

Enrolled Minutes of the Sixty-Eighth Regular Meeting or Special Meeting
For the Thirtieth Highland Town Council Regular Plenary
Business Meeting (In person) Monday, August 10, 2026

The Thirtieth Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana met in its regular plenary session on Monday, August 10, 2026 at 6:30 o'clock P.M. in the regular place, the Highland Municipal Building, 3333 Ridge Road, Highland, Indiana.

*This meeting was convened as an in person meeting and lived streamed to the Town of Highland Facebook. Facebook permits the public to observe and record the proceedings but allows no interaction between and among the Town Council and members of the public. The public is able to participate in person. Councilor George Georgeff, Councilor Doug Turich, Councilor Alex Robertson, Councilor Tom Black and Councilor Philip Scheeringa all participated in person.

Pursuant to HMC Section 2.05.130(A)(2), the Town Council considered and reviewed the agenda in an informal proceeding in the plenary meeting room before the president called the meeting to order.

The Town Council President Georg Georgeff presided over the meeting. The Clerk-Treasurer, Mark Herak, was present to memorialize the proceedings. The meeting was opened with Councilor Tom Black reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and offering a prayer.

Roll Call: Present on roll call were Councilors George Georgeff, Doug Turich, Alex Robertson, Thomas Black and Philip Scheeringa present. Councilors George Georgeff and Philip Scheeringa were absent. Clerk-Treasurer, Mark Herak was also present. A quorum was attained.

Additional Officials Present: Metropolitan Police Chief Ralph Potesta; Glenn Schlessner, Fire Chief; Redevelopment Director Maria Becerra; Ed Dabrowski, Director of Information Technology; Building Commissioner Kenneth J. Mika; Park Director Mindi Ray; Public Works Director Mark Knesek and John Reed, Attorney with JPR Legal Services were present.

Guests: Theresa Badovich (remotely) and Robin Carlascio (remotely) of the Idea Factory were also present.

Minutes of the Previous Meetings: The minutes of the July 27, 2026 Plenary meeting were approved by general consent.

Special Orders:

1. **Executive Proclamation:** A Proclamation Recognizing Rail Safety Week in the Town of Highland from September 21st through 27th 2026 – *See Tracks? Think Train*

- (a) Reading and Execution of Proclamation.
- (b) Action by the Town Council President

The Town Council President approved the proclamation by his signature:

TOWN OF HIGHLAND
PROCLAMATION OF the TOWN EXECUTIVE

A PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 21ST TO 27ND, 2026 AS RAIL SAFETY WEEK IN THE TOWN OF HIGHLAND

Whereas, National *See Tracks? Think Train Week*;

Whereas, 2,273 rail grade crossing collisions resulted in 764 personal injuries and were responsible for 287 fatalities in the United States during 2025; and

Whereas, Educating and informing the public about rail safety, reminding the public that railroad right of ways are private property, enhancing public awareness of the dangers associated with highway rail grade crossings, ensuring pedestrians and motorists are looking and listening while near railways, and obeying established traffic laws will reduce the number of avoidable fatalities and injuries caused by incidents involving trains and citizens; and,

Whereas, The International Association of Chiefs of Police, National Operation Lifesaver, United States Department of Transportation, and all local, state, county, and railroad law enforcement officers, first responders, and railroad corporations commit to partnering together in an effort to educate at a national level all aspects of railroad safety, to enforce applicable laws in support of National *See Tracks? Think Train Week*;

Now, Therefore, I, George Georgeff, by virtue of the authority vested the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, proclaim and designate the week of September 21st to the 27th *See Tracks? Think Train Week* in the Town of Highland;



in me as President of Indiana, now hereby 2026, as NATIONAL *See Tracks? Think Train Week*

Be it Further Proclaimed, That, I urge all citizens to recognize the importance of rail safety education.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Corporate Seal to be affixed at the Highland Municipal Building this 10th day of August in the year 2026.

TOWN OF HIGHLAND, INDIANA
BY ITS TOWN COUNCIL PRESIDENT

George Georgeff

Attest:

Mark Herak, Clerk-Treasurer



- 2. Advisory Board of Zoning Appeals Docket:** Petition for a Use Variance Request by Cathy Warquier, for the location commonly referred to as 3705 Highway Avenue, to allow the Petitioner the use of a space above an existing garage, separate and independent of the existing single family residence on this property. The property is located in a R-1/ Single Family Residential. Two Family Residential Use is not permitted in this zoned district. A Use Variance is being sought from HMC Section 18.15.030 (A) Permitted Uses (1) One-family detached dwellings, including models. This is not a permitted use in this zoned district HMC Section 18.15.050. A Use Variance is required to permit the proposed use.

The Town of Highland Advisory Board of Zoning Appeals by a vote of four (4) in favor and one (1) opposed acted to **FAVORABLY** recommend the request for the use variance. The ABZA met in regular session on Wednesday, June 24, 2026. The findings of fact were memorialized and were approved by the Advisory Board of Zoning Appeals at its Meeting of July 22, 2026. (90 days ends 20 October 2026). This tolls from the making of the recommendation which could be the meeting at which the ABZA acts not when filed.

- (A) Opportunity for Comment
- (B) Action on the Recommendation

*Pursuant to IC 36-7-4-918.6, the Town Council may either **accept the favorable recommendation** and **GRANT** the requested use variance or it may **reject (over rule) the favorable recommendation** and **DENY** the use variance. If **not** acted upon by the Town Council within 90 days after the ABZA certifies its recommendation, the request of the Petitioner takes effect.*

Councilor Scheeringa moved to accept the favorable recommendation of the Advisory Board of Zoning Appeals and Grant the use variance. Councilor Turich seconded.

Upon a roll call vote, there were five (5) affirmative votes and no negative votes. The motion passed. The favorable recommendation of the Advisory Board of Zoning Appeals was granted and the use variance was approved.



TOWN OF HIGHLAND

Highland Municipal Building • 3333 Ridge Road

Highland, Indiana 46322

219-838-1080 • Fax 219-972-5097



Population 23,696

Incorporated in 1910

July 22, 2026

George Georgeff, President
Highland Town Council
3333 Ridge Road
Highland, IN 46322

RE: CERTIFICATION OF ACTION TAKEN BY THE TOWN OF HIGHLAND BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS CONCERNING A USE VARIANCE REQUEST BY CATHY WARQUIER, FOR THE LOCATION COMMONLY REFERRED TO AS 3705 HIGHWAY AVENUE, TO ALLOW THE PETITIONER THE USE OF A SPACE ABOVE AN EXISTING DETACHED GARAGE ON THE PROPERTY AS AN APARTMENT, SEPARATE AND INDEPENDENT OF THE EXISTING SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE ON THIS PROPERTY. THIS PROPERTY IS ZONED R-1 / SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL. TWO FAMILY RESIDENTIAL USE IS NOT PERMITTED IN THIS ZONED DISTRICT.

The Town of Highland Advisory Board of Zoning Appeals met in regular session on Wednesday, June 24, 2026. As part of their agenda, by a vote of four (4) in favor and one (1) opposed, the Board voted to send a **Favorable Recommendation** to the Town Council, contingent upon the apartment being rehabbed for living conditions (to code), and the use of said apartment to be limited to family members only.

The Findings of Fact were approved/memorialized at the July 22, 2026, BZA meeting. This matter can now be acted upon by the Town Council. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Kenneth J. Mika
Zoning Administrator

Cc: Town Council
Clerk Treasurer, Mark Herak
BZA Attorney, John Reed

Attached: Meeting Minutes of 7/22/26
Approved Findings of Fact

HIGHLAND BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
Minutes of the Meeting of
June 24, 2026

The Highland Board of Zoning Appeals met in the meeting room of the Highland Municipal Building, 3333 Ridge Road, Highland, IN 46322, on June 24, 2026. Commissioner Murovic called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m. Commissioner Helms led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL: Present were Commissioners Helms, Smith, Thomas, Wright, and Murovic. Also present were Building Commissioner/Zoning Administrator Ken Mika, and BZA Town Attorney John Reed.

MINUTES: The minutes of March 25th, 2026, were approved as posted.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: The next Board of Zoning Appeals meeting will take place on July 22nd, 2026.

COMMUNICATIONS: None.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: Public Hearing for Cathy Warquier of 3705 Highway Avenue, (represented by Attorney Jonathan Petersen), Highland, IN 46322, requesting a Use Variance to update and use the property above the detached garage at 3705 Highway Avenue as an apartment and a 2nd residence on this property. {HMC 18.15.030 (A) Permitted Uses (1) One-family detached dwellings, including models. This is not a listed, permitted use in this zoned district. - per {HMC 18.15.050} Use Variances.

Commissioner Murovic asked Attorney Reed if the Proof of Publication was published on time. Attorney Reed confirmed it was published correctly and Mr. Mika confirmed that the sign was posted correctly.

Attorney Jonathan Petersen stepped forward and introduced himself as the representative for the petitioner Cathy Warquier. Attorney Petersen stated they had prepared a PowerPoint presentation and directed the Board's attention to the slides. He first pointed out on the property record card for 3705 Highway the description of a Two-Family Dwelling and Platted Lot, and that the structure was built in 1949. It was originally built as a single-family home. He stated that they would be focusing on the apartment unit that was above the garage. He also stated that Ms. Warquier resided at the property and has maintained the property in a very acceptable condition. He pointed out that there were several other homes near her that are very similar in construction, that also have apartments above the garage, one being directly across the street from her home.

These other apartments are in use. He added that Ms. Warquier wanted to go through this process the right way. He asked Ms. Warquier what she planned to use the apartment for. She responded that she planned to use it for her son, so he could live there. Mr. Petersen pointed out that this building was constructed for that type of use, this use was allowed right across the street, and the equities he suggested would urge the Board to approve this Use Variance. He added that Ms. Warquier is seeking to restore the original functionality of the property. Mr. Petersen then showed the slides of contracts that Ms. Warquier had obtained from the licensed contractor for work she plans to have done in the space to bring it up to code in order for her son to reside there, possibly totaling as much as \$30,000. He added that she is simply asking for the Board's permission to have this work done and let her son live there. Lastly, Attorney Petersen explained that Ms. Warquier had taken a further step by having 14 of her neighbors sign a petition stating they had no objection to Ms. Warquier restoring the apartment above the garage at her residence. He then stated that they had submitted their presentation to the Board and asked that it be recommended for approval by the Board.

Commissioner Murovic opened the discussion to the public. Hearing no remonstrance, she closed the public meeting and brought the discussion back to the Board.

