



Steve McDaniel, Director

- ✚ The month started with taping our next Parks Podcast. In this episode, we talked about playgrounds and how they are a vital part of any park. My guests were Dave Weadock and Chuck Reddinger. Download this episode now.
- ✚ I was the keynote speaker for the Building Contractors Association's CAGERS monthly event. I was able to share the fun and exciting things Parks and Recreation has to offer the community.
- ✚ I was part of the team that held a public meeting to share our updated design of Foster Park's entrance. The attendance was good and there were a lot of questions from those to see the design. We have placed the drawings and images up on the Engage Fort Wayne site for more input.
- ✚ I was able to connect with Will Klein of Trust for Public Land earlier in the month. Our discussion went from adding Fort Wayne to their database to the economic benefits that FWPRD brings to our city. I am guessing we will continue to have discussions with TPL in the future.
- ✚ We celebrated with four employees who joined the Quarter Century Club this year. Employees who started their 25th year with the department were: Travis Roth, Mark Stafford, Christina Hoy, and Linda Miller. They join another 14 staff members, making a total of 18 in the club. Those 18 have a combined service record of 538 years of service to Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation.
- ✚ October is budget month. On the 14th, Rhonda and I presented the budget to the City Council. We had a few questions from a couple of the members. On the 24th, we received proposed cuts by the council. On the 28th, we discussed those proposed cuts, and only one went through. Overall, it was a minimal cut that we will be able to absorb.
- ✚ The team and I continue to review Park Policies monthly to update them and verify our needs for the future. I believe this will take us several months to complete.
- ✚ I met with the golf team to discuss needs for 2026. Everyone had several ideas that we were able to narrow down and search out more information. The team and I will get together one more time before meeting with the Golf Advisory Committee.
- ✚ One of the many things that I get to look forward to each year happens this month. Harlean and I are part of the costume judging at McMillen Park's Community Center's Harvest Festival. This year did not disappoint. We had a lot of great costumes. It was also great to see all the families and kids out participating in the event.
- ✚ I also attended the Arts United Grand Opening event. For the last 15-plus months, our next-door neighbor to Freimann Square has been under construction. It is good to see that wrapping up and their renovations are complete. Congratulations, Arts United.
- ✚ I attended an event by the Foellinger Foundation called Neighborhood Conversation: An evening with Seth Kaplan. This night was a great discussion by Mr. Kaplan, as well as a panel discussion by Mayor Tucker, Seth Kaplan, Rev. Mondragon, and Tamesha Fikes.
- ✚ We dedicated the opening of Café Flora at the Botanical Conservatory as the month ended. We are very excited to have the Café open and provide yet another element of your experience when you visit the Conservatory. Stop by and try them out.

Chuck Reddinger – Deputy Director of Recreation,

Salomon Farm Park, Neighborhood Outreach Community Centers (Youth/Downtown/McMillen Park), Riverfront, Athletics, Aquatics, Golf, Outdoor Recreation, Special Events, Headwaters Park, and Travel Service

✚ Community Center –Highlights

- Facility rentals maintained a 50 percent utilization rate in October, with five of ten available dates booked. Total rental attendance was 141, generating \$980 in revenue.



- Programs with strong participation included Gymnastics and Dance (71), Chair Yoga (14), and Estate Planning (20).
- Active Aging Week, held October 6–10, attracted over 120 participants with support from more than 20 volunteers and 10 community sponsors.
- The annual Halloween Haunt on October 18 drew approximately 1,000 participants and volunteers as part of Downtown Fright Night, sponsored by Mike's Affordable Appliances.
- The October 20 Monday Luncheon, sponsored by Anew Hospice, had 27 attendees and featured a fall-themed menu.
- Two new \$150 sponsorships were secured for the Veterans' Breakfast, and additional partnerships were confirmed for Santa's Workshop.
- Staff completed professional development and partnership meetings, including Lead Boldly training, Galaxy Digital coordination, and volunteer platform updates.
- Facebook engagement increased to 8,956 interactions in October despite lower reach, indicating a stronger audience connection. The **Community Center's upgraded camera system** has been completed, providing improved coverage both inside and outside the facility.



McMillen Park Community Center – Highlights

- Continued school outreach at Paul Harding, South Side, New Haven, and Towles Intermediate to increase teen participation in after-school programs. Open Gym Basketball and Esports remain the most popular activities.
- Kids Café served 320 dinners, 223 snacks, and 9 breakfasts during the month, continuing to address food insecurity and provide a safe after-school space.
- Kids Korner welcomed 24 participants, and Parents Night Out with Easter Seals Arch continued to receive positive family feedback.
- Adult programs remain strong: Cardio Fit, Essential Step, and Pickleball (31 participants) all grew in attendance; Adult Basketball League launched with eight teams.
- One rental was held in October with 30 attendees.



Weisser Park Youth Center – Highlights

- The After-School Program served 774 youth participants with 11 new registrations during this reporting period.
- On September 25, Dr. Justin McGee from Parkview Regional Medical Center visited the Turner Chapel AME Ubuntu Learning Lab. Youth learned about the importance of education and communication in medical careers through an interactive mock doctor's appointment.
- On October 16, Victims Assistance staff led a Domestic Violence Awareness Month workshop on healthy relationships, boundaries, and positive affirmations. Each participant received a small gift and a fidget keychain.
- The Center hosted the Greater Northeast Indiana Jack and Jill of America, Inc. Carole Robertson Day celebration on September 25 with 92 attendees, including 55 Weisser youth. The event featured historical presentations, performances, and refreshments.
- On September 22, 24 youth visited the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo, enjoying educational exhibits and rides.



Jennings Recreation Center – Highlights

- Outreach partnerships this month included:
 - **Allen County Public Library** – Continued literacy engagement through storytelling and art.
 - **Erin’s House** – Provided youth with emotional support activities focused on coping and resilience.
 - **Drum Fun** – Promoted mindfulness and focus through rhythm-based learning.
 - **Top Tier Dance Program** – Continued rehearsals in preparation for upcoming performances.
- Jennings Recreation Center hosted a **Family Game Night** on Thursday, September 25, 2025, with support from the Supervisor of Outreach and the Recreation Superintendent.

Riverfront

- Total Promenade Program and Rental Attendance: 1,650
- **Notable Events:** Riverfront Social Runners, Howl-O-Walkoween, Yappy Hour, Riverfront Book Swap, and Park Board of Commissioners Meeting.
- Throughout the month of October, Riverfront Fort Wayne hosted nine rental reservations and four programs in Promenade Park. Altogether, more than 1,500 attendees visited the park, whether participating in a rental event or attending a Riverfront program. Rental highlights included Lutheran Social Service’s Annual Fundraiser, Miss Virginia’s Food Pantry Volunteer Dinner, Animal Care and Control’s Annual Howl-O-Walkoween, and Fort Wayne Football Club’s fan event. Promenade Park also welcomed two wedding-related rentals and an internal Parks event, Poetz Portal.
- Regularly scheduled programming continued with Yoga on the Riverfront, led by Chelsea Vona of Discover Yoga, and Zumba in the Park, instructed by Vanessa Escobar through a partnership with the Greater Fort Wayne YMCA. These fitness-focused programs brought in a combined 80 participants. Riverfront staff also introduced two new programs in October: Yappy Hour on the Riverfront and Riverfront Book Swap. Yappy Hour on the Riverfront drew an estimated 150 dog lovers to enjoy live music, mingle with other pet owners, and visit Ted’s Snack and Bar. Eleven participants purchased a Paw Print Keepsake craft for \$5. Riverfront Book Swap was another success, with attendees gathering in the Park Foundation Pavilion to exchange books, connect with local bookstores, and engage with the Human Library. Thanks to the generous donations of Sunbound Books and Hyde Brothers Booksellers, guests also had the chance to win bookstore gift cards through a raffle.

