

## GENERAL DEPARTMENT UPDATES



**National Recreation & Parks (NRPA) Conference:** Staashelm and Mollenhauer attended the NRPA Conference in Atlanta, Georgia. They were able to network with like-minded professionals from across the country. Many of the educational sessions they attended focused on best practice standards, newest trends in the industry, and the inclusion of AI in the field. In addition, the conference boasts the largest vendor show in parks and recreation with over 570 vendors showcasing everything from playgrounds, restrooms, software, and other park amenities and solutions.

## PROJECTS

**Grand Avenue Basin Update:** Grand Avenue Basin repairs and upgrades were completed. The remaining items to be completed in the spring include tree installations, prairie installation, and water surface aeration.

**Draper Park Update:** Barnes Manufacturing and City staff installed the crossing signal previously housed at City Square Park. Culvers Landscaping and Rathje Construction installed bricks salvaged from City Square Park in the gathering spaces.



**Oak Shade Cemetery Crypt Wall:** Plans have been released and gone out for public bid to make the needed repairs to the failing cemetery crypt wall. Bids are due November 12 and should be awarded at the November 21 Council meeting.

**Central Plaza Update:** The plaza is currently on schedule for a December 24<sup>th</sup> completion. Parks staff has been working on obtaining items for the new addition including ice skates, a rental shack, skate sharpener, and more. In addition, we continue to work with the selected artist for the new art addition to be included in the plaza.

## PARKS

**Low Arts & Environment Center Shed:** A shed was placed on the west side of the A&E building to be utilized as event storage space. This will house items such as trash cans, stanchions, lanterns, and other event related items. Many of the items are used for events hosted at the amphitheater, so the location will be convenient.

**Asphalt Trail Repairs:** Portions of the South Lowe trail had large crack repairs completed. They were cut out and then replaced with new base material and asphalt.



**Fall Activities:** Grounds staff rented a stand-on aerator. Areas that were overseeded and/or aerated include Lowe Amphitheater, Lowe Diamonds 1-4, and City Hall. These areas were determined based off the turf maintenance plan priority list and the needs of each location.



Fall cutback operations were conducted in all city-owned medians and flowerbeds. This will help minimize the amount of dead plant material in the beds in the spring.

Leaf mulching was started in the cemetery. Crews will continue to go through all parks and green spaces as dry weather allows.



**Holiday Lighting:** Staff began installation of the holiday lighting in October. The panel tree will be installed in the beginning of November and the round-a-bouts, Artway Alley, North Plaza, and the 7<sup>th</sup> Ave Streetscape will be decorated.

**Horticulture:** October brought abnormally warm and dry weather, so horticulture staff continued watering planters throughout the entire month. Staff were able to utilize the rest of the fall mums to create a fall showcase, complete with pumpkins, to decorate in the “MARION” flower bed at the corner of Marion Blvd & 6th Avenue/1st Street (former McDonalds).



In addition, most fall cutbacks were completed in all park and city-owned spaces including medians and roundabouts with the assistance of Parks staff. As fall work is slowing down, holiday décor becomes top priority. At the end of the month, staff began to acquire fresh decorations for this season to mockup examples for this year’s holiday planters.

## URBAN FORESTRY

**Forestry Activities:** Staff had a break in watering plantings as more than six inches of rain was received over the course of two weeks during October.

Preparation at the Hanna Park dumpsite was completed for changes to the adjacent flood plain grade. Staff relocated a chip pile onsite and mowed down heavy brush and grass for more efficient operations beginning in November.

**Monard Research Project (MRP):** Distribution to community members of over 608 trees through the Native Tree Right-of-Way Enrichment program was completed through a partnership with MRP. Tree Board and staff had the opportunity to attend a celebration at the MRP Farm.

**Planting Projects:** An additional 250 native trees were planted from MRP in the City rights-of-way as part of fall planting projects. Other projects included 135 trees through the Iowa DNR Community Trees program, 30 trees through the MidAmerican *Trees Please!* program and 250 seedlings from the Iowa State Forestry Nursery.