Commissioner Helms pointed out that the Board would just be making a positive or negative recommendation to the Town Council this evening and the final say would be up to the Town Council. Mr. Petersen responded that he understood. Commissioner Helms then asked Mr. Mika to elaborate the reasons this Use Variance request was denied the last time and if there were any specific reasons the Board should be aware of tonight. Mr. Mika stated that the zoning of this property is single-family. He went on to say that going back to 2011, the property was in foreclosure and had been vacant for nearly two years when Cathy Warquier inquired about the property and was interested in purchasing. When Ms. Warquier called the Building & Inspection Department at that time to inquire about the possible use of the apartment above the garage, she was told that the legal non-conforming use of this apartment would no longer be possible, as it had been vacant for longer than a year, and because of this, the use would have to revert back to the R-1 zoned district. Ms. Warquier purchased the property in approximately 2011, despite the fact that she had been told that the use of the apartment would not be permitted. She then filed for a Use Variance to use this space in 2014 and again in 2015, which were both unsuccessful. Commissioner Thomas asked what the situation was with the home across the street. Mr. Mika explained that in order for the legal non-conforming use to cease, the property would need to be vacant for a year or more, or there would need to be damage totaling 50% or more of the value from a natural disaster. There had been no such transition with the property across the street. Mr. Mika then stated that the county may not be aware that the legal non-conforming use of this apartment at 3507 Highway was not effective any longer, because the property information is still stating it is a two-family dwelling. Ms. Warquier pointed out that she is still paying taxes on this property. Commissioner Thomas stated that she would have to contact the Assessor's office so that could be re-evaluated. He continued that he used to own this property, so he was very familiar with it. He then asked if the upstairs apartment was livable, because it was close to non-livable in 2000 when he sold the property. Ms. Warquier stated that she planned

to remodel and bring the apartment up to code, which was why she had submitted the quotes showing the work that she planned to do. Mr. Petersen reiterated the work that his client planned to do and said Ms. Warquier has every intention of bringing the property up to a safe and habitable place for her family member to reside. He then mentioned that she took the additional step to get the approval of many of her neighbors and didn't meet any resistance from them. For these reasons, they were asking for a favorable recommendation from the Board. Commissioner Helms asked if the petitioner was to bring this space up to an acceptable standard, if there was any other reason she could not have an apartment above the garage. Mr. Reed stated that there may be an issue with parking if too many of the homes in an R-1 zoned district became 2-family dwellings. He suggested that there could possibly be a covenant added to specify the apartment could only be utilized by family members. Commissioner Thomas asked if this home at 3705 Highway Avenue was Ms. Warquier's personal residence. She replied that it was. He then asked if she still owned the house on Walnut Drive in Munster. She replied that her daughter lived there. Commissioner Murovic asked if there were any other multi-units or duplexes in the surrounding area. Mr. Mika stated that there were probably three. One of them, the use had gone away because of the non-conformance, and with some, the legal non-conformance was still in effect.

Commissioner Helms pointed out that it was clear Ms. Warquier was going to be investing a lot of money and time in improving the property to make it livable and up to code. He added that the only sticking point was the non-conforming to the R-1 zone. He then stated he would like to make a motion to give a favorable recommendation to the Town Council with the condition that the apartment is rehabbed to living conditions and the use is limited to family members. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion, and it was approved by a roll call vote of 4 in favor and 1 opposed.

NEW BUSINESS: Public Hearing for Matthew Hanft, 8434 Delaware Street, Highland, IN 46322, requesting a Variance to construct a new garage (24' x 40' / 960 sq. ft.) at 8434 Delaware Street that exceeds the maximum accessory structure allowance by 240 sq. ft. (HMC 18.05.060) Interpretation and Application – Supplementary district regulation. (F) Accessory Buildings (5) In Zoning District R-1A, R-1, R-2 or R-3. The summation of the gross floor area of all accessory structures shall not exceed the gross floor area of the principal structure, or 720 square feet, whichever is less.

Commissioner Murovic asked Attorney Reed if the Proof of Publication was published on time. Attorney Reed confirmed it was published correctly and Mr. Mika confirmed that the sign was posted correctly.

Matthew Hanft stepped forward and introduced himself, stating his address as 8434 Delaware Street. He proceeded to pass out a design packet to the Board members with the specifications and drawings of the garage he hoped to build on his property. He said he had lived at this location since 2019 and had been a Highland resident his entire life. He continued to say that he put up a very large light display every Christmas, which required a lot of storage, and was one of the reasons for his need for the over-sized garage. More importantly, he added that his whole basement was filled with toys for the

HIGHLAND BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS

Petitioner:

Cathy Warquier
3705 Highway Avenue,
Highland, IN 46322

Property Location:

3705 Highway Avenue,
Highland, IN 46322

FINDINGS OF FACT FOR A POSITIVE RECOMMENDATION
CONCERNING A USE VARIANCE IN AN R-1 ZONING DISTRICT

1. The Petitioner, Cathy Warquier, is requesting a Use Variance to update and use the property above the detached garage at 3705 Highway Avenue as an apartment and a 2nd residence on this property. HMC 18.15.030 (A) Permitted Uses (1) One-family detached dwellings, including models. This is not a listed, permitted use in this zoned district - per {HMC 18.15.050} a Use Variance is required to permit the proposed use.

2. This matter came before the Highland Board of Zoning Appeals for public hearing on June 24, 2026. Petitioner appeared in person and by Attorney Jonathan Petersen, the property owner's representative. Petitioner presented proof of notice and publication as required by law.

1. Attorney John Reed stated, after inquiry from Chairperson Murovic, that the Proofs of Publication were in order. Mr. Mika further stated that he confirmed with attorney Reed that the publication was made in a timely manner and contained the correct meeting information. Mr. Mika confirmed that the signage was properly posted in accordance with the Ordinance.

3. Attorney Jonathan Petersen stepped forward on behalf of the petitioner Cathy Warquier, and attorney Petersen's comments can be reviewed at Exhibit A.

SEE EXHIBIT A

4. Commissioner Murovic opened the discussion to the public. Hearing no remonstrance, she closed the public meeting and brought the discussion back to the Board. The Board discussion can be reviewed at Exhibit B.

SEE EXHIBIT B

5. After said discussion, the Board motioned to give a FAVORABLE recommendation to the Town Council to approve the proposed use variance. The motion contained two conditions: (1) that the living area above the garage be restored to code compliant living conditions, and (2) that the additional living area be occupied only by members of the owner's immediate family. The Board then voted four (4) in favor and one (1) opposed to send a FAVORABLE recommendation to the Town Council to approve the proposed use variance.

6. Pursuant to the evidence presented and materials submitted to the Board, which are a part of the record herein, the Board of Zoning Appeals makes the following Findings of Fact concerning its recommendation of approval to the Town Council:

- A. Under the Town of Highland Zoning Ordinance HMC 18.15.030 (A) Permitted Uses (1) One-family detached dwellings, including models. This is not a listed, permitted use in this zoned district. - per {HMC 18.15.050} Use Variances.
- B. That the Petitioner's proposed use would not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals and general welfare of the community.
- C. That the Petitioner presented evidence that the proposed use would be aesthetically compatible with the immediate area and the other properties in the surrounding area. Therefore, the proposed use would not have a deleterious effect on neighboring property owners.
- D. That the board and approved with the condition that the apartment is rehabbed to living conditions and the use is limited to family members. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion, and it was approved by a roll call vote of four (4) in favor and one (1) opposed.

WHEREFORE, based upon the above Findings of Fact, the Highland Board of Zoning Appeals, by a vote of four (4) in favor and one (1) opposed, voted to FAVORABLY RECOMMEND the requested Use Variance to the Town Council

Findings of Fact approved the 22nd day of July, 2026.

TOWN OF HIGHLAND
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS



Susan Murovic, Chairperson
Town of Highland Board of Zoning Appeals

EXHIBIT A

Attorney Petersen stated they had prepared a PowerPoint presentation and directed the Board's attention to the slides. He first pointed out on the property record card for 3705 Highway the description of a Two-Family Dwelling and Platted Lot, and that the structure was built in 1949. It was originally built as a single-family home. He stated that they would be focusing on the apartment unit that was above the garage. He also stated that Ms. Warquier resided at the property and has maintained the property in a very acceptable condition. He pointed out that there were several other homes near her that are very similar in construction, that also have apartments above the garage, one being directly across the street from her home. These other apartments are in use.

Attorney Petersen further added that Ms. Warquier wanted to go through this process the right way. He asked Ms. Warquier what she planned to use the apartment for and she responded that her son would live in the apartment. Mr. Petersen pointed out that this building was constructed for that type of use and that the use was allowed right across the street, and the equities he suggested would urge the Board to approve this Use Variance.

He added that Ms. Warquier is seeking to restore the original functionality of the property. Attorney Petersen then showed the slides of contracts that Ms. Warquier had obtained from the licensed contractor for work she plans to have done in the space to bring it up to code in order for her son to reside there, possibly totaling as much as \$30,000. He added that she is simply asking for the Board's permission to have this work done and let her son live there. Lastly, Attorney Petersen explained that Ms. Warquier had taken a further step by having 14 of her neighbors sign a petition stating they had no objection to Ms. Warquier restoring the apartment above the garage at her residence. Attorney Petersen stated that they had submitted their presentation to the Board and asked that it be recommended for approval by the Board.

EXHIBIT B

Commissioner Helms pointed out that the Board would just be making a positive or negative recommendation to the Town Council this evening and the final say would be up to the Town Council. Mr. Petersen responded that he understood. Commissioner Helms then asked Mr. Mika to elaborate the reasons this Use Variance request was denied the last time and if there were any specific reasons the Board should be aware of tonight.

Mr. Mika stated that the zoning of this property is single-family. He went on to say that going back to 2011, the property was in foreclosure and had been vacant for nearly two years when Cathy Warquier inquired about the property and was interested in purchasing. At that time, when Ms. Warquier called the Building & Inspection Department to inquire about the possible use of the apartment above the garage, she was told that the legal non-conforming use of this apartment would no longer be possible, as it had been vacant for longer than a year, and because of this, the use would have to revert back to the R-1 zoned district.

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Commissioner Thomas asked if this home at 3705 Highway Avenue was Ms. Warquier's personal residence. She replied that it was. He then asked if she still owned the house on Walnut Drive in Munster. She replied that her daughter lived at that residence.

Commissioner Murovic asked if there were any other multi-units or duplexes in the surrounding area. Mr. Mika stated that there were probably three. One of them, the use had gone away because of the non-conformance, and with some, the legal non-conformance was still in effect.

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Commissioner Helms then stated he would like to make a motion to give a favorable recommendation to the Town Council with the condition that the apartment is rehabbed to living conditions and the use is limited to family members. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion, and it was approved by a roll call vote of four (4) in favor and one (1) opposed.

Comments from the Public or Visitors:

Terry Steagall, Highland, thanked the Council for putting on tonight's agenda, Resolution 2026-21 supporting USW7-1 and hoped they would adopt it. According to Terry, the BP workers were illegally locked out by management, in an attempt to break the union.