Salomon Farm Park

On Friday, October 10, 2025, and Saturday, October 11, 2025, Salomon Farm Park hosted the annual **Fall Harvest Festival**, running from 10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m. on Friday and 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. on Saturday. The festival featured antique farm equipment demonstrations, children’s activities and rides, farm animal interactions, food and craft vendors, and an antique tractor parade. Partner organizations included the **Tri-State Tractor Club**, **DeKalb County Horsemen’s Association**, and the **Flax and Fleecers Guild**. A **\$5 per-vehicle parking fee** was charged to help offset event expenses. Due to the growing popularity of the festival, **attendance, revenue, and vendor participation all increased** compared to 2024. **Per-car revenue** rose from \$7,820 in 2024 to \$8,295 in 2025, a **6% increase**. **Vendor booth sales** increased from \$925 to \$1,200, a **30% increase**. **Attendance** (according to Placer AI) grew from **3.2K in 2024 to 3.9K in 2025, a 22% increase**. *Please note that attendance figures from Placer AI do not include young children or individuals without cell phones.)*



Sweet Breeze

Due to continued low river levels, the Sweet Breeze canal boat was removed from the water one week early—on Thursday, October 9, 2025, instead of the scheduled Thursday, October 16, 2025. As a result, several weekend tours and one private tour were canceled. The decision was made following prolonged dry conditions throughout September and October. With no rainfall in the forecast for the final week of operation, staff determined it was necessary to conclude the season early to ensure the safety of the vessel and passengers.

Golf

- Chris Rudolph reported that Mark Slater has begun the process of rebuilding the #7 green at the Foster Park Golf Course. He stated that he was having a little trouble with the green holding its shape due to a lack of moisture in the dirt or ground.
- Chris Rudolph stated that he and his staff continue to repair or replace irrigation heads at all three golf courses. He also stated that this will be an ongoing process due to the large number of heads that are broken or missing.
- Gary Whitacre reported that Foster, McMillen, and Shoaff Golf Courses are still enjoying play even though the temperature is starting to drop and days are getting shorter.

Deputy Rhonda Berg - Director of Finance & Theatre, Budgets, Payroll, and Commercial Vouchers, Trust Fund Donations, Registrations, Rentals, Tickets, Customer Service, Accounts Payable, and Receivable.

Payroll and Accounts Payable

- The Parks and Recreation Department paid 327 employees (144 full-time and 183 regular part-time and seasonal) for the payroll ending October 18th, and paid on October 24th, 2025.
- We currently have the following permanent full-time positions open, posted, interviewing or in the process of being hired, as of October 31st, 2025:
 - Assistant Golf Superintendent (Fund 121)
 - Manager – Neighborhood Programs (Fund 121)
 - Program Facility Coordinator – Jennings (Fund 121)
 - Forestry Grounds Person – Entry Level (Fund 121)
 - Fleet Mechanic – Golf (Fund 439)
- 48 total P-Card statements were processed for October for charges made at the end of August to almost the end of September.
- There was a total of 545 invoices processed during October from 10/1 to 10/31.
- More seasonal staff separations this month, which included Sweet Breeze and Foellinger Theatre, as well as a few Park Maintenance Seasonal Employees.
- Seasonal Ice Rink positions are being filled now as they get ready to open.
- Working on getting the seasonal requisition for 2026 ready as well.

Customer Service and Finance

- Joana Garcia started on Oct 20th. She is fluent in Spanish and has already helped customers with her bilingual skills.



- Maddie met with Eden Lamb and Candace Senters to discuss the reserving of Johnny Appleseed Campground for the 2026 season while it is closed during the winter months. This will become Maddie's responsibility over the winter.
- Joyce and Rhonda met with Eric Ummel and Camille Schuelke regarding registering for Community Garden Plots for next year. Starting in January, all new renters will be registering through the Parks and Recreation website and completing forms to be submitted online.
- Kim has begun to enter all of the Winter Fun Time information into RecTrac and is requesting each location to verify that all information entered is correct.
- Attended the Southeast Area Partnership Meeting on October 22, 2025, and presented fliers on our Halloween and Veterans' Day Events, along with copies of the Fall Fun Times
- Jarin and Rhonda met with Dave Weadock to discuss possible Theatre CIP projects for both the end of 2025 and throughout 2026.
- Rhonda and Jill met with Ricoh to get a quote on replacing our large marketing printer. The equipment we currently have, the parts are no longer being made for. We hope to make this purchase in the next two months
- Kim, Joniece, and Rhonda helped out with the Salomon Farm Fall Harvest Festival, both at the information booth and taking parking fees.
- Rhonda attended the Quarter Century Club Breakfast.
- Steve and Rhonda presented the 2026 Budget to City Council on October 14, 2025, and then went back to City Council on October 28th to defend the two budget cut recommendations. Steve was able to save the \$1,000,000 CIP proposed cut, but we did lose the \$13,653 mid-year raise cut. This will be absorbed into our budget and will not affect current employee salaries.
- Rhonda attended the Parks and Recreation Policy Review Meeting on October 22nd. This is a huge project that Rob and the Administrative Staff will be working on for several months.

Foellinger Theatre Report: October 2025 Season Closeout Summary

- The Foellinger Theatre concluded its 2025 season with a successful full facility closeout and transition into winter operations on October 9th. All bar, concession, and stage areas were thoroughly cleaned and consolidated, with equipment, inventory, and food products properly stored or returned. The stage was stripped and winterized, and the facility and grounds were organized and secured. All contractor invoices have been paid, and no safety incidents were reported this month. The Parks Department will finalize the winterization of the full facility during the week of October 27th.
- Looking ahead, key facility projects include ceiling repairs in the men's restroom, continued front-of-house lighting upgrades, and repainting of the bar and concession floors. Staffing transitions are underway, with core leadership maintaining a partial off-season presence. Administrative progress continues on theatre inventory, operational documentation, 2026 season scheduling, and exploration of a dedicated marketing role as part of broader rebranding efforts.
 - **Operational Notes (Season Close)**
 - **October 9th Closeout and Cleaning**
 - **Bar & Concessions:**
- Complete ceiling-to-floor deep clean across all areas.
- All items consolidated into sealed, pest-proof containers for winter.
- Shelves and floors cleaned and sanitized.




- Food products were either moved to the basement, disposed of, or donated.
- Coolers cleaned and relocated to restrooms for winter storage.
- Appliances cleaned and stored appropriately.
- All unopened beer returned to Five Star for reimbursement to Parks.