**Linn County Master Gardeners:** Forestry staff assisted Master Gardeners with installation of a trellis system at the Lowe Park orchard to be planted in the future with apple tree varieties.



Forestry staff also helped Master Gardeners and student volunteers install new posts, fencing and mulch at the Lowe Park Demonstration Orchard to prevent deer and wildlife damage over winter.

**Growing Futures:** Trees Forever's Growing Futures team completed planting the 200 trees scheduled for the City right-of-way areas. Their attention then turned to maintenance of the trees, including staking and watering. They will continue watering as needed this fall and resume next spring.

**Iowa Urban Tree Council (IUTC):** The City Arborist led a tour with the IUTC visiting three sites in Marion where storm response has been completed or new reforestation efforts have been put into place following the 2020 Derecho.



**Iowa Parks & Recreation Association (IPRA):** Forestry and Parks staff hosted the IPRA's one day

Maintenance Workshop at Lowe Park to teach about standard forestry operations in the Parks industry and talk about pruning and heavy brush management.



**REQUESTS FOR SERVICE**

CODE COMPLIANCE	AUG 2024	SEP 2024	OCT 2024
New Complaints	49	23	2
Resolved Complaints	54	25	17
Active Complaints	51	53	41

COMPLAINT TYPE	AUG 2024	SEP 2024	OCT 2024
Tree – Right of Way	0	0	0
Tree – Private Property	0	1	1
Sidewalk Obstruction	2	1	1
Sidewalk Not Cleared (Snow or Ice)	0	0	0
Tall Grass and Weeds	47	21	0
Parks Misc	0	0	0
TOTAL	49	23	2

**CEMETERY**

OAK SHADE CEMETERY	AUG 2024	SEP 2024	OCT 2024
Spaces Sold	2	18	3
Burials	4	7	2

**RECREATION**

**Lil Pigskins Football:** This four-week program introduces children to the basics of football without contact. Two times were offered at the Marion YMCA for kids ages 5 & 6 for a total of 26 participants. The final class was October 21. The kids enjoyed learning new movements and working on technique.



**Falliday Market 2024:** It was a beautiful day for the Falliday Market October 19 at the Lowe A&E Building with over 60 vendors, (34 vendors inside and 28 outside on the back patio and front east parking lot). Hundreds of people from the community attended to shop. Vendor products included a



variety of items from baked goods to house decorations, all homemade. Recreation staff did an amazing job directing and helping vendors bring their items in starting at 6:30 in the morning!



**Bingo:** The 2<sup>nd</sup> month of Bingo was held October 25 and brought in almost 120 participants! We were full to the max with eager players ready to test their luck and win a bingo. The Friends of the Parks sold popcorn for 50¢ per bag. The blackout payout was \$62.75. Next month's Bingo is November 8.

**NFL Flag Football:** The Fall NFL Flag Football league began in September with 14 teams for a total of 150 players in two divisions. This program is a partnership with the YMCA, and wrapped up with a beautiful fall morning on October 12

**Fall 3v3 Soccer:** The Fall 3v3 Soccer wrapped up October 3. The league featured 24 teams and over 120 participants, with parents volunteering as coaches and recreation staff assisting and refereeing games.



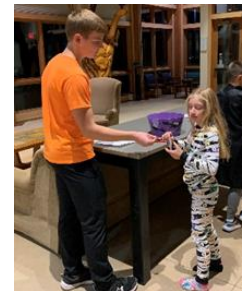
**Tailgate in the Park:** The third annual Tailgate in the Park was held October 5 at Lowe Park.



Zio Johnno's sponsored the event and hosted a spaghetti eating contest (photo left). The Iowa vs Ohio State game was shown on the big LED screen from Blue Sky. Recreation staff oversaw the inflatables and yard games including Bags, Ladder Golf, Crossnet, Kanjam, Giant Jenga, and Connect 4. There was also face painting and food for sale from Hy-Vee. The beautiful warm day was enjoyed by about 500 people, unfortunately, the screen had to be taken down at halftime the game due to high wind gusts.