Staff Reports: The following staff reports were received and filed.

2026
 TOWN OF HIGHLAND INJURIES FOR THE MONTH
 JULY

CASE	DATE	DEPARTMENT	DESCRIPTION	Record Only No Med Treatment	OSHA Recordable	Not OSHA Recordable	Filed with WC Insurance
	OF INJURY						
			NO INJURIES FOR THE MONTH				

RO = Record Only

DEPT	2026		2025	2026		RESTRICTED	LOST DAYS
	INJURIES	YEAR TO		RESTRICTED	LOST DAYS		
	THIS MONTH	DATE	Total Injuries Last Year	DAYS THIS YEAR	THIS YEAR	DAYS 2025	2025
PARK & REC		2	1				7
FIRE							
POLICE		1	5	26	159	0	29
STREET		2	2		24		4
WATER							
SEWER			2				
Public Works		3			46		
REDV							
BUILDING		1	1				
TOTALS	0	9	11	26	229	0	40

Effective January 1, 2002 OSHA changed the recordkeeping guidelines. We now count the number of days lost from the day after the injury until the employee returns to work. Weekends, holidays, vacation days or other days scheduled off are included in the lost days count to a maximum of 180 days

Building Report July, 2026

PERMIT TYPE	#	Res.	Comm.	Est. Cost	Fee Collected
Commercial Buildings	1		1	\$ 248,000.00	\$ 4,560.00
Comm. Additions/Remodel	6		6	\$ 217,956.00	\$ 3,925.50
Signs	3		3	\$ 19,450.00	\$ 873.00
Single Family	1	1		\$ 280,000.00	\$ 4,963.50
Duplex/Condo	0			\$ -	\$ -
Residential Additions	0			\$ -	\$ -
Residential Remodeling	111	111		\$ 1,525,268.00	\$ 31,219.00
Concrete/Asphalt/Flatwork	13	13		\$ 223,023.00	\$ 3,334.50
Garages	2	2		\$ 60,550.00	\$ 1,351.50
Sheds/Pergola	2	2		\$ 26,550.00	\$ 699.00
Decks & Porches	5	5		\$ 84,714.00	\$ 2,145.00
Fences	15	15		\$ 78,537.00	\$ 2,791.50
Above/In ground pools	3	3		\$ -	\$ 162.00
Drain Tile/Waterproofing	5	5		\$ 36,260.00	\$ 1,101.00
Misc: Road Cuts (17)	17	17		\$ -	\$ 2,673.00
Total Building Permits	184	174	10	\$ 2,800,308.00	\$ 59,798.50

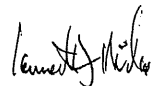
Electrical Permits	23	19	4	\$ -	\$ 3,953.00
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Mechanical Permits	36	31	5	\$ -	\$ 3,982.00
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Plumbing Permits	13	11	2	\$ -	\$ 2,211.65
Water Meters	0			\$ -	\$ -
Water taps	1	1		\$ -	\$ 200.00
Sewer/Storm Taps	1	1		\$ -	\$ 300.00
Total Plumbing Permits	15	13	2	\$ -	\$ 2,711.65

July 2026 Code Enforcement: 304 Investigations, 83 Warnings & 5 Citations were issued.
Inspections done for the month of July 2026 were as follows: 43 Building Inspections,
19 Plumbing Inspections, 18 HVAC and 17 Electrical Inspections. There were no Electrical Exams given.

Submitted By:



Kenneth J. Milka

Mark Herak

From: Glenn Schlessner
Sent: Monday, August 3, 2026 11:23 AM
To: Mark Herak
Cc: Denise Beck
Subject: July Stats

July fire department statistical:

84 CFS
439 YTD

Glenn M. Schlessner, Sr.

Fire Chief
Highland Fire Department
2901 Highway Avenue
Highland, IN 46322
Phone: 219-923-9876



Communications:

Highland Football Tailgate at Main Square on August 13th
Live from Main Square - August 15th from 2:00 to 9:00
Community Garage Sale - August 15th at Lincoln Center
Highland Community Garage Sale – August 21 – 22
Downtown Restaurant Crawl – August 25 – 4 p.m. to 9 pm
Backyard BBQ - September 24-27th
Griffith's Rock & Rail – September 3rd to September 6th
Government offices will be closed on Monday, September 7st (Labor Day)

Appointments:

• Statutory Boards and Commissions

Executive Appointments (May be made in meeting or at another time)

Regional Statutory Commissions or Boards

Home Rule Boards and Commissions

Legislative Appointments

Regional Statutory Commissions or Boards

Home Rule Commissions

1. **Main Street Bureau Board:** (17) appointments to be made by the Town Council.
Term: Two years ending 1 Jan 2027. *Currently only 8 of 17 appointed.*

General Orders and Unfinished Business:

1. **Appropriation Enactment No. 2026-19.** An Enactment Appropriating Additional Monies in Excess of the Annual Budget for the Gaming Fund In the amount of \$81,645.92, all pursuant to I.C. 6-1.1-18, and I.C. 36-5-3-5

Introduced by Councilor Black at the July 27, 2026 Town Council Plenary Meeting. Motion failed to get unanimous consent to consider at the same night of introduction.

Councilor Scheeringa moved for the passage and adoption of Appropriation Enactment No. 2026-19. Councilor Black seconded. Upon a roll call vote, there were four (4) affirmatives and one (1) negative, with Councilors Georgeff, Robertson, Black and Scheeringa voting in the affirmative and Councilor Turich voting in the negative. The motion passed. The ordinance was adopted upon the signature of the municipal executive.

**Town of Highland
Appropriation Enactment
Enactment No. 2026-19**

AN ENACTMENT APPROPRIATING ADDITIONAL MONIES IN EXCESS OF THE ANNUAL BUDGET for the GAMING FUND, ALL PURSUANT TO I.C. 6-1.1-18, and I.C. 36-5-3-5.

WHEREAS, Following a public hearing advertised pursuant to I.C. 5-3-1, it has been determined that it is now necessary to appropriate more money than was appropriated in the annual budget for the **Gaming Fund**;

WHEREAS, It has been determined that such additional appropriations as may be approved by this enactment, will not increase the levies set under I.C. 6-1.1-17, all pursuant to I.C. 36-5-3-5;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT ENACTED by the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana, as follows:

Section 1. That for the expenses of said municipality, the following additional sums of money are hereby appropriated and ordered set apart out of the **Gaming Fund** herein named and for the purposes herein specified, subject to the laws governing the same:

Gaming Fund

Acct. No. 4437-0000-41040 179 th Resurfacing	\$81,645.92
<i>Total 400 Series:</i>	\$81,645.92
Fund Total:	\$81,645.92

Section 2. That the Clerk-Treasurer is hereby authorized and instructed to inform the Department of Local Government Finance of this action and that these monies be made available for expenditure pursuant to I.C. 6-1.1-18.

Section 3. That in satisfaction and for the purposes of the provisions set out in I.C. 36-5-2-9.6, I.C. 36-5-3-5, I.C. 36-5-4-2, this enactment shall be deemed properly filed and introduced before the Town Council at a regular or special meeting, properly called and convened pursuant to I.C. 5-1.5-14 *et seq.*

Introduced and Filed on the 27th Day of July 2026. Consideration on the same day or at same meeting of introduction sustained by a vote of in favor and opposed, pursuant to I.C. 36-5-2-9.8.

DULY ORDAINED AND ADOPTED this 10th Day of August 2026, by the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana, having been passed by a vote of 4 in favor and 1 opposed.

TOWN COUNCIL of the TOWN of
HIGHLAND, INDIANA

George Georgeff, President (IC 36-5-2-10)

ATTEST:

Mark Herak
Clerk-Treasurer (IC 33-42-4-1; IC 36-5-6-5)

2. Introduced Ordinance No. 1842-E: An Ordinance to amend Ordinance No. 1842 to establish the Wage and Salary Rates of the Elected Officers, the Non-Elected Officers, and the Employees of the Town of Highland, Indiana particularly modifying the job description of and changing the compensation package as it pertains to the Chief of the Department.

Introduced by Councilor Black at the July 27, 2026 Town Council Plenary Meeting. There was no further action.

Councilor Scheeringa moved for the passage and adoption of Ordinance No. 1842-E. Councilor Black seconded.

Discussion: Councilor Robertson asked that the vote be suspended indefinitely. Councilor Georgeff called for a second. The motion died for a lack of a second. Upon a roll call vote, there were four (4) affirmatives and no (0) negatives and one (1) abstention, with Councilors Georgeff, Robertson, Black and Scheeringa voting in the affirmative and Councilor Turich abstaining. The motion passed. The ordinance was adopted upon the signature of the municipal executive.

ORDINANCE No. 1842-E
of the
TOWN of HIGHLAND, INDIANA

AN ORDINANCE to AMEND ORDINANCE No. 1842 to ESTABLISH THE WAGE and Salary Rates of the Elected Officers, the NON-ELECTED Officers, and the Employees of the TOWN of HIGHLAND, INDIANA Particularly Modifying the Job Title of and Changing the Compensation Package as it pertains to the Chief of the Department.

WHEREAS, Title 36, Article 1 Chapter 4 of the Indiana Code confers certain general corporate powers on the several units of government in Indiana;

WHEREAS, Section fifteen of that chapter specifically provides that a unit of government may fix the level of compensation of its officers and employees;

WHEREAS, I.C. 36-5-3-2 provides in pertinent part that the town legislative body shall provide reasonable compensation for the other town officers and employees;

WHEREAS, I.C. 36-5-3-2(b), further provides that the Town Legislative body shall, by ordinance fix the compensation of its own members and the Town Clerk-Treasurer;

WHEREAS, I.C. 36-5-3-2(c) still further provides that the compensation of an elected town officer may not be changed in the year for which it is fixed, nor may it be reduced below the amount fixed for the previous year;

WHEREAS, The Town Council of the Town of Highland, as the Town Legislative body, now desires to amend the ordinance that was adopted to fix the compensation of its elected officers, appointed officers and employees of the Town for the year 2026 and thereafter as amended;

WHEREAS, The Town Council of the Town of Highland, as the town legislative body, has been advised that it is necessary change the COMPENSATION RANGE for the Fire Chief/Fire Inspector within the Fire Department; and

WHEREAS, The Town Council of the Town of Highland, as the town legislative body, now desires to amend the wage and salary ordinance as it pertains to the Fire Department; and,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY ORDAINED by the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana, that the Salary of the Chief of the Department/Fire Inspector is modified and a compensation range created, pursuant to the provisions indicated herein and as follows:

Section 1. That Section 3 (C) of Ordinance No. 1842 be amended by repealing Section 3 (C) of that Ordinance in its entirety and replacing with the following section, which shall be numbered as Section 3 (C) and read as follows:

(C) *Master's Degree Pay.* All Department heads and senior supervisory workers, with the exception of the Fire Chief who earn a graduate degree from an accredited University or College in a discipline relevant to their administrative responsibilities, shall have an additional compensatory adjustment added to the base rate in the bi-weekly amount of \$112.32;

Section 2. That Section 3 of Ordinance No. 1842 be amended by adding

Section 3 (D) of that Ordinance, which shall be numbered as Section 3 (D) and read as follows:

(D) *Master's Degree Pay.* Per the Contract Incentive, when the Fire Chief earns a graduate degree from an accredited University or College in a discipline relevant to his administrative responsibilities, he shall have an additional compensatory adjustment added to the base rate in the bi-weekly amount of \$288.46. This is a contract incentive and sunsets when Chief Glenn Schlessler ends his employment with the Town of Highland;

Section 3. That Section 12 (A) Chief of the Department/Fire Inspector of Ordinance No. 1842 be amended by repealing Section 12 (A) of that Ordinance in its entirety and replacing with the following section, which shall be numbered as Section 12 (A) and read as follows:

Section 12. *Fire Department.* That subject to the provisions of this ordinance, the salary and wages for the non-elected officers and employees of the Town of Highland are hereby fixed for its **Fire Department** as follows:

(A) Chief of Department (1)

That the salary of the Chief of the Department shall be paid biweekly and shall be hereby fixed as set forth below:

- (1) That subject to subdivision (D), the compensation for a Chief of the Department-possessing a **baccalaureate** level degree in a related field granted from an accredited University or College is hereby fixed at \$4230.77 bi-weekly;
- (2) That per his negotiated contract, the Chief of the Department is eligible to receive Two Thousand and no Cents (\$2000) per annum for Chief Fire Officer Designation s from the Center for Public Safety Excellence;
- (3) That per his negotiated contract, the Chief of the Department is eligible to receive overtime payments, for work in excess of 50 per week, in the amount of \$42.00 per hour;

Section 4. That all portions of ordinances in conflict with this ordinance are hereby repealed and are of no further force nor effect;

Section 5. That except where otherwise noted herein, other compensation and benefits matters not expressly provided herein for salaried and hourly employees and the Clerk-Treasurer shall be as set forth in the Compensation and Benefits Ordinance, commonly called the Employee Handbook as amended

from time to time;

Section 6. That an emergency exists for the immediate taking effect of this Ordinance which, shall become effective and shall remain in full force and effect from and *after the date of its passage and adoption* pursuant to any constraints currently in force in Ordinance No. 1842 and until its repeal or amendment by subsequent enactment, subject to any express provisions of this ordinance, in all other instances not sooner than August 2, 2026;

Section 7. That the provisions set forth in Section 1, shall be effective from August 10, 2026 and continue thereafter until amended , modified or repealed by passage and adoption of a successor ordinance.

(B) That the Clerk-Treasurer shall have authority to implement the provisions of this ordinance pursuant to the authority expressly set forth in IC 36-5-6-6 (a) (3) & (4).

Introduced and Filed 27th day of July 2026. Consideration on same day or at same meeting of introduction was not considered, pursuant to IC 36-5-2-9.8.

DULY ORDAINED and ADOPTED this 10th Day of August 2026, by the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana, having been passed by a vote of 4 in favor, 0 opposed and 1 abstention.

**TOWN COUNCIL of the TOWN of
HIGHLAND, INDIANA**

George Georgeff, President (IC 36-5-2-10)

Attest:

Mark Herak
Clerk-Treasurer (IC 33-42-4-1; IC 36-5-6-5; IC 36-5-2-10.2)

3. Introduced Ordinance No. 1854: An Ordinance to Amend the Compensation, Benefits and Personnel Program of the Municipality, to be known as the Compensation and Benefits Ordinance Commonly known as the Employee Handbook, Pursuant to IC 36-1-3 and other Relevant Statutes. (making the Fire Chief eligible to receive overtime payments for work in excess of 50 hours per week, without express written permission of the President or Chair of the relevant Board of Jurisdiction.

Introduced by Councilor Black at the July 27, 2026 Town Council Plenary

Councilor Black moved for the passage and adoption of Ordinance No. 1854. Councilor Robertson seconded. Upon a roll call vote, there were four (4) affirmatives and no (0) negatives and one (1) abstention, with Councilors Georgeff, Robertson, Black and Scheeringa voting in the affirmative and Councilor Turich abstaining. The motion passed. The ordinance was adopted upon the signature of the municipal executive.

**ORDINANCE NO. 1854
OF THE
TOWN OF HIGHLAND, INDIANA**

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE COMPENSATION, BENEFITS AND PERSONNEL PROGRAM OF THE MUNICIPALITY, TO BE KNOWN AS THE COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS ORDINANCE COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE EMPLOYEES HANDBOOK, PURSUANT TO IC 36-1-3 AND OTHER RELEVANT STATUTES MAKING THE FIRE CHIEF ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE OVERTIME PAYMENTS FOR WORK IN EXCESS OF 50 HOURS PER WEEK, WITHOUT EXPRESS WRITTEN PERMISSION OF THE PRESIDENT OR CHAIR OF THE RELEVANT BOARD OF JURISDICTION.

WHEREAS, The Town Council is the fiscal and legislative body of the Town of Highland;

WHEREAS, IC 36-1-3-2 confers upon all local units the powers that they need for the effective operation of government as to local affairs;

WHEREAS, IC 36-1-3-6 (b)(1) prescribes that any such exercise of power shall be authorized through enactment of an ordinance passed by the legislative body; and

WHEREAS, IC 36-1-4, sections 14 and 15 provide in pertinent parts for the establishment of a system of employment for any class of employee and for fixing the level of compensation of its officers and employees; and

WHEREAS, IC 5-10 in several pertinent chapters further authorizes Indiana political subdivisions to participate in and provide for certain compensation plans, and group benefits for its public workforce and officers, some of which have been duly adopted and established by ordinance of the Town; and

WHEREAS, IC 36-5, Chapters 3 and 4 provide additional authority and guidelines for fixing the level of compensation of officers and employees in towns; and

WHEREAS, The Town Council has determined that certain modifications to the program for compensation, benefits and personnel management for its public workforce, consistent with Indiana Statutes, would be of benefit to support and carryout the public purposes of the municipality; and

WHEREAS, The Town Council now desires to authorize and establish such a compensation, benefits and personnel program;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY ORDAINED BY the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana, as follows:

Section 1. That *Section 2.01* of the Compensation and Benefits Ordinance Commonly Known as the Municipal Employees Handbook be amended by placing an * next to the name of the Fire Chief, which shall read as follows:

§ 2.01 Exempt Employees

Exempt employees refers to workers who are exempt from certain provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act pertaining to overtime. It also means that you are in a supervisory or professional position as further defined in 29 CFR 541.200 et. sq., and not eligible for overtime payments for work In excess of 40 over per week, except as provided by this handbook.

Exempt Salaried Positions

Director of Public Works	Street Supervisor
Water & Sewer Supervisor	Facilities Supervisor
Maintenance Supervisor	Deputy Clerk-Treasurer
Building Commissioner/Chief Inspector	Fiscal Analyst
Superintendent of Parks & Recreation	Park Director
Director of Recreation	Recreation Supervisor(s)
Metropolitan Police Division Commander(s)	Chief of Police
Metropolitan Police Ass't. Div. Commander(s)	Assistant Chief of Police
Metropolitan Police Administration Officer(s)	Fire Chief*
Redevelopment Director	Operations Director
Information Technology Director	

*Overtime payments: The Fire Chief is eligible to receive overtime payments in the amount of \$42.00 per hour for work in excess of 50 hours per week.

(Ord. 1717.1691-C27, 7/2020; Ord.1719.1691-D, 8/20; Ord 1733.1726-A, 6/14/2021; Ord. 1744.1726-D, 10/11/2021)

Section 2. That *Section 4.03.03* of the Compensation and Benefits Ordinance Commonly Known as the Municipal Employees Handbook be repealed in its entirety, which shall read as follows:

§ 4.03.03 Department Head Overtime

§ 4.03.03 Department Head Overtime: With the exception of the Fire Chief, No department head may receive overtime pay or compensatory time off, without the express written permission of the President or Chair of the relevant Board of

Jurisdiction. Per his negotiated contract, the Fire Chief is eligible to receive overtime payment at a rate \$42 per hour for work in excess of 50 hours per week..

Section 3. That *Section 4.03.04* of the Compensation and Benefits Ordinance Commonly Known as the Municipal Employees Handbook be repealed in its entirety, which shall read as follows:

§ 4.03.04 Exempt Supervisory Worker Overtime

§ 4.03.04 Exempt Supervisory Worker Overtime : With the exception of the Fire Chief, In all cases, when the overtime assignment involves a task or duty that is not part of the regular task or duty associated with the exempt supervisory worker, the rate of pay must be authorized in an ordinance of the Town Council. Per his negotiated contract, the Fire Chief is eligible to receive overtime payment at a rate \$42 per hour for work in excess of 50 hours per week.

Section 4. That this ordinance is to be construed as a companion ordinance complimentary to any ordinance passed from time to time establishing wages and rates of pay and known as the salary ordinance;

(A) That this ordinance shall be effective to the extent that it is not in conflict with Federal or State law;

(B) That all other ordinances and resolutions related to the subject matter of this ordinance and not in conflict with its provisions, and the enabling instruments dealing with public employee retirement plans, remain in full force and effect;

(C) That all other ordinances and resolutions in conflict with the provisions of this ordinance are hereby repealed and have no further force or effect;

Section 5. That this ordinance shall become and remain in full force and effect from and after the date of its passage and adoption upon its signature by the executive as attested thereto by the clerk-treasurer, in the manner prescribed by IC 36-5-2-10(a).

Introduced on the 27th day of July 2026. Consideration on same day or at same meeting of introduction was not considered, pursuant to IC 36-5-2-9.8.

DULY ORDAINED and ADOPTED this 10th Day of August 2026, by the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana, having been passed by a vote of 4 in favor and 0 opposed and 1 abstention.

TOWN COUNCIL of the TOWN of

George Georgeff, President (IC 36-5-2-10)

Attest:

Mark Herak
Clerk-Treasurer (IC 33-16-4-1;IC 36-5-6-5)

New Business:

1. Ratify the Meeting: Ratify the special study session meeting held on Saturday, August 8, 2026 in the Community Room of the Highland Police Station, 3315 Ridge Road, pursuant to HMC Section 2.05.130(A) (4) and Section 2.05.130(F).

Councilor Robertson moved to ratify the special meeting held on Saturday, August 8, 2026, at 9:00 o'clock a.m., in the Community Room of the Police Station, 3315 Ridge Road. Councilor Scheeringa seconded. Upon a roll call vote, there were five (5) affirmative, no negatives. The motion passed. The meeting was ratified.