Stage:


- Led by Michael Brett with Force Tech assistance.
- Stage fully stripped and drapes stored in bins for cleaning at the 2026 season opening.
- Production equipment (lights, speakers, amps, subs, mics, cables) stored in climate-appropriate locations or sent to Forcetek for winter servicing.

Grounds:

- Unused items under bleachers removed and sent to Lawton (hoses, metal troughs, excess trash cans).
- Trash cans pressure-washed and cleaned; stored in restrooms for winter.
- Follow-spots removed from booths and stored away.
- Batteries removed from all devices.

 **Contracts:** All invoices for the 2025 season were paid and organized into show-specific folders. Contractors: Pristine, Force Tech, Alliance Security, CSC, FiveStar, FWACB, etc.

 **Box Office:** Continued discussion on future position development for Patrick Ventura.

 **Safety & Incident Reporting:** No safety or incident reports for October 2025.

Upcoming Facility Projects:

- Ceiling repairs in the men's restroom.
- Continuation of front-of-house lighting project.
- Repainting of bar and concessions floors.
- Finalizing the replacement of the hydrant through VFP.

Staffing & Front of House:

- Seasonal staff separations completed for bartenders, concessions workers, and cleaners.
- Balance of separations to occur in November.
- Held a Volunteer Appreciation Event on October 30th to thank the volunteers for their generous amount of time given to help Foellinger Theatre guests have the most enjoyable experience. We couldn't do what we do without them!

Ongoing Projects:

- Received three vendor quotes for drape cleaning; to be completed before 2026 opening.



- Maggie is nearing completion of the full theatre inventory.
- Cole is managing the 2026 avails calendar and exploring the addition of a Foellinger-specific marketing role.
- Operational logs in progress (keys, permits, inspections, contacts, conferences).
- Development of early opening procedures and 2026 opening outline.
- Rate sheet and co-pro terms finalized and submitted to the attorney for review and approval by the Board at the November 6th meeting.

Steve Schuhmacher – Deputy Director of Park Maintenance,

Facilities, Technicians, Grounds/Heavy Equipment, MainTrac, Projects, Storeroom, Administration, Safety Compliance



Facilities Supervisor: Greg Reith

- Pavilion rental totals for October were 190.
- Graffiti was removed from the following locations: Packard Park, Waynedale Park, Lawton Park Skate Park, Lawton Park Kids Crossing, Brewer Park, Lindenwood Nature Preserve, Buckner Park, and Bloomingdale Park.
- The team pressure-washed the following locations: Packard Park, Waynedale Park, Brewer Park, Rockhill Park, Foster Park Pavilion 3, and Memorial Park.
- Relief staff have begun winterizing and servicing equipment as our summer rental season comes to an end.
- This is the last month of our summer rental season for 2025. Our summer rental season will start back up in May of 2026.



Maintenance Technician Supervisor: Mike Cremeans

- Freimann Square fountains were shut down for the winter months. Maintenance Techs drained the pond and installed protective covers around each fountain.
- Halloween decorations were installed at the downtown Community Center, which included a 12-foot skeleton.
- All FWPRD splash pads were shut down for the season. This included winterizing the water systems and removing movable fixtures.
- The Hurshtown reservoir closed for the season. Both wooden piers and the kayak launch were removed and stored for the off-season.
- Holiday light displays were installed at McMillen Park Community Center, Albert Jennings Center, Cooper Youth Center, McKinney Commons, and the downtown Community Center.
- Seasonal water shut off has begun with the Hanna Homestead shelter, Bowser Park shelter, Lafayette Park Shelter, and a handful of stand-alone drinking fountains. This process will continue into November until all locations are winterized.
- The on-call staff received a total of **26** calls this month. **6** of which were lock issues, **6** were calls from dispatch regarding alarms, and **14** were miscellaneous issues.
- Our Technicians completed the following general tasks last month: 11-Alarm Maintenance, 11-Building Maintenance, 6-Carpentry, 16-Electrical Repair jobs, 4-HVAC Maintenance, 2-Key Core Maintenance, 14-Light Maintenance, 12-Lock Maintenance, 4-Paint, 8-Playground Maintenance, 12-Plumbing Maintenance, 5-Sign Maintenance, and 10-Vandalism



Grounds Maintenance/Heavy Equipment Rob Schenkel

- Tree limb and debris cleanup continued at various park locations.
- River greenway trails were serviced weekly to mow, remove sticks, debris, and flood damage.
- Botanical Conservatory and Lakeside Park compost bins were emptied several times this month.
- Crews are maintaining parks on a 6–8-day rotation, including mowing grass, string trimming around trees and fence lines, blowing off walkways, and spraying weeds.
- Parking blocks have been straightened and replaced as needed in various parks.
- Trash routes continue to run seven days a week until November.
- The soccer field at Rea Park was aerated, top-dressed, and seeded to improve turf quality.
- Heavy Equipment crews removed the information kiosk from Lawton Park and stored it for future use.
- Safety mulch was added to the playgrounds at Summit Park, Waynedale Gardens Park, Sheldon Park, Rockhill Park, and McMillen Park.
- Straw is being delivered to Weisser Recreation Center and to the Mayor for fall events and pictures.
- Heavy Equipment crews excavated a drinking fountain water line at McMillen Park that needed repair. Once the repairs were completed, the crew installed patio pavers to improve the area around the drinking fountain.



Main Trac Coordinator: Nicole Roth

- Main Trac Entries: 7,841 for the month, and we had 29 calls from the 311 Call Center.
- No volunteer hours reported.
- Continued entering time sheets, contracted/sales invoices, and monthly reports for Recreation Staff.



Superintendent: Mike Gore

- Approve and record invoices for various materials used and applied in grounds, maintenance, and facilities departments.
- Overseeing a variety of issues on all sides of Maintenance.
- Going back over inspections of the Parks and doing new ones.
- Continuing the 2025 River Greenway inspections.
- Working on 2025 monthly MMR reports for IDEM at the spray parks.
- Writing and overseeing 2025 change orders.



Operations/Support/Storeroom & Property Transactions: Travis Roth

- Storeroom staff supplied materials for crews setting up for the Salomon fall festival.
- First aid kits from various summer programs have been delivered to the storeroom for staff to refill and update them before the 2026 summer season.
- Passenger vans were provided to City Utilities for a tour of the Camp Scott wetland area.
- Recreation borrowed a van on Halloween for a planned event.
- The courier attended the OSHA 30 training provided by the City's Risk Management department.
- As pavilion rentals slow down, the storeroom has started reducing the levels of stocked items to prepare for the end-of-year audit.
- Staff began ordering and stocking mulching mower blades for the grounds crew as they began to transition from mowing grass to mulching leaves.