**Little Kickers Camp:** The Little Kickers Kickball Camp wrapped up October 15 for ages 3 to 5. Recreation staff taught basic skills such as kicking, fielding, and base running, with a game held in the final week.

**Halloween BOO! Camp:** This youth holiday camp for children in K to 5<sup>th</sup> grades was held on October 26 at Lowe with 24 participants. Parents dropped off their kids (costumes optional) and recreation staff lead them through Halloween themed crafts, games, snacks, and movie. With the nice fall weather, kids were able get outside for some of the games. Photo right is from the Trick-or-Treating activity.



**Little Sports Camp:** This camp for 3- to 5-year-olds is held four times and teaches a new sport each time. Sports explored include soft/baseball, soccer, football, and basketball. Little Sports Camp runs October 28 to November 6 and is held at the Marion YMCA gym with 36 participants.

---

**ARTS COUNCIL**

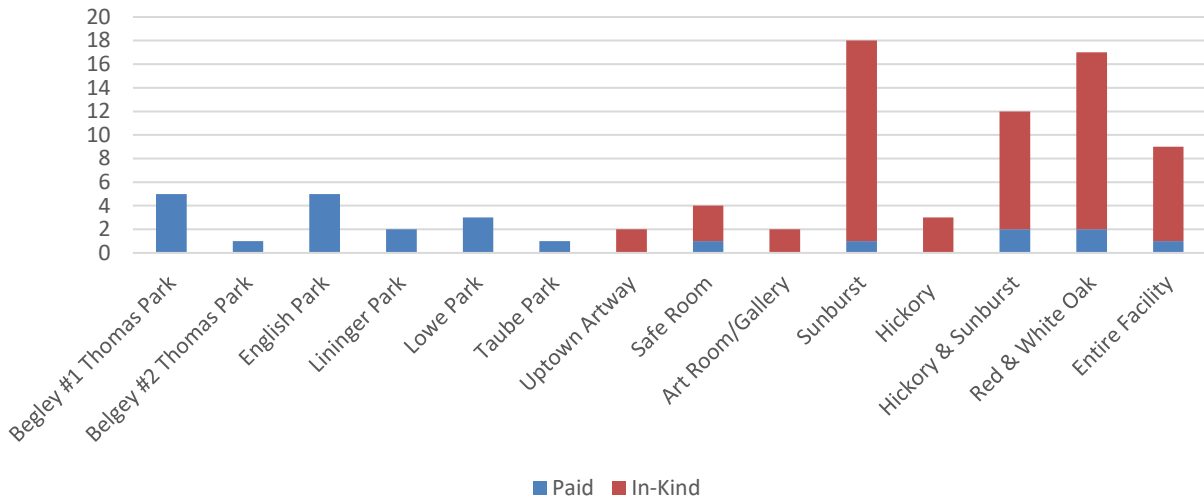
**Art Gallery:** The gallery exhibit continued through the month, featuring Jayson Reid. The next exhibit by Michael Flanagan will be on display Nove. 1 to Dec. 12. Gallery hours are Mon. to Fri. 7 a.m. to 4 p.m., and the first Sat. of each month from 1 to 3 p.m.



**Coffeehouse Nights:** October 4 was the first Coffeehouse Nights with Roots of Rhythm. There were 37 attendees to enjoy the free musical performance at the Lowe Arts & Environment Center. Upcoming performances include Nov. 1 Terry McCauley, and Dec. 6 Lucas Blekeberg.

**FACILITY RESERVATIONS**

2024: In-Kind 60; Paid 24  
2023: In-Kind 73; Paid 40  
2022: In-Kind 72; Paid 39



**ACTIVITIES USAGE**  
(Pavilion data not reflected)

2024 - 65  
2023 - 91  
2022 - 84