TOWN of HIGHLAND

HIGHLAND MUNICIPAL BUILDING • 3333 RIDGE ROAD • HIGHLAND, INDIANA 46322
PHONE: (219) 838-1080 FAX: (219) 972-5097

OFFICE of the TOWN COUNCIL

PUBLIC NOTICE

DATE: THURSDAY, JULY 30, 2026
TO: AREA MEDIA AND PUBLIC

RE: SPECIAL STUDY SESSION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF HIGHLAND

PLEASE LET THIS SERVE AS NOTICE THAT A SPECIAL STUDY SESSION HAS BEEN CALLED FOR SATURDAY, AUGUST 8, 2026 AT 9:00 A.M. OF THE HIGHLAND TOWN COUNCIL. THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY SESSION IS TO DISCUSS VARIOUS ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS AND TO DISCUSS GOALS AND STRATEGIZE WITH THE DEPARTMENT HEADS, PURSUANT TO HIGHLAND MUNICIPAL CODE SECTION 2.05.130(A)(4) AND SECTION 2.05.130(F) AND SUCH OTHER MATTERS AS MAY BE DEEMED NECESSARY OR DESIRABLE.

THE MEETING WILL BE HELD IN THE COMMUNITY ROOM AT THE HIGHLAND POLICE STATION, 3315 RIDGE ROAD, HIGHLAND. NO ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN OTHER THAN THE EXCHANGE AND RECEIPT OF INFORMATION.

THESE MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC TO OBSERVE AND RECORD.

TOWN COUNCIL of HIGHLAND
George Georgeff, President

BY: OFFICE OF THE HIGHLAND CLERK-TREASURER
MARK HERAK, CLERK-TREASURER

(IC 5-14-1.5-5).

Generation: 7/30/26 at 6:24 PM

2. Authorize the proper officer to publish legal notice of a public hearing in the Gaming Fund in the amount of \$17,000.00 in the Gaming Revenue. If approved, the public hearing will be held on August 24, 2026 at 6:30 P.M. O'clock in the Municipal Building, 3333 Road Highland.

Councilor Scheeringa moved to authorize the proper officer to publish legal notice as indicated. Councilor Turich seconded. Upon a roll call vote, there were five (5) affirmatives and no negatives. The motion passed. The proper officer was authorized to publish the notice as indicated

**TOWN OF HIGHLAND
NOTICE TO TAXPAYERS OF PROPOSED ADDITIONAL
APPROPRIATIONS**

Notice is hereby given the taxpayers of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana, that the Town Council of said Municipality in said Municipal Building, 3333 Ridge Road, at 6:30 p.m. on the 24th day of August 2026, will consider the following additional appropriations in excess of the budget for the current year in the following funds:

Gaming Revenue Fund

4437-0000-47006 EV Charging Stations	\$	17,000.00
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<i>Total for 400 Series:</i>	\$	17,000.00
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Total for the Fund: \$17,000.00

Funds to support these additional appropriations in the **Gaming Revenue Fund** shall be supported by miscellaneous revenue, unreserved unobligated fund balance on deposit to the credit of the fund.

Taxpayers appearing at such meeting shall have a right to be heard thereon. The additional appropriations, as finally made, will be filed with the Department of Local Government Finance, for its review. The Department of Local Government Finance shall make a written determination of the sufficiency of funds within fifteen days of receipt of a certified copy of the action taken.

TOWN COUNCIL of HIGHLAND
George Georgeff, President

By: Mark Herak
Clerk-Treasurer

3. **Works Board Order 2026-19:** Approving and Authorizing the Metropolitan Police Chief, Purchase through the State of Indiana, from Currie Motors Fleet, 10125 West Laraway Road, Frankfort, IL 60423 one (1) 2026 Ford Police Interceptor Utility AWD Base, Pursuant to IC 5-22-10 and I.C. 5-22-10.

Councilor Turich moved the passage and adoption of Works Board Order No. 2026-19. Councilor Black seconded. Upon a roll call vote, there were five (5) affirmatives and no negatives. The motion passed. The order was adopted pending the signature of the municipal executive.

Town of Highland
Board of Works
Order of the Works Board 2026-19

An Order Approving and Authorizing the Metropolitan Police Chief to Purchase from Currie Motors Fleet of 10125 West Laraway Road, Frankfort, IL 60423, through the State of Indiana, (1) one 2026 Ford Police Interceptor Utility AWD Base, partially financed by the Trading-in of Existing Vehicles, all pursuant to I.C. 5-22-8-2 and I.C. 5-22-10.

Whereas, The Town of Highland Metropolitan Police Department, as part of its public duties, has a responsibility for patrol, public safety and protection of life and property throughout the Town of Highland and, from time to time, it is necessary to purchase and or lease materials and supplies in order to carry out the functions of the department; and

Whereas, The Metropolitan Police Chief has determined a need to replace certain equipment and supplies and has further determined the purchase price will be below \$50,000.00.

Whereas, The Metropolitan Police Chief has identified Currie Motors Fleet of Frankfort, IL, IN to be a desirable source vendor for the purchase of one (1) 2026 White Police Interceptor Utility AWD at price of \$45,142 minus the three (3) trade-ins totaling \$4,050.00 for a total of **\$41,092.00**;

Whereas, The price for the purchase exceeds \$25,000.00 and, pursuant to Section 3.05.040 (E) as well as Section 3.05.050 (B) of the Highland Municipal Code, such purchase requires the express approval of the purchasing agency; and

Whereas, The Town Council as the Works Board of the Municipality, pursuant to Section 3.05.030 (A)(2) of the Highland Municipal Code serves as the purchasing agency for the Metropolitan Police Department; and

Whereas, The Metropolitan Police Chief, pursuant to Section 3.05.050 (D)(2) of the Highland Municipal Code, serves as the Purchasing Agent for the Metropolitan Police Department; and

Whereas, The purchase of the vehicles will be supported by the Municipal Capital Cumulative Fund (MCCD), and a duly approved appropriation in the Metropolitan Police Department of the Corporation General Fund;

Whereas, The Town Council now desires to approve and authorize the Police Chief to complete the purchase pursuant to the terms and stated herein,

Now, Therefore Be It Ordered by the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana, acting as the Works Board of Municipality:

Section 1. That the Works Board hereby finds and determines that the offer from Currie Motors Fleet, 10125 West Laraway Road, Frankfort, IL to be the lowest responsive and responsible offer having offered a gross unit price of **\$45,142.00** for one (1)) 2026 White Police Interceptor Utility AWD minus the three (3) trade-ins totaling \$4,050.00 for a total of **\$41,092.00**; all pursuant to I.C. 5-22-8-2 and I.C.5-22-10;

Section 2. That the Police Chief is authorized and approved to purchase from Currie Motors Fleet, 10125 West Laraway Road, Frankfort, IL one (1) 2026 White Police Interceptor Utility AWD at **gross** price of \$45,142 minus the three (3) trade-ins totaling \$4,050.00 for a total of **\$41,092.00**;

Section 3. That the Metropolitan Police Chief is now authorized and approved to execute the purchase agreement and any additional documents in order to implement this purchase and then file these documents as financial materials with the Office of the Clerk-Treasurer, pursuant to IC 36-5-4-14.

Be It So Ordered.

Duly Passed, Adopted, and Ordered by the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana, acting as the Works Board, this 10th day of August, 2026 having passed by a vote of 5 in favor and 0 opposed.

**TOWN COUNCIL of the TOWN of
HIGHLAND, INDIANA**

George Georgeff, President (IC 36-5-2-10)

Attest:

Mark Herak
Clerk-Treasurer (IC 33-42-4-1; IC 36-5-6-5)

4. Request from Highland Memorial Post #180 to use the Town's crowd Control fencing for their 250th Celebration of the United States of America, to be help on Saturday, August

8th, at the American Legion Post #180, 2703 Jewett Street. This is retro to August 8, 2026. In June of 2023, the Town Council adopted Resolution No. 2023-20 establishing a rental policy, fee schedule, penalties and regulations by Non-Profits located in Highland.

Councilor Scheeringa moved to retroactively allow Highland Memorial Post #180 to use the Town's crowd control barriers for their 250th Celebration of the United States of America, to be held on Saturday, August 8th at the Highland Memorial Post #180 post. Councilor Black seconded. Upon a roll call vote, there were five (5) affirmatives and no negatives. The motion passed.



Highland Memorial Post #180
2703 Jewett Street
Highland, IN 46322
(219) 972-3948

May 27, 2026

Highland Police Department
Attn: Chief Ralph Potesta
3315 Ridge Road
Highland, IN 46322

EMAIL: rpotesta@highland.in.gov

Dear Police Chief Potesta,

I am writing to you in regards to a Post event was have scheduled on Saturday August 8, 2026 at the American Legion Post 180 in Highland Indiana.

We are planning an event open to the public for a 250th Celebration of the United States of America(flyer included). The event will occur on the grounds of our Post and is scheduled to be from 3:00pm to 10:00pm. We would greatly appreciate it if we could obtain the assistance of the Town of Highland and the Highland Police Department in securing barricades around the perimeter of the grounds. We would need about 250 feet of barricades in order to properly regulate the movement of participants to the event. While we are sensitive to the financial resources of all in our community, we will be charging \$20.00 per person and want to control the movement of people through the main entrance of the parking lot. This will assist us in crowd control of all who attend.

We will have security amongst the attendees and hopefully we won't have any adverse situations. As this is a celebration of this great country, the mood should be very celebratory and we don't expect any problems but are prepared regardless. We would like to see those officers who are off duty participate as this is a community event and we hope for a great turn out from all the residence of the Town of Highland.

Thank you for consideration in supporting our mission and helping us make a positive impact to those we serve. We are looking forward to a very positive celebration of the 250th Anniversary of

the United States of America and within the community of the Town of Highland. Thank you once again for your time and cooperation.

Warm regards,

Keith Wicklund
Post Commander
American Legion Post 180 Highland, Indiana
Tax Exempt# 0003135675000 0

5. **Proposed Ordinance No. 1626-A:** An Ordinance To Amend Section 5.05.050 of the Highland Municipal Code Regarding Business License Fees, All Pursuant To IC 36-1-5 Et Seq.

Councilor Scheeringa introduced and filed proposed Ordinance 1626-A. There was no further action.

ORDINANCE No. 1626-A
of the
TOWN of HIGHLAND, INDIANA

AN ORDINANCE To AMEND SECTION 5.05.050 OF THE HIGHLAND MUNICIPAL CODE REGARDING BUSINESS LICENSE FEES, ALL PURSUANT TO IC 36-1-5 ET SEQ.