24 Stihl Power Pole Saw	Scrapped	P240
25 Stihl Power Pole Saw	Added Into Inventory	P260
11 Stihl BR600 Blower	Scrapped	P290
25 John Deere 2550 Mower	Added Into Inventory	R212
25 Bobcat Pallet Forks	Added Into Inventory	R530

2025 Vehicle Lease Purchase Update and Garage Highlights:

Ford Transit Cargo Van	Delivered
Ford Transit Cargo Van	Delivered
Shelving for Cargo Van	Delivered
Chevy Colorado (3)	Delivered
Bobcat T770	Delivered
Club Car 550 Carts	Delivered
Ford F350 Chassis	Delivered
Dump Bed	Delivered
Portable Welder	Delivered
Forestry Bobcat	
Attachment	Delivered
Mulch Mate trailer	Delivered
John Deere Gator	Delivered
Steel Green Sprayer	Delivered
Ford F250s (2)	Delivered

- 168 work orders were scheduled this month, 29 of which were services.
- Garage crews assisted with the removal of Sweet Breeze from the river and the transportation of the boat to Rea for winter storage. The boat and trailer were both serviced and repaired. The truck used to tow the boat was also inspected and serviced to make sure it would be ready for the move.
- Crews also worked with the maintenance techs to clear up storage space inside the Rea building for equipment and materials being moved from the Harris Road barn to be stored at Rea.
- A Landscape Bobcat stump grinder required all of the cutting teeth to be replaced, along with the brackets that hold the cutting teeth to the machine.
- Repairs to the Headwaters ice rink Zamboni began to prepare that unit for the skating season.



- A Ford F350 plow truck was taken to W.A. Jones to have a plow wiring issue resolved. The wiring harness was repaired, and the truck is now ready for the winter snowplowing season.
- A Ford utility truck operated by the maintenance techs had front-end damage from an incident with a John Deere Gator at Solomon Farm. Replacement parts were sourced from Bob Thomas Ford, and the truck was repaired and back in service in 2 days.
- The forestry Freightliner grapple truck has been suffering from some electrical issues. Garage mechanics are working with the local dealer to identify which wiring could be the issue and then repair it in-house.
- There will be no fall city auction in 2025 due to the City's Fleet Department not having enough vehicles to send. The Parks vehicles slated to go to auction will go in the spring, when there will be a city auction. The golf courses and grounds are going to prepare lists of outdated and unrepairable equipment that can be included in this sale.
- The John Deere barrel train rides at Salomon Farm were serviced before the annual Fall Festival to make sure they were ready for daily use. The farm's tractors and Bobcat skid steer loader were also serviced.
- Garage crews assisted the grounds division with preparing tractors and brush-cutting mower decks for the yearly mowing of natural areas at Franke Park and Salomon Farm.
- A golf course picker cart suffered a seized engine. Several similar carts have had the same issue. The cart was taken to Midwest Golf and Turf to attempt to identify the root cause of these failures. The vendor will replace the engine in the picker cart free of charge due to the repeated nature of these issues.
- A pull-behind Toro mower at McMillen golf course required replacement of the large rollers on the back of the mowing deck. Mechanics fabricated custom brackets to retain the mower's bearing caps to help keep them greased and prevent further roller damage.
- Battery-powered grease guns were ordered for several of the golf courses and the Riparian division to allow staff to keep equipment properly serviced and extend the life of machine parts.

Project Administration: Dave Weadock

- Bloomingdale Park Playground Equipment – Installation planned for Spring of 2026.
- Brewer Park Construction – Final project closeout documents in progress.
- Foellinger Theatre House Lighting Products – All products have been received.
- Foellinger Theatre House Lighting Installation – Installation is in progress.
- Foster Park Golf Course Restoration Plan – Restoration is in progress.
- Foster Park Pavement Striping – Installation planned for November.
- Franke Park Pond Pavilion Interior Renovation – Construction is in progress, and completion planned for late October.
- Hanna Homestead Park Playground Equipment – Design of new playground is in progress.
- Hamilton Park Playground Border Replacement – Construction planned for early 2026.
- Headwaters Park Fountain – Construction in progress.
- Headwaters Park Service Buildings Roofing – Project completed.
- Kreager Park Playground Equipment – All approvals received. Installation planned for Spring 2026.
- Kreager Park Tennis Center Fence Renovation – Planning in progress.
- Kreager Park Tennis Courts Recoating – Planning in progress.
- Lafayette Park Playground Equipment – Design revisions are in progress.
- Lakeside Park Pavilion #1 Exterior Improvements – Project completed.
- Lakeside Park Pond Fountain – Fountain replacement planning in progress. Installation in Spring 2026.
- Lakeside Park Electrical Service Upgrades – Planning in progress.
- Lawton Park Maintenance Building Roof Design – Planning documents sent to PAS for review.
- Lawton Park Skate Park Fence Walls – Construction is in progress.
- Lions Park Tennis/Pickleball Courts Recoating – Planning is in progress.
- McMillen Park Pool Liners Replacement – Approvals in progress. Construction to begin in early November.
- McMillen Park Pool Drains Improvements – Approvals in progress. Construction to begin in early November.
- McMillen Park Pavilion Roof Replacement – Planning is in progress.



- Mechanic St. Bridge Construction – Final closeout procedures in progress.
 - Northside Park Psi-Ote Pavilion Lower Updates – Bidding complete. Construction in early 2026.
 - Northside Park Administration 1st Floor HVAC Replacement – Approvals in progress. Installation planned for late 2025.
 - Northside Park Pool Sand Filters Replacement – Project planned for early 2026.
 - Promenade Park Safety Surfacing Replacement – Installation planned for Spring 2026.
 - Repka Park Playground Equipment – Approvals in progress. Installation planned for Spring 2026.
 - Salomon Farm Animal Barn – Planning in progress.
 - Salomon Farm Pasture Barn Utilities – Construction is in progress.
 - Shoaff Park Riverlodge Roof Replacement – Construction in progress.
 - Shoaff Park Playground Equipment – Approvals in progress. Installation planned for Spring 2026.
 - Various Parks Signage Improvements – Projects ongoing.
 - Wells St. Bridge Partial Deck Replacement – Construction is in progress.
- **Other work:**
- Various Parks: reviewed potential for necessary future projects, updating park site plan bases and building plans, underground utility locates were scheduled and performed, assisting the marketing department by preparing requested project information, cost estimates for various projects are being prepared upon request, and park assessments are being completed.
 - Content preparation for Engage Fort Wayne
 - PAS Division GIS training sessions in progress with staff
 - Preparing GIS content for the Parks mobile application

Safety: Tony DeVido

- The Parks & Rec. The Safety Committee meeting was on 10-28-25. 4 Parks employees attended
- 3 3-vehicle crash was reported for this time period.
- 2 employee injuries were reported during this time period.
- 1 CPR/FA classes were held. 6 employees were certified
- 3 CDL holders successfully renewed their licenses.
- 24 Worksite inspections were done.
- Safety Review Council meeting was held. 2 Parks employees were present.
- Annual Compliance training has begun. 3 divisions completed.
- Parks co-hosted an OSHA 30-hour class. 10 Parks employees participated.

