2077



WARD 5
ROGER SHEEMAN
 rsheeman@highland.in.gov
 (630) 673-3363



CLERK-TREASURER
MICHAEL GRIFFIN
 mgriffin@highland.in.gov
 (219) 838-1080

NEWS TIP? STORY IDEA?

Send your suggestions to:
gazeboexpress@theideafactory.us.com

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2020 census reveals Highland’s population increased despite new technology, pandemic

The 2020 census shows Highland recorded its highest population since 1980. It was welcome news to officials who weren’t sure how the advent of on-line forms and a census timeline that coincided with the global pandemic would impact the count.

“I had hoped our numbers would be stable with a very slight increase,” Clerk-Treasurer Michael Griffin said. “That we registered a net increase of 257 residents is very good news.”

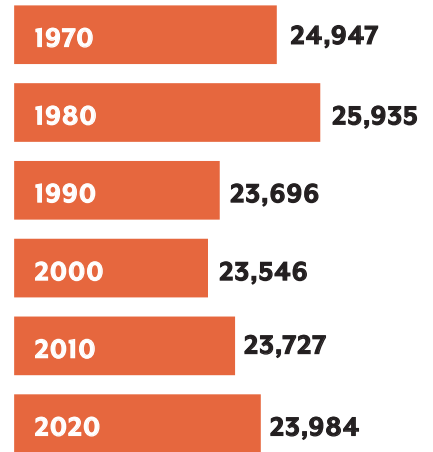
Big thank-you’s are in order for Complete Count Committee Co-Chairs Lance Ryskamp and Erin Stojic.

In a message to Ryskamp, Griffin wrote: “I appreciate you and your hand in getting our response rates up, thereby rendering a more accurate count for the census.”

The new data, which bumps Highland to the 41st most populous community in Indiana, will positively impact funds the town receives for programs, including road construction and education.

[BY THE NUMBERS]

Despite being landlocked, Highland logged better-than-expected population gains in 2020.



Complete Count Committee members include Co-Chairs **Lance Ryskamp** (Highland Redevelopment Commission Assistant) and **Erin Stojic** (former Deputy Clerk-Treasurer) as well as School Board Trustee **Victor Garcia**, **Rich Underkofler**, **Tim Huizinga**, former Chamber Executive Director **Mary Luptak** and former Highland Library Branch Manager **Linda Johnsen**.

CommuniTree grant program helps Highland expand its tree inventory throughout town

The town’s shade canopy will grow by 48 trees this fall thanks to the combined efforts of the Tree Board, Highland Public Works and the CommuniTree grant program.

Tree Board Secretary Richard Underkofler said with the latest acquisition, the town has planted nearly 900 trees since 2019. That tally will grow yet this year when the town receives trees from the Student Conservation Association.

A majority of this year’s plantings of American Hornbeams, Cockspur

Hawthornes, Dogwoods and Tupelos will grace the Highway Avenue and Sandalwood neighborhood parkways.

Highland’s efforts to expand its tree counts and species diversity are being encouraged by groups across the globe that believe the solution to climate change begins with the planting trees.

It is well known, a broad tree canopy provides a welcoming swath of shade and cooler breezes. Trees also absorb carbon emissions, boost oxygen levels and are capable of reducing temperatures by as much 10 degrees.



HIGHLAND ESSAY CONTEST

Lifelong resident? Moved here last week? Highland Main Street is looking for children just like yours to pen three paragraphs about what they love about downtown.

Miles Books owner Jim Roumbos said he dreamed up the idea of a first-ever essay contest to hear how youth feel about the town's central shopping hub.

"As downtown businesses, we hear from a great many shoppers about downtown, that they love our trees and variety of shops," Roumbos said. "This is our plan to hear from kids, who almost never tell us what they love and where they think we could do better."

[HOW TO ENTER]

Children ages 3-17 are invited to write three paragraphs – as short or as long as you choose – about what they like about downtown Highland. Parents are welcome to assist their child. Drop the entry with the child's name and contact info at the Highland Public Library **October 15 – November 15**. Prizes for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place will be awarded in the following age groups:

- Kindergarten-Grade 3
- Grades 4-6
- Grades 7-8
- Grades 9-12

HIGHLAND TICKER



The community gathered en masse to celebrate the first year anniversary of Highland's monthly **Restaurant Crawl** with live entertainment, a classic car show, shopping specials – and, of course – a healthy helping of soul-satisfying eats. It may have been one of the first times downtown's main thoroughfares were closed to make way for pedestrian traffic and plenty of picnic tables – but it won't be the last. ... The Town Council has created its first **Information Technology Department** and hired former contract employee Ed Dabrowski to head the effort. ... It's official: Customer favorite **Olive Garden** will soon be serving up its pasta favorites from a new location inside the remodeled Old Country Buffet at Main Street and Indianapolis Boulevard in Highland. ... Early bird pricing – \$25 for runners and \$15 for walkers – ends **October 14** for the **46th Annual Pumpkin Plod**. Register today! Course map and more info available at runsignup.com.

[COMMUNITY GARAGE SALE]

Do you have stuff you'd like to sell, but don't want people in your home? Join the community garage sale from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. **October 16** and **November 20** at Lincoln Center. Register to sell your items now! Vendor fees are \$34 for 10' X 10' interior space or \$56 for 23' x 6' wall space. Table, chairs, extension cords not provided.

[YOUTH BASKETBALL]

Children will play a 10-game season while learning the fundamentals of basketball. The league will consist of three divisions: Kindergarten-1st Grade, 2nd-3rd Grade, 4th-5th Grade. Games are on Saturdays and practice on weekdays. Teams determined by a player draft. All players receive a T-shirt. Deadline to register is **October 16**. Fee is \$50 for residents and \$55 for nonresidents. Practice begins the week of November 8. Season runs through February 19 at Lincoln Center.

[PAINT A PUMPKIN]

Decorate a pumpkin for your front porch and create a one-of-a-kind bucket for all your Halloween candy 6-8 p.m. **October 27** at Lincoln Center. It will be a spooktacular time for ages 6-10 with snacks and apple cider too! Fee is \$15 for residents and \$10 for nonresidents. Deadline to register is **October 17**.

[CALLING ALL VENDORS]

Highland Parks and Rec is accepting crafters and vendors for its annual fall show **November 27**. Vendor fees are \$43 for 10' X 10' interior space or \$70 for 23' x 6' wall space. Table, chairs, extension cords not provided. Retail merchant certificate required.

INFO: For more information on these and other events, call (219) 838-0114 or visit highlandparks.org to register.

HAPPY HALLOWEEN

TRUNK OR TREAT
11 AM – 2 PM OCTOBER 23
MAIN SQUARE PARK

Interested in participating?
 The Highland Council of Community Events
 invites merchants and organizations to participate.
 Costumes and decorated vehicles are encouraged.
 Set-up time is from 9 - 10 a.m.
REGISTRATION: Deadline is **October 11**.
 Visit highland.in.gov or the HCCE Facebook page to register.
QUESTIONS? Email highlandcce@gmail.com.

TRICK-OR-TREATING HOURS
 Trick-or-treating hours are from **5 to 7 p.m. October 31**
 for all Highland ghouls and goblins!