WHEREAS, Title 36, Article 1, Chapter 5 of the Indiana Code provides that the legislative body of a unit **shall** codify, revise, rearrange, or compile the ordinances of the unit into a complete, simplified code excluding formal parts of the ordinances;

WHEREAS, The legislative body of this unit, the Town of Highland, is the Town Council, pursuant to IC 36-1-2-9(5) and IC 36-5-2-2;

WHEREAS, The present general and permanent ordinances of the Town of Highland, formally codified in 2012, are in need of technical and substantive modifications desirable to further improve and perfect the Code; and

WHEREAS, The Town Council, is persuaded that it is necessary and desirable to adopt a technical and substantive modification to Section 5.05.050 in order to further improve and perfect the Code,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY ORDAINED BY the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana, as follows:

Section 1. That Section 5.05.050 subdivisions (A), (B) and (C) of the Highland Municipal Code are hereby repealed in their entirety and amended by successor subdivisions, which shall be identified and read as follows:

5.05.050 Business license fee and registration fee.

(A) Any person maintaining, operating or conducting any business, business activity, occupation or commercial establishment, or doing business, or engaging in any service or occupation within the town, including but not limited to acting as lessor for residential or commercial properties, or renting residential properties month to month, shall pay an annual fee prescribed by this section.

(B) In the event there is no specific fee set for the engagement of a particular business as lessor for residential or renting residential properties month to month

or service, then an annual license fee for business or service not otherwise classified shall be **as follows**:

- (1) \$100.00. if paid before March 1st of the calendar year.
- (2) \$120.00 if paid after February 28th of the calendar year.
- (3) If the business is being established for the first time, the license fee shall be that prescribed for payments made before March 1st.

(C) In the event there is no specific fee set for the engagement of a particular business as a commercial property, then an annual license fee for business or service not otherwise classified shall be **as follows**:

- (1) \$200.00. if paid before March 1st of the calendar year.
- (2) \$220.00 if paid after February 28th of the calendar year.
- (3) If the business is being established for the first time, the license fee shall be that prescribed for payments made before March 1st.

(D) Exempt businesses as described in HMC 5.05.080 shall pay a registration fee as follows:

- (1) \$100.00, if paid before March 1st of the calendar year.
- (2) \$120.00 if paid after February 28th of the calendar year,
- (3) If the exempt business is being established for the first time, the license fee shall be that prescribed for payments made before March 1st.

Section 2. That this ordinance shall be effective from and after its passage and adoption, but not sooner than October 1, 2026, as evidenced by the signature of the Town Council President and attested thereto by the Clerk-Treasurer, all pursuant to IC 36-5-2-10 and IC 36-5-2-10.2.

Introduced on the 10th day of August, 2026. Consideration on same day or at same meeting of introduction was not considered, pursuant to IC 36-5-2-9.8.

DULY ORDAINED and ADOPTED this 24 day of August, 2026, by the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana, having been passed by a vote of ____ in favor and ____ opposed.

**TOWN COUNCIL of the TOWN of
HIGHLAND, INDIANA**

George Georgeff, President (IC 36-5-2-10)

Attest:

Mark Herak
Clerk-Treasurer (IC 33-42-4-1; IC 36-5-6-5; IC 36-5-2-10.2)

6. Execute and instruction. Action to instruct the Town Council President to execute the deed for the land (former State of Indian right of way and immediately adjacent to the Fair Haven Rape Crisis Center by affixing his signature to the deed.

Councilor Black moved to instruct the Town Council President to execute the deed for the land (former State of Indiana right of way and immediately adjacent to the Fair Haven Rape Crisis Center) by affixing his signature to the deed. Councilor Turich seconded. Upon a roll call vote, there were five (5) affirmatives and no negatives. The motion passed. The agreement was executed upon the signature of the municipal executive.

7. Resolution No. 2026-21: A Resolution Articulating The "Sense Of The Town Council" supporting the members of United Steel Workers Local 7-1 and urging BP Products of North America, Inc., to end the lockout and resume good-faith bargaining.

Councilor Robertson moved the passage and adoption of Resolution No. 2026-21. Councilor Scheeringa seconded. Upon a roll call vote, there were five (5) Affirmatives, no negatives. The motion passed. The resolution was adopted pending the signature of the municipal executive

Town Council of the Town of Highland RESOLUTION NO. 2026-21

A RESOLUTION ARTICULATING THE "SENSE OF THE COUNCIL" SUPPORTING the MEMBERS of the UNITED STEEL WORKERS LOCAL 7-1 and URGING BP PRODUCTS OF NORTH AMERICA, INC., to END the LOCKOUT and RESUME GOOD-FAITH BARGAINING

WHEREAS, BP Products North America Inc. ("BP") owns and operates the Whiting Refinery in Whiting, Indiana, a major industrial facility whose safe and stable operation is important to communities throughout Northwest Indiana; and

WHEREAS, United Steelworkers Local 7-1 represents more than 800 employees at the Whiting Refinery; and

WHEREAS, on March 19, 2026, BP locked out the members of United Steelworkers Local 7-1 from their jobs at the Whiting Refinery; and

WHEREAS, many of these workers and their families live, work, worship, volunteer, shop, and participate in civic life throughout Northwest Indiana, including in the Town of Highland; and

WHEREAS, the lockout has placed significant financial and emotional strain on working families who are living without their regular paychecks; and

WHEREAS, United Steelworkers Local 7-1 has stated that its members did not voluntarily walk off the job, but were locked out by BP; and

WHEREAS, the right of workers to bargain collectively, protect local jobs, and negotiate in good faith is essential to the economic stability of working families and the communities they support; and

WHEREAS, the continued lockout has consequences not only for locked-out workers and their families, but also for local businesses, schools, neighborhoods, and municipal economies throughout Northwest Indiana; and

WHEREAS, the Whiting Refinery is a major industrial facility whose safe operation directly affects the health, safety, environment, and economic well-being of surrounding communities; and

WHEREAS, local governments have a responsibility to speak in support of the health, safety, economic security, and general welfare of their residents; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council of the Town of Highland recognizes the importance of all working families. It also recognizes that the members of the United Steelworkers Local 7-1 are suffering an uninvited hardship by being locked out.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED By the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana as follows:

Section 1. The Town Council expresses its support for the locked-out members of United Steelworkers Local 7-1 and their families.

Section 2. The Town Council urges BP to end the United Steelworkers lockout.

Section 3. The Town Council further urges BP to return to the bargaining table and negotiate in good faith with United Steelworkers Local 7-1.

Section 4. The Town Council recognizes the vital role of experienced and trained refinery workers in maintaining safe operations at a facility that directly affects the health and safety of Northwest Indiana communities.

Section 5. The Clerk-Treasurer of the Town of Highland is directed to transmit a copy of this Resolution to BP Products North America Inc., United Steelworkers Local 7-1, the Governor of Indiana, and any other party deemed appropriate by the Town Council.

DULY RESOLVED and ADOPTED this 10th day of August, 2026 by the Town Council of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana, having been passed by a vote of 5 in favor and 0 opposed.

**TOWN COUNCIL of the TOWN of
HIGHLAND, INDIANA**

George Georgeff, President (IC 36-5-2-10)

ATTEST:

Mark Herak
Clerk-Treasurer (IC 33-42-4-1; IC 36-5-6-5)

6. Proposed Ordinance No. 1852: An Ordinance amending the Highland Municipal Code, by adding to Title 10 Vehicles and Traffic, a new Chapter 10.50 to be styled Electric Bicycles ("E-Bikes") and Electric Scooters ("E-Scooters")

**First introduced by Councilor Black at the Town Council Plenary meeting of July 6, 2026. There was no further action.*

Councilor Turich moved to table Ordinance No. 1852 until the August 24, 2026 plenary meeting. Councilor Scheeringa seconded. Upon a roll call vote, there were (5) affirmatives

and no negatives. Ordinance No. 1852 will be placed on the agenda of the August 24, 2026 plenary meeting.

7. Proposed Ordinance No. 1853: An Ordinance establishing a Civil Town of Highland Motor Vehicle Excise Surtax and Wheel Tax

**First introduced by Councilor Scheeringa at the Town Council Plenary meeting of July 6, 2026. There was no further action.*

Councilor Turich moved to table Ordinance No. 1853 until the August 24, 2026 plenary meeting. Councilor Scheeringa seconded. Upon a roll call vote, there were (5) affirmatives and no negatives. Ordinance No. 1853 will be placed on the agenda of the August 24, 2026 plenary meeting.

Comments from the Town Council:

(Good of the order)

- **Councilor Doug Turich:** *Metropolitan Police Commission • Liaison and Plan Commission Member • Advisory Board of Zoning Appeals Liaison • Liaison to Building & Inspection Department*

Councilor Turich acknowledged Building Commissioner Ken Mika who reviewed the Building and Inspection Report as filed under staff reports for the month of July and then gave the following report:

8/10/26 HIGHLAND TOWN COUNCIL MEEING / BUILDING DEPARTMENT REPORT

- Mr. Mika summarized the July Building Department activity report.
- The BZA currently has no business before them for the August 26th Meeting.
- The PC has advertised for a Public Hearing for their Wednesday August 19th meeting at 6:30 PM to entertain a recommendation to the Town Council for consideration of passage of the Towns Comprehensive Plan that has been in the works for some time.
- Building – Construction on the Smiles by Gentle Dental Clinic 2628 45th is progressing. The building footings and foundation this week should be completed. Work on the Buddy Bear Car Wash / Ridge Rd continues underground utility work was completed last week.
- It is believed that the Cardinal Campus Boutique Hotel which we issued occupancy back in February opened this past weekend.

Ken Mika

Town of Highland
Building Commissioner / Zoning Administrator

Councilor Turich then acknowledged Metropolitan Police Chief Ralph Potesta, who gave the following report:

Town Council Meeting Notes for 08/10/2026 – Police Department – 07/27/2026 thru 08/10/2026 – Past 2 weeks

0 – Burglaries / Robberies / Rapes / Thefts from Vehicles

2 Auto Thefts – one involved a known subject.

Vandalism – Main Square – reported today

Johnston School – group of elementary school aged children damaged a railing near a doorway by pulling it down.

Southridge School – Construction Bobcat window shattered with a rock - \$2,000.00 loss – Group of 4 juveniles causing the damage.

8 DUI arrests

19 year old resident received a phone call from an unknown subject claiming to be with “BOJ”. Informed resident that she missed jury duty and that there were presently two warrants out for her arrest on top of a \$2,000.00 fine. Caller talked our resident into paying \$260 through Apple Pay which the resident did. No suspect leads. \$260 loss.

9 Retail Thefts

5 arrests

**5 Illinois residents involved – 3 suspects from surrounding Indiana towns – 1 suspect from KY
Losses ranged from \$2.00 to \$1,031.00**

Several reports of reckless driving eBikes.