Chad Shaw - Deputy Director of the **BOTANICAL CONSERVATORY** **Planning & Development, Forestry, Greenhouse, Landscape & Horticulture, and Riparian**

Botanical Conservatory Report – October 2025

- “...*Something Blue*” Showcase Exhibit continued to warmly welcome visitors, inviting guests to experience the romance and charm of a tradition reimagined in botanical form. With formal landscape design, a grand central fountain, and striking blue-themed plantings, the exhibit offered a dreamy setting for newlyweds and garden lovers alike. From heartfelt photo ops to leisurely strolls through enchanting scenes, the exhibit captures the essence of summer elegance. Generously sponsored by the Fort Wayne Park Foundation, English Bonter Mitchell Foundation, and Majic 95.1, “...*Something Blue*” sets the stage for a memorable season at the Botanical Conservatory.
- The Botanical Conservatory hosted several well-received events in October 2025: Pumpkin Path Display (open

through October 26), Botanical Brew (October 3), Rocky Horror Picture Show (October 18), and Garden Trick-or-Treat (October 25). Staff are gearing up for Veterans' Day in the Garden (November 11), Fern's Fairylight Express (Opening November 22), \$1 Night Light Display (Starting November 26), Holly Shopping (November 29), and several pre-registered programs and workshops throughout the month.

- The Botanical Conservatory officially celebrated the opening of Café Flora on October 30 with a grand opening event featuring remarks from Director Steve McDaniel, Deputy Director Chad Shaw, Superintendent Stacy Haviland, and General Manager Dr. Nate Cardelli. The event highlighted the success of the project and expressed shared aspirations for Café Flora to serve as a cornerstone of the Botanical Conservatory's ongoing commitment to excellence in guest experience. Special recognition was given to Angela Daugherty, Supervisor of Retail & Café Operations, whose dedication and leadership were instrumental in bringing the café to fruition. The celebration concluded with a ceremonial ribbon-cutting and a public unveiling of the new café space.
- There is one open staff position, PT Rental Coordinator; candidates are being interviewed.

Botanical Conservatory KPIs

- October 2025 marked a strong performance period for the Botanical Conservatory, with substantial increases across several key indicators. Monthly attendance climbed to 9,002 visitors, reflecting a 13.63% increase over October 2024 and contributing to a year-to-date total of 101,826—an 11.85% improvement over last year.
- Admissions revenue rose modestly for the month, up 2.45%, while membership revenue experienced a more notable gain of 13.02% compared to October 2024. Both categories showed continued year-over-year growth, reinforcing positive trends in public engagement and member retention.
- Retail performance saw some divergence. While Conservatory Shop revenue held essentially flat for the month, down slightly by just 0.21%, year-to-date totals remained behind by 3.05%. However, the debut of Café Flora contributed a new revenue stream, generating \$2,445.94 during its soft opening phase. These retail categories will continue to be monitored closely as operations stabilize in a stunning new space.
- Rental and catering revenue were a bright spot in October, increasing by over 51% year-over-year, with year-to-date totals up nearly 11%. This growth reflects the Botanical Conservatory's continued appeal as a venue for private events and the ongoing demand for unique indoor/outdoor event space.
- Year-to-date total revenue surpassed \$1.2 million, up 6.75% from 2024, affirming the Botanical Conservatory's continued financial strength and upward trajectory heading into the holiday season.

Attendance

October 2024: 7,922 visitors

October 2025: 9,002 visitors

An increase of 1,080 visitors or +13.63% to 2024

YTD Comparisons

2024 Attendance: 91,038 visitors

2025 Attendance: 101,826 visitors

An increase of 10,788 visitors or +11.85% to 2024



Admissions Revenue

October 2024: \$35,455.78

October 2025: \$36,325.27

An increase of \$869.49 or +2.45% to 2024

YTD Comparisons

2024 Admissions Revenue: \$347,363.46

2025 Admissions Revenue: \$359,617.90

An increase of \$12,254.44 or +3.53% to 2024

Membership Revenue

October 2024: \$5,693.00

October 2025: \$6,434.00

An increase of \$741.00 or +13.02% to 2024

YTD Comparisons

2024 Membership Revenue: \$76,093.00

2025 Membership Revenue: \$80,427.00

An increase of \$4,334.00 or +5.70% to 2024

Conservatory Shop Revenue

October 2024: \$19,785.60

October 2025: \$19,743.96

A decrease of \$41.64 or -0.21% to 2024

YTD Comparisons

2024 Gift Shop Revenue: \$259,611.70

2025 Gift Shop Revenue: \$251,697.41

A decrease of \$7,914.29 or -3.05% to 2024

Café Flora Revenue

October 2025: \$2,445.94

Rental & Catering Fee Revenue

October 2024: \$6,140.00

October 2025: \$9,280.00

An increase of \$3,140.00 or +51.14% to 2024

YTD Comparisons

2024 Rental Revenue: \$73,105.00

2025 Rental Revenue: \$81,067.50

An increase of \$7,962.50 or +10.89% to 2024

Other Revenue (includes Activity Enrollments, Donations, Plant Sale, etc.)

October 2024: \$669.64

October 2025: \$880.60



YTD Comparisons

2024 Other Revenue:	\$369,031.97
2025 Other Revenue:	\$425,195.00

Conservatory Total Revenue

October 2024:	\$67,744.02
October 2025:	\$75,109.77

An increase of \$7,365.75 or +10.87% to 2024

YTD Comparisons

2024 Total Revenue:	\$1,124,580.13
2025 Total Revenue:	\$1,200,450.75

An increase of \$75,870.62 or +6.75% to 2024

Botanical Conservatory Business Development

- Staff submitted a grant proposal to the SIA Foundation for support of the Desert House Improvements Project.
- Staff submitted a grant proposal to the James B. & Lois R. Archer Charitable Foundation for support of the Desert House Improvements Project.
- Staff submitted a grant proposal to the O'Rourke Family Foundation for support of the 2026 Showcase Garden Exhibits.
- Promotional and complimentary tickets were distributed to PBS Fort Wayne and Majic 95.1 for the 2025-2026 Fern's Fairytale Express exhibit. Provided information for the stations' promotional spots.
- Staff submitted final event reports to PHP, WANE 15, and 89.1 WBOI for the 2025 Botanical Brew. These reports will enable us to approach these sponsors for continuing support of upcoming special events.
- Staff submitted the final promotional report to 99.5 & 102.3 for the 2025 Rocky Horror Picture Show. This report will enable us to approach the media for continuing support of the 2026 RHPS.

Botanical Conservatory Public Programs and Events:

- Botanical Brew (October 3) - In its 4th year, Botanical Brew continues to be a favorite event! It has garnered guest preference with the attendance of 1,460 people, more than doubling the 716 in its first year. Vendor participation has also increased, with 15 total beverage producers representing 17 different products. In addition, there were 5 food vendors, 13 artisans, 4 featured demonstrators, 11 buskers, and 2 different bands offering core entertainment indoors and outdoors. While not much capacity remains for Botanical Brew to grow, the event is almost certain to maintain its popularity come next year.
- Rocky Horror Picture Show & Fright Night Market (October 18) - It rained all night long for this year's outdoor screening of The Rocky Horror Picture Show during Downtown Fort Wayne's Fright Night. Yet, 419 people came out to enjoy this participatory event where community and camaraderie outshone the drizzle and rain! Emcee, Lavendelle kept the audience engaged during the pre-screening costume contest and impromptu an acapella singing. Indoors, the fun-filled Fright Night Market offered reprieve from the weather.
- Garden Trick or Treat (October 25) - This popular, annual event saw a 17% increase with 1,055 guests in




attendance. Participants enjoyed hunting for ghosts throughout the gardens, then trick-or-treating down the Pumpkin Path with twelve botanically-themed stations like “Spooky Plant Parts,” “Creepy Compost Dig,” and “Seeds of Mystery.” Along with such wonderful volunteers hosting the stations, staff were happy to have even more community involvement with the addition of helping hands from Allen County Environmental Management and the Allen County Public Library. Overall, it was a successful event with lots of smiling faces!

Education

- Continuing T'ai Chi (October 7-November 4) - Sandy Gebhard led another well-received T'ai Chi series. Seventeen participants registered, with a maximum of twenty permitted. Most, if not all, participants are returning students.
- Succulent Pumpkins (October 16) - In this returning, seasonal workshop, 24 pre-registered participants created festive succulent-accented pumpkins, crafting unique pieces of seasonal living décor! Program staff prepared for and led the popular class using succulents grown at the Lawton Park Greenhouse. This beloved workshop is expected to return in the Fall of 2026.

GROW IT! School Plant Program

Sixty-five different schools were directly contacted and invited to participate in the 2026 School Plant Program. Going forward, the goal is to receive plant quantities just after the City-Wide Blue-Ribbon Show and before sowing seed for spring. An online “Free Plant Order Form” was promoted in mid-September and was due by the end of October. Next, staff are tracking orders and sending final confirmations while trying to be sure schools don't miss out. Staff are simultaneously streamlining program offerings to be more cohesive and accessible from here on out.

 **Youth Field Trips:** This October, 22 schools and organizations brought 528 visitors to the Botanical Conservatory. These groups enjoyed Staff-Led Labs (17%), Self-Taught Activities (42%), and Basic Visits (41%). In October of 2024, ten groups brought 512 people to the Botanical Conservatory.

Exhibits & Displays:

- ...*Something Blue* (June 28-November 16) - The newest showcase exhibit is inspired by the symbolic wedding rhyme, “Something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue!” Where enchanted scenery complements a formal landscape of blue hues, visitors are immersed in a fairytale of blue beauty in bloom. The exhibit also features a grand fountain in addition to a variety of photo ops with complimentary pieces, bringing together a lovely backdrop for heartfelt memories this summer/fall.
- Joni Walker: Nature Walk (June 28-November 16) - This talented, local artist is now showcasing a collection of her watercolor paintings in the Gallery Hall at the Botanical Conservatory. Her artwork, featuring the beauty and wonders of nature, is available for purchase at shop.botanicalconservatory.org. A public artist reception was held on August 15th from 1-3 pm.
- Pumpkin Path Display (September 30-October 26) - This seasonal display keeps getting better and better, as staff and volunteers come together making it something for everyone to enjoy. Throughout its duration, guests were able to help themselves to a Seek and Find Activity while also taking advantage of numerous photo ops amidst beautiful fall scenery.

Volunteers/Staff

- October was an exceptionally busy month in which events and operations were well supported by volunteers! Fourteen different volunteers contributed to the success of Botanical Brew with setup, maintenance, and teardown. During Downtown Fort Wayne's Fright Night, 4 volunteers distributed candy during the day, and in the evening, 9 volunteers supported the screening of The Rocky Horror Picture Show, an associated costume contest, and Fright Night Market. When Garden Trick-or-Treat expanded its offerings and needed additional support, more than 20 people answered the call and volunteered to fill fourteen different assignments. For the teardown of the Pumpkin Path, 7 volunteers served alongside 9 Honor Society students from South Side, with 2 accompanying staff, who deconstructed this month-long display in less than 3 hours.
- At the Front Desk, 8 volunteers filled 37 shifts while 9 volunteers covered 41 shifts in the Gift Shop. Two year-round SWAT volunteers maintained their weekly shift to groom and assist garden staff while Gift Shop plants continued to be groomed by a third volunteer. A group from Easter Seals offered a shift to sweep garden paths, allowing staff to manage other projects. CAS students were of great assistance during their 40 hours of volunteer service when planting some of the plants in the new Mediterranean beds, removing more rocks from the Desert House, staking mums in Showcase, and pulling annuals from the front beds to prepare for spring bulbs.

Upcoming

June 28- November 16: ...*Something Blue* showcase exhibit
 June 28- November 16: Nature Walk, art display by Joni Walker
 November 22-April 12, 2026: Fern's Fairylight Express showcase exhibit
 November 22-April 12, 2026: Gathered After the Fall, art display by Ben High
 November 28-December 19: \$1-Night Light Display

November 11: Veteran's Day, OPEN
 November 16-21: Showchange Week
 November 26: \$1-Night of Lights at the Botanical Conservatory
 November 27: Thanksgiving Day, CLOSED
 November 28: Black Friday, OPEN 10 am-5 pm
 November 28: Holiday Performance by Those 2 Guys in Suits & Ties
 November 29: Holly Shopping at the Botanical Conservatory

December 5: Holiday Performance by The Snow Fort Singers
 Dec. 6, 13 & 20: Santa Saturdays
 December 6: Breakfast with Santa, pre-registered
 December 7: Succulent Christmas Tree, pre-registered
 December 10: Volunteer & Member Holi-Day Open House
 December 12: Holiday Performance by PFW Holiday Carolers
 December 13: Evergreen Centerpiece, pre-registered
 December 14: Suzuki Strings Holiday Performance
 December 20: Book Signing- Talitha Shipman
 December 24 & 25: Christmas Eve & Christmas Day, CLOSED
 December 31: New Year's Eve, OPEN 10 am-5 pm
 January 1: New Year's Day, CLOSED

Botanical Conservatory Landscape and Horticulture

- October marked a key seasonal transition for the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory, with staff



completing the deinstallation of the Pumpkin Path display and preparing the outdoor Terrace for winter.

- The annual bulb planting was completed across exterior beds, ensuring spring color and botanical interest in the coming season. Lawnmanics performed essential turf management during the month, including over seeding, aeration, and a final fertilization treatment. Additionally, A-Plus Irrigation fully winterized the outdoor irrigation system and replaced all Terrace Garden heads with MP Rotators—a water-saving upgrade that improves coverage and supports the long-term care of outdoor plantings.
- Preparation for the Fern's Fairylight Express holiday showcase advanced significantly. Horticulture staff developed a detailed showchange schedule and began sourcing plants, equipment, and props to meet design and timeline requirements. As part of seasonal refresh efforts, florist's mums were installed in the Showcase House to enhance the ...*Something Blue* showcase exhibit with fresh, vivid color.
- Progress on the Desert House planting continued, with planting completion anticipated in November. Additional winter work will focus on labeling and interpretation to support educational goals around this curated desert collection.
- Pest control was addressed by J&A Ford, who completed indoor and outdoor treatments targeting known issues such as Magnolia Scale in the outdoor collection and California Red Scale, which has particularly impacted the olive trees in the Mediterranean Beds.
- Routine outdoor landscape maintenance—including weed control and visual upkeep—remained a priority to support guest experience, event presentation, and horticultural quality throughout the month.