3 Officers in 3rd week of Police Academy – all going well.

With Detective Commander Jason Hildenbrand retiring, we are looking at now sending 3 non-certified officers to the January Police Academy.

Detective Lee Natelborg will be running the Detective Bureau until a permanent promotion can be made. Also going to have to do a Cpl. Promotion as there are presently no supervisors under Lee and he is going to be attending the Staff and Command School at the end of the year.

Councilor Turich asked that the 1st half summary of the Highland Police Department and the Building Department Executive Summary be made part of the minutes:

Highland Police Department

First Half 2026 Public Safety Summary (January - June)

Year-to-Date at a Glance

- 5,622 total cases handled
- 279 adult arrests
- 467 traffic accidents investigated
- 2,421 traffic citations issued
- 2,354 written warnings issued
- 66 OWI arrests
- 1 robbery
- 0 burglaries
- 92 shoplifting incidents
- 11 thefts from vehicles
- 2 vehicle theft-related incidents (1 stolen vehicle and 1 attempted vehicle theft)

Key Trends

Serious crime remains very low.

- Highland recorded only **one robbery and zero burglaries** during the first six months of 2026, reflecting continued community safety and effective crime prevention efforts.

Retail theft continues to be the primary criminal concern.

- Officers handled **92 shoplifting incidents** during the first half of the year.
- The majority of incidents occurred at a small number of repeat retail locations, most notably Kohl's, Meijer, Target, and Best Buy.
- Shoplifting activity increased significantly during the second quarter and remains the most common criminal trend affecting the community.

Vehicle-related thefts remain largely preventable.

- Eleven thefts from vehicles were reported.
- Nearly every incident involved unlocked vehicles or unsecured work vehicles.
- Stolen property included tools, wallets, cell phones, medications, and other personal belongings.

Traffic and impaired driving enforcement remain a priority.

Highland Police Department

Q2 2026 Public Safety Summary (April - June)

Q2 at a Glance

- 2,976 total cases handled
- 162 adult arrests
- 225 traffic accidents investigated
- 1,194 traffic citations issued
- 1,073 written warnings issued
- 32 OWI arrests
- 1 robbery
- 0 burglaries
- 54 shoplifting incidents
- 6 thefts from vehicles
- 1 attempted vehicle theft

Key Trends

Property crimes remain concentrated in retail thefts.

- Shoplifting accounted for the largest category of reported criminal activity, with **54 cases** during the quarter.
- The majority occurred at a small number of repeat locations, including Meijer, Kohl's, Target, and Best Buy.

Vehicle-related thefts continue to be crimes of opportunity.

- Six thefts from vehicles were reported during the quarter.
- All reported incidents involved unlocked vehicles or work vehicles left unsecured while operators were nearby.
- Stolen property included wallets, cell phones, tools, and electronic equipment.

Impaired driving arrests increased significantly in May.

- Officers made **16 OWI arrests in May**, compared to 8 arrests in both April and June.
- This suggests increased enforcement activity and/or seasonal increases in impaired driving during warmer months.

Traffic safety activity remains strong.

- Officers investigated 225 crashes and issued nearly 1,200 traffic citations during the quarter.
- Continued traffic enforcement remains an important factor in maintaining roadway safety.

Notable Outliers

- The quarter's only robbery occurred at Ulta in June when suspects physically pushed employees while fleeing with merchandise, elevating the incident from a retail theft to a robbery.
- Shoplifting reached its highest monthly level in May with 23 incidents.
- Vehicle theft activity remained very low, with only one attempted vehicle theft reported during the quarter.

Recommended Actions

- Expand public awareness campaigns encouraging residents and contractors to lock vehicles and remove valuables from plain view.
- Continue partnerships with major retailers to address repeat shoplifting offenders and share crime prevention strategies.
- Maintain proactive OWI and traffic enforcement efforts during peak spring and summer activity periods.
- Continue directed patrols in commercial corridors and retail centers where theft-related incidents are most concentrated.
- Increase crime prevention messaging around vehicle security, as every theft-from-vehicle incident involved unsecured vehicles.

Conclusion

Highland continues to experience **very low levels of violent crime and burglary**, with the primary public safety challenges remaining **retail theft, thefts from unsecured vehicles, and impaired driving**. Continued enforcement, community education, and retailer partnerships will help maintain Highland's strong public safety environment while addressing these emerging trends.

Highland Police Department July 2026 Activity

Robberies: Zero (0)

Burglaries: Two (2)

- 7-13-26 2045 Porte De Leau Ct. Male smashed out the window of his ex-girlfriends patio door and walked in. He then departed and was arrested by our officers and charged with burglary.
- 7-18-26 10100 blk of White Oak Lane. A residence that was not being lived in was broken into by unknown subjects. Inside it was found full of discarded liquor bottles and trash showing that it had been used for a drinking party.

Theft from Vehicle: Zero (0) CC denotes: Catalytic Convertor

Theft (Shoplifting)

Total of twenty-one (21) cases handled with seven (7) female adults, one (1) male adult and one (1) male juvenile having been arrested.

These thefts took place at Kohl's (4), Meijer (5), Pilot Gas Station (1), Buyer's Market (2), Dollar General (1), Target (6), For Eyes (1) and Best Buy (1).

Vehicle Theft: One (1)

- 7-24-26 Discount Tire, 10128 Indianapolis Blvd. Utility trailer used to store discarded tires was stolen from the rear of the business after hours.

Cases Handled:	1,102	OWI Arrests:	83
Accidents Investigated:	79	Tickets Written:	285
Adult Arrests:	51	Warnings Written:	384

July 2026		Highland Police Department 2026 Monthly Report												
	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	YTD	
Total Hours Worked													0	
Net OT Hours booked													0	
Net OT Hours used													0	
Miles Traveled / Dept Veh													0	
Total Incidents Handled	882	812	952	940	1,079	951	1,102						6,718	
Homicide	0	0	0	0	0	0	0						0	
Kidnapping/Abduction	0	0	0	0	0	0	0						0	
Forcible Sex Offenses	0	0	0	0	0	0	0						0	
Robbery	0	0	0	0	0	1	0						1	
Assaults	6	3	6	8	8	8	6						45	
Arson	0	0	0	0	0	0	0						0	
Burglary Residential	0	0	0	0	0	0	2						2	
Burglary Non-Residential	0	0	0	0	0	0	0						0	
Thefts	34	12	18	35	41	23	39						202	
Vehicles Stolen	1	0	0	1	1	1	1						5	
Fraud	16	7	17	11	18	15	18						102	
Vandalism	4	6	6	4	4	6	10						40	
Drug Offenses	5	4	4	2	5	3	7						30	
Weapons Offenses	0	0	1	1	0	0	1						3	
Dollar Amount Stolen	103,270	27,235	111,887	83,381	119,464	75,974	227,055						748,266	
Dollar Amount Recovered	35,585	46,248	27,396	40,229	2,171	21,447	20,980						194,056	
Arrest Total	44	40	43	59	63	47	51						347	
Citations	455	367	406	501	400	295	285						2,709	
Warnings	411	477	394	442	325	312	384						2,745	
Crashes Handled	87	78	77	83	62	79	79						545	
Persons Injured in Crashes	7	10	6	10	10	3	7						53	
Persons Killed in Crashes	0	0	0	0	0	0	0						0	
Vehicles Towed	48	51	63	56	63	50	53						384	
DUI	11	11	12	8	16	7	3						68	

TOWN OF HIGHLAND BUILDING DEPARTMENT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

January-July 2026

Executive Summary

Development Activity:

816 Building Permits Issued
\$14.9 Million in Construction Value
\$315,814 in Permit Fee Revenue
1,533 Code Enforcement Investigations

Through July 2026, the Building Department facilitated approximately **\$14.9 million in private construction investment**, compared to **\$12.99 million** during the same period in 2025, representing an increase of approximately **\$2.0 million (14.9%)** year-over-year.

Based on the year-to-date reports (January through July):

Construction Value Comparison

Year	Estimated Construction Value
2025 YTD (Jan-Jul)	\$12.99M
2026 YTD (Jan-Jul)	\$14.93M
Difference	\$1.94M
Percent Change	14.94%

Key Takeaway for Council

While the Town has realized nearly **\$15 million in construction investment** through July 2026, total estimated construction value is approximately **\$1.9 million higher** than the same period in 2025, an increase of **14.9%**.

Additional Context

Residential reinvestment remains strong, with:

- **458 residential remodeling permits**
- Nearly **\$7.0 million** in residential remodeling valuation
- Continued activity in fences, flatwork, decks, drainage improvements, and other property enhancement projects.

Key Highlights for Council

Residential Investment Continues

- 458 Residential Remodeling Permits
- 93 Fence Permits
- 51 Concrete/Flatwork Permits
- 30 Deck & Porch Permits

Over 90% of permit activity continues to be residential reinvestment, demonstrating homeowner confidence and ongoing property improvements throughout the community.

Commercial Development Remains Active

- 3 Commercial Building Projects
- 37 Commercial Remodel/Additions
- \$4.8 Million in Commercial Construction Activity

Community Protection & Compliance

- 1,533 Code Investigations
- 460 Warnings Issued
- 59 Citations Issued

The Department continues to emphasize voluntary compliance while preserving neighborhood quality.

Permit Activity Trend

Building Permits Issued by Month

Month	2025	2026
Jan	33	59
Feb	32	83
Mar	96	73
Apr	141	129
May	121	143
Jun	137	145
Jul	127	184

Key Trend

- Permit activity increased from 59 permits in January to 184 permits in July.
- July was the strongest month of 2026 and exceeded July 2025 activity.
- The trend indicates continued momentum entering the second half of the construction season.

Detailed Supporting Context

Building Department Operations Report

January - July 2026

Town of Highland

The Building Department continued to support residential and commercial investment throughout the community during the first seven months of 2026. While overall permit volumes are above the same period in 2025, we are also seeing steady increase through the spring and summer months, with July producing the highest monthly permit total of the year.

The department also maintained a significant code enforcement workload, conducted inspections across multiple disciplines, and processed a substantial volume of contractor licensing and permit-related activities.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Permit Activity

KPI	January-July 2026
Total Building Permits Issued	816
Residential Permits	748 (91.7%)
Commercial Permits	68 (8.3%)
Estimated Construction Value	\$14.94 million
Building Permit Fees Collected	\$315,814
Electrical Permits	95
Mechanical Permits	162
Plumbing Permits	87
Contractor Licenses Issued/Renewed	595
Contractor License Applications Processed	262

Development Trends

The largest permit categories continue to be homeowner improvement projects:

Permit Type	Total Permits
Residential Remodeling	458
Fences	93
Miscellaneous Permits	69
Concrete/Flatwork	51
Commercial Additions/Remodels	37
Decks & Porches	30
Drain Tile/Waterproofing	26

Observation: Residential remodeling alone accounts for approximately 56% of all building permits issued, demonstrating continued reinvestment in existing housing stock.