Botanical Conservatory Facility and Maintenance

- Maintenance staff collaborated to deinstall the Pumpkin Path display and began closing the Terrace Garden for the winter season. Mutton's Party & Tent Rental removed both event tents from the site, transporting them for professional cleaning and seasonal storage. This ensures their readiness and longevity for future events. In preparation for colder months, staff also closed and secured the exterior restrooms as part of the Botanical Conservatory's annual winterization procedures.
- Allied Mechanical replaced the building's original water heater, which had been in service since 1983, with a new, energy-efficient unit. This upgrade was completed smoothly, restoring critical service to the facility. The annual State boiler inspection was also conducted during the month, and the Botanical Conservatory passed without deficiencies. Updated operating permits are forthcoming.
- A new wood entry door was installed for the Building Supervisor's office, replacing the worn and fatigued metal door that had exceeded its useful life. This improvement contributes to a more functional and professional working environment. Concurrently, staff supported early-stage preparations for the Fern's Fairylight Express holiday showcase, transporting stored props into the facility and staging elements in advance of the November show change.
- Teusch Electric completed a lighting upgrade in the Gallery Hall, replacing older light bars with new track systems and LED fixtures. This improvement enhances energy efficiency, exhibits visibility, and ease of maintenance. Elsewhere in the facility, Three Rivers Painting began repainting the east wall of the Showcase Garden following the removal of mature ivy. This refresh will brighten the space and improve its visual appeal for guests throughout the upcoming exhibit.



- Custom prop fabrication for the holiday showcase continued steadily throughout October, with in-house staff building and assembling key scenic elements. This ongoing effort is critical to the immersive experience planned for the winter season and represents a substantial creative investment by the team.



A beautiful evening was enjoyed by all during Botanical Brew



Participants smiling with their very own Succulent Pumpkins



Rain didn't stop guests from viewing Rocky Horror on the outdoor Terrace



Trick or Treaters making rounds during Garden Trick or Treat



A snapshot of beauty as part of the ...Something Blue Showcase Exhibit



A couple walking through & enjoying the outdoor Pumpkin Path Display



Volunteers as part of the Bonsai Club pruning Bonsai at the Greenhouse



Conservatory Volunteers helping wristband guests for Botanical Brew



*Conservatory Volunteers assisting during
Garden Trick or Treat*



*The Honor Society Students from South Side High School help deconstruct
the Pumpkin Path Display*



Planning Report – October 2025

- Construction of the Franke Park Renaissance, Phase I project is complete.
- Riverfront Phase II B construction continues. Paver installation is underway throughout the esplanade. Staff continue to meet with AEP for coordination of this project with their transmission line rebuild.
- Design work continues on the Foster Park Entrance project. A public presentation was made on Oct. 7th to review the design development drawings. Staff continue to coordinate with City Utilities on the restoration of their utility construction project throughout Foster Park.



- Staff are working with members of Wildwood Park Community Association and Heritage Landscapes to find historical photos of the park for the Wildwood Park and Rockhill Park Historic Landscape Study and Guideline project.
- Staff are coordinating with members of the Maplewood Community who want to install a native pollinator garden in Sheldon Drive Park as part of their Neighborhood Improvement Grant.
- Three quotes were received for Mitigation Monitoring services for mitigation plantings required by Construction in a Floodway permits for the Franke Park Renaissance and Lawton Park Trestle Bridge projects. V3 was the successful bidder.
- Staff reviewed 15 proposals that were submitted for the Rebid of the Conservatory's Exploration and Terrace Garden Design and shortlisted 4 design teams for interviews.
- A grand opening was held for Café Flora at the Conservatory on Oct. 30th.
- Chad attended the 2025 ASLA Conference in New Orleans; many of the sessions he attended focused on park-related design and planning. The conference was a valuable learning/professional experience.



Horticulture and Landscape Report- October 2025

- 29 volunteers worked 340 hours in the greenhouse.
- The greenhouse provided 93 plants to be sold at the Botanical Conservatory's Gift Shop.
- 125 plants were donated to Turnstone's para volleyball event, and 10 plants were donated to the Theater's Volunteer Dinner.
- 612 garden mums and 705 flowering cabbages and kales were provided for the Parks landscapes and the Botanical Conservatory's pumpkin path.
- 395 floral mums went to the Botanical Conservatory's showcase, and 3,000 flower bulbs were planted for Bunny Tales, Showcase, Home and Garden Show, Volunteer Dinner, and the Conservatory's Gift Shop.
- The Lakeside Park team focused on daily litter pickup; weekly mowing and spin trimming; sidewalk edging; fountain maintenance, including vacuuming and draining the fountain; landscape bed weeding, bed edging, mulching; and rose bed maintenance that included pesticide treatments for black spot and powdery mildew. Staff also removed all annual flowers, prepped for bulb installation that will begin early November, and began leaf pickup.
- The Foster Park team focused on daily litter pickup; weekly mowing of the bridal glen, regularly removing tree debris from the tennis courts; leaf litter pickup; and watering all annual beds. Staff also spent time applying pre-emergent herbicides for weed control and doing some bed mulching. All annual flowers were removed, and beds were edged, tilled, and prepped for bulb installation. Bulb planting began this month, and the fountain was cleaned and drained for the season.
- The Downtown Team their daily litter and trash removal in downtown parks. Post emergent herbicide applications and general weeding/bed cleanups were made at the Arts United Japanese Garden, Courthouse Green, Freimann, Headwaters, Promenade, Little Turtle, Meyers Park, MLK Bridge, and Riverfront IIA. The Freimann fountain was cleaned, drained, and winterized for the season. Staff also pulled annuals, planted Mums in all Community Center pots, and power washed on the square at Freimann. Cleanup was completed at the Arts United Japanese Garden before the grand opening of the building renovation. Due to drought, areas that had been seeded in Headwaters were watered multiple times throughout the month. Staff finished landscape bed reductions in Headwaters Park. The Burning Bush at the Community Center was removed to provide more visibility and safety to the Community Center staff.
- The City Team continued to mow Northside and the Lawton office weekly, adding in leaf cleanup as part of their duties. Post-emergent herbicide applications and general weeding/bed cleanups were made in Bluffton Road/Indian Village Blvd, Camp Canine, Franklin, Hamilton, Indian Village Park/Sears Pavilion, Irishtown, Kreager, Lawton, McCulloch, Northside, Packard, PSI OTE pavilions, Salomon, Shoaff, Swinney, and



Weisser. All annuals were pulled from the Swinney Letter bed; staff did annual landscape maintenance at the Thomas Nature Sanctuary; applied fertilizer and weed control to the turf at both Northside and the Lawton Offices; sheared the Yews at the Northside office, and pruned all trees and shrubs around the Lawton playground to improve visibility and safety. Staff spent part of the month on stump grinding, turf repairs, and landscape bed reductions in the Franke Day Camp area. Due to drought, areas that had been recently seeded at Swinney and Franke Day camp were watered frequently, along with the Magnolias at the Bluffton Road letter bed. Bulbs were installed under the Magnolias this month to finish that project. Mulching projects this month included Foster West and Buckner Park.