Monthly Permit Trend

Month	Building Permits
January	59
February	83
March	73
April	129
May	143
June	145
July	184

Trend Analysis

- Permit activity increased substantially as the construction season progressed.
- From January (59 permits) to July (184 permits), monthly permit activity increased by more than 200%.
- July represented the strongest month of the year, accounting for approximately 23% of all permits issued year-to-date.
- Residential remodeling, fences, flatwork, and outdoor improvements continue to drive permit demand.

Economic Development Indicators

Construction Investment

Category	Estimated Value
Commercial Construction & Remodels	\$4.82 million
Residential Construction & Improvements	Over \$10 million
Total Construction Value	\$14.94 million

Notable projects include:

- **3 Commercial Building Projects**
 - Estimated value: \$3.17 million
- **2 New Single-Family Homes**
 - Estimated value: \$930,000
- Ongoing commercial remodeling activity with 37 commercial renovation permits

Council Significance: Investment value reflects continued private-sector confidence in Highland.

Inspection Activity

Year-to-Date Inspections

Inspection Type	Total
Building Inspections	159
Plumbing Inspections	93
Electrical Inspections	108
HVAC Inspections	72

The department also administered:

- 6 electrical exams
- Additional inspections when required
- Red-tag enforcement activities for code compliance

Code Enforcement Performance

Year-to-Date Activity

KPI	Total
Code Investigations	1,533
Warnings Issued	460
Citations Issued	59
Citations Paid	35

Trend Analysis

Code enforcement activity remained consistently high throughout the reporting period.

- Investigations averaged approximately 219 cases per month.
- Citation activity increased during spring and early summer as exterior property maintenance concerns became more visible.
- The department's emphasis on warnings before citations demonstrates a compliance-first approach.

Revenue Generation

Year-to-Date Revenue

Revenue Source	Amount
Building Permit Fees	\$315,814
Contractor Licensing	\$41,948

Contractor Applications	\$9,301
Amusement Device Licenses	\$3,540
Citations & Court Revenue	\$2,540
Other Fees	\$1,177

The Building Department continues to serve as an important revenue-generating operation while supporting development and neighborhood preservation efforts.

Year-over-Year Perspective

Compared to the same period in 2025:

- Building permits increased from approximately 687 to 816 permits (14.9%).
- Estimated construction value increased from \$12.99 million to \$14.93 million.

Additionally:

- Permit volumes strengthened each month during 2026.
- Commercial investment remains active.
- Residential reinvestment continues at a strong pace.
- July was the strongest month of the year and may indicate improved activity during the second half of 2026.

Executive Conclusion

The Building Department remains highly active, having processed 816 building permits representing nearly \$15 million in construction investment through July 2026. Activity has accelerated each month during the construction season, culminating in a strong July. Residential reinvestment continues to be the primary driver of permit activity, while commercial projects and code enforcement efforts demonstrate ongoing economic development and neighborhood preservation throughout the Town of Highland.

Recommended Future KPIs for Town Council Reporting

To provide a more strategic view of development and department performance, consider tracking the following metrics going forward:

Development Metrics

- Average Permit Processing Time
 - Days from application to permit issuance.
- New Tax Base Created

- o Estimated assessed value generated from new construction projects.
- Commercial vs. Residential Investment Value
 - o Dollar value trends rather than permit counts alone.
- Project Completion Rates
 - o Percentage of permits closed within target timelines.

Customer Service Metrics

- Inspection Completion Time
 - o Average time from inspection request to inspection performed.
- Same-Day or Next-Day Inspection Rate
 - o Measures responsiveness.
- Permit Applications Submitted Online
 - o Tracks modernization and efficiency.

Code Enforcement Metrics

- Voluntary Compliance Rate
 - o Percentage of cases resolved without citations.
- Repeat Property Violations
 - o Identifies chronic problem properties.
- Average Days to Compliance
 - o Measures effectiveness of enforcement efforts.

Strategic Community Metrics

- Investment Value Per Household
- Housing Units Added
- Commercial Square Footage Added or Renovated
- Permit Activity by Neighborhood
- Quarterly Development Pipeline

Councilor Alex Robertson: *Fire Department Liaison • Redevelopment Commission Member • Public Works Liaison • Liaison to Main Street Bureau • Liaison to the Tree Board • Liaison to the Highland Neighbor for Sustainability.*

Councilor Robertson acknowledged Fire Chief Glenn Schlessner who gave an update of the events happening in the Fire Department.

Councilor Robertson then acknowledged Public Works Director Knesek who gave an update of the events happening in Public Works.

• **Councilor Tom Black:** *Redevelopment Commission Liaison and Member • Member of the Lake County Solid Waste Management District Board • Regional Planning Commission (NIPRC) • Shared Ethics Representative • Liaison Traffic Safety • Liaison to the Sanitary Board*

Councilor Black acknowledged Redevelopment Director Maria Becerra who gave the following report:

REDEVELOPMENT OF GATEWAY KEY PARCELS

Kennedy Ave.

- 2655 Garfield - As part of the long-term Redevelopment plans for the Kennedy Ave. Gateway Corridor, the property was purchased, July 15th.
- 8436 Kennedy – vacant abandoned gas station
 - In July, we were informed that the Town was selected from 55 applicants down to 12 as eligible to submit a full grant application by September 9, 2026. Redevelopment Commission submitted a letter of intent proposal for a "Love Where you Live" Legacy Grant. The Proposal was submitted to turn the vacant lot into a Community Space with Art pieces, bike racks, benches and native landscaping.

Indianapolis Blvd.

- Redevelopment 8113 – 8200 Indianapolis (6 acres) Town owned parcels
 - Owner seeking to redevelop property (old bus station) along with the Redevelopment owned parcels. P.U.D. Planned Unit Development to be presented to the Planning Commission.
- Redevelopment of the 8401 Indianapolis Parcel (old Ultra parcel)
 - Attorney Reed has filed paperwork necessary to move forward with eminent domain.

Big Restaurant Crawl August 25th 4-9, with the \$7.00 specials. Jose's, Sakura Bowl, Langels, Growlers, SIP, Relish Hot Dog, Dan Pierogies, The Counter, and Fuzzyline are all participating. Music and Craft Vendors

Big Restaurant Crawls

September 29th and the Halloween Theme Crawl is October 27th. 4-8.

We continue to look for Craft Vendors check town Main Street facebook page for details, we currently have 12 craft vendors.

Highland Neighbors for Sustainability

Please check their webpage on the Town's website.

They meet monthly every third Tuesday of every month at 6:30 at Greenwich Restaurant downtown.

The **Community Garden Downtown** is always in need of volunteers, please check link of the Town's webpage for more information.

• **Councilor Philip Scheeringa:** • *Park Board Liaison* • *Information Communications and Technology Department Liaison* • *Redevelopment Commission Member*

Councilor Scheeringa acknowledged Mindi Ray, the Parks and Recreation Superintendent, who gave an update of the events happening in Park.

Councilor Scheeringa then acknowledged IT Director Ed Dabrowski, who said he had no prepared report but was available to answer questions.

• **Councilor George Georgeff:** *Town Executive (I.C. 36-1-2-5-(4); I.C. 36-5-2-2; I.C. 36-5-2-7);* • *Board of Trustees of the Police Pension Fund, Chair (By Law)* • *Budget Committee Chairman* • *Redevelopment Commission Member* • *Liaison to the Board of Water Works* • *Member of the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIPRC)*

Councilor Georgeff said he attended the 250th attended the 250th Celebration of the United States of America, sponsored by American Legion Post 180, on Saturday, August 8th, at the American Legion Post #180, 2703 Jewett Street. He said it was a nice event.

That concluded comments from the Council and President Georgeff then turned it over to comments from visitor's or residents, reminding them to limit their comments to 2 minutes.

Comments from Visitors or Residents:

Paul Sines, Highland, questioned the Council on what progress had been made at the house located at 8143 Grace Place since he inquired at the July 27th meeting? He was advised the court hearing is Wednesday, August 19th.

Scott Houldieson, Highland, thanked the Council for passing Resolution 2026-21 and supporting the locked out union workers.

Terry Steagall, Highland, thanked the Council for passing Resolution No. 2026-21 supporting the locked out union workers of USW7-1. He said this is an illegal lockout by BP. He said the R's and D's have to work together as this is a moral and ethical thing. He said with the devastating effect SEA1 has on Lake County, to make up for the short fall, the County should consider creating a barrel tax. BP has the capacity to produce 440,000 barrels a day. If a \$1 tax per barrel was implemented, the county budget shortfall would be resolved.

Councilor Georgeff asked if there were any other comments. Hearing none, he closed comments from the public and brought it back to the Council. He then asked for a motion to pay claims.

Payment of Accounts Payable Vouchers. There being no further comments from visitors or residents, Councilor Robertson moved to allow the vendors accounts payable vouchers as filed on the pending accounts payable dockets, covering the period July 29, 2026 through August 11, 2026. Councilor Turich seconded. Upon a roll call vote, there were five (5) affirmatives and no negatives. The motion passed. The accounts payable vouchers for the vendor docket were allowed, payments allowed in advance were ratified, the payroll dockets were ratified, and for all remaining invoices, the Clerk-Treasurer was authorized to make payment.

Accounts payable vouchers July 29, 2026 – August 11, 2026 in the amount of **\$1,168,468.39**

General Fund, \$417,097.09; **MVH Fund**, \$49,788.03; **LR&S**, \$17,737.29; **MVH Restricted**, \$1,282.50; **Law Enforcement Continuing Ed**, \$333.01; **Public Safety Income**, \$9,000.00; **Community Crossing Grant**, \$21,254.18; **2026 Gen Obligation Bond**, \$272,219.40; **CEDIT Econ Dev.**, \$100,000.00; **Gaming Revenue**, \$1,200.00; **MCCD**, \$29,098.66; **Municipal Cumulative Street Fund**, \$2,612.50; **ICT Fund** \$12,011.65; **Insurance Premium**, \$234,833.78

Payroll Docket for payday of August 7, 2026 by fund:
General, \$346,190.29

Payroll Docket for payday of August 7, 2026:

Office of Clerk-Treasurer, \$17,632.50; Building and Inspection Department, \$11,346.80; Metropolitan Police Department, \$171,363.94; Public Works Department (Agency), \$95,042.05; Fire Department, \$6,817.41 and Information and Technology Department, \$4,441.37

Total Payroll: \$290,800.44

Adjournment of Plenary Meeting. There being no further business on the agenda, the Town Council President declared the regular plenary meeting of the Town Council of Monday, August 10, 2026, adjourned at 7:45 o'clock p.m.

Mark Herak
Clerk-Treasurer

Approved by the Town Council at its meeting of August 24, 2026.