- Irrigation winterization began in all parks.
- Landscape staff moved all the Fort Zoo tropical plants back to the greenhouse for the winter season.
- The 24th annual Great Tree Canopy Comeback was held on October 18th this year. Staff assisted volunteers in planting 50 trees at Northside Park and helped remove invasive shrubs at the Swinney Park on the banks of the St. Mary's River.
- Staff completed Workplace Violence training, Harassment training, Stormwater training, Chainsaw/Chipper training, Chainsaw Maintenance training, and General Safety training.
- Two seasonal staff team members worked their last day of the season this month.
- Pride Landcare, Mow Baby Mow, and MJK Lawncare continued with their annual mow maintenance contract. They began leaf pickups in selective parks per contract.
- Lawnganics continued with their annual turf fertilization and weed control contract.
- Aquatic Management continued to maintain the Thomas Property pond, spraying for algae and submerged weeds as per contract.
- Seven diseased Crab Apple trees were removed and replaced with Red Bud trees at Indian Village Park.



Riparian Management Report- October 2025

- Maintained the Guldlin boat ramp and all dock systems, which include cleaning and removing debris on or around the docks.
- Removed approximately 200 pounds of litter in and around the rivers.
- Began prepping work before having invasive shrubs mown during the new winter schedule, which includes marking important trees and clearing/marketing hazards.
- Began working on large woody debris on the upper Saint Joseph River.
- Hosted a volunteer clean-up at Foster Park YMCA. Total of 7 people for 4 hours of work, 28 volunteer hours. Approximately 2.5 tons of debris were removed.
- Cleared a new dock storage area at REA for incoming docks for improved efficiency and maintenance.
- Team completed the OSHA 30-hour training course.
- The Supervisor began participating in the Lead Boldly management training.



Forestry Report- October 2025

- This year's fall tree planting project is underway. We anticipate all trees being planted by January 1st.
- Grady Sprunger has accepted the vacant *Ground Person – Entry-level* position. We are excited to welcome him to the forestry team on November 1st.
- This year's winter street tree removal project bids were accepted, and contracts have been awarded. In total, 93 trees and the resulting stumps will be removed by 3 different local contractors over the next 150 days. Offering the project as 10 separate small lists has proven effective in attracting smaller, local contractors and favorable pricing. This leaves 413 high-priority tree removals for in-house crews to address.
- Graber Lumber Company completed the removal of woody debris from the RAE Property dump site. This partnership has been in place since about 2011 and continues to benefit all parties involved.



- In October, Forestry crews completed 24 out-of-cycle tree maintenance requests. Examples of these requests include tree limb elevation to facilitate buses, removal of limbs touching homes, clearing street lighting and signage, and removal of dead limbs.
- In-house crews removed 109 trees in October. 11 of these were the result of damage caused by storms. 12 were located within the parks, and 3 were the result of vehicle damage.
- Completed 5 inspections/appraisals of trees that had been damaged by vehicles. In total, these incidents resulted in \$2,9250.00 in damages.
- Crews responded to and cleared 30 storm-related broken/fallen/hanging limbs.
- Responded to and closed 87 requests from the 311 Call Center this month.

Kathryn Pargmann – Manager, Lead of Marketing

- + www.RiverfrontFW.org had 7,906 hits to the site this month, and the Promenade Park link had 521 hits. The Rental link continues to be a popular source of information. A total of 111 hits in October.
- + The Marketing Team focuses on various marketing tasks associated with the release of the Winter Fun Times on Nov. 5.
- + Held a successful Café Flora Press Conference on October 30.
- + **Web Statistics:** Active Users: 17,496 Event Counts:119,329
- + 40 Graphic Design projects completed.
- + Conservatory Sponsorship Brochure/Showcase graphics produced.
- + Completed application for LSA Grant (\$15,000) as well as an application for Forestry funding for Ash Borer treatment (\$15,000).
- + Completed grant application for Hanna Homestead funding (\$275,000 if awarded 1st place, smaller amounts also available).
- + Sent initial eblast for area businesses to promote Winterval sponsorship opportunities.
- + Social media promotions for: Foster Park Entrance Presentation, GTCC Call for Volunteers, Extended Travel Trips, and Youth Center Full-Time Job.
- + Arranged for 10 media interviews with select staff promoting October events.
- + October Media Mentions: 66.
- + Over 5,000 Instagram Followers on our Fort Wayne Parks channel now.
- + Social Media Totals for October:

FB Followers	107,110
FB Viewers	445,541
X (formerly Twitter) Followers	13,951
Instagram Followers	30,419

Note: all statistics as of 10/29/2025.

Gary Whitacre – Manager, Golf Operations

✚ 2025 has been a challenging year for the golf courses. Extreme weather conditions coupled with equipment breakdowns have had a large effect on the quality of our product, and it reflects in the revenue numbers.

✚ Below are the year-over-year comparisons for October, as well as year-to-date totals:

<u>OCTOBER</u>	<u>FOSTER</u>	<u>MCMILLEN</u>	<u>SHOAF</u>
2024 REVENUE	\$35,086.75	\$34,368.25	\$48,758.25
2025 REVENUE	\$22,096	\$29802.75	\$49,832.75
YTD 2024	\$434,545	\$342,066.75	\$652,913.05
YTD 2025	\$385,556.50	\$342,525.50	\$621,129.50

✚ All three golf courses will close at the conclusion of play on Veteran's Day, Tuesday, November 11. As is our custom, Veterans will pay no green fees on this day. Regardless of the weather, this will be the final day of the year. Grounds maintenance will use the remaining time after closing to aerify the greens and set the course up for next season.

✚ The golf carts have made it through the season relatively ok, with minimal maintenance necessary. We are acquiring a number of quotes for golf carts in an effort to build the fleet to 110 units (currently 93), all the while modernizing the fleet. Currently, 40 of our carts are 2015 model year, and these are approaching the end of their useful lifetime.

✚ The range cart situation is also of concern. The main cart used for range picking at Shoaff experienced engine failure in October and is currently at Lawton being evaluated. The backup cart will finish the season, but is at the end of its useful life. Being able to retrieve balls from the range is a high priority, especially at Shoaff.

✚ Along these lines, an automated range system is being looked into. It appears the initial cost would pay for itself in equipment and labor savings in under 5 years, and may very well be the best alternative moving forward.

✚ Work on the Deep Rock Tunnel project at Foster is completed, and the rebuilding of the 7th green complex is nearing completion. The golf course will start next year the same way it ends this year, with the nines reversed and one provisional green in play. Hopefully, by mid-next season, all 18 holes will be available as normal and the nines will switch back.



- ✚ Maintenance work will begin in earnest as the courses close, as all greens will be aerified aggressively to try and repair weather and situational damage from this year. We expect to hit the ground running next year and be in good shape as we progress into 2026.

Dawn Ritchie – Greenway & Trails Manager



- ✚ We had a Legislative Round Table on 10/28 to promote the 82-mile Poka-Bache Connector to our state and federal delegations in hopes that they will help us secure funding for the remaining 30 miles. We had 32 attendees, including representatives from the Governor's Office, Senator Young, Senator Banks, and Rep. Stutzman. We also had 1 State Senator and 4 State Reps., plus a dozen more elected officials. Unfortunately, no elected official from the City of Fort Wayne attended. We provided an Impact Report to the attendees and had a good discussion on the trail and how they can help. We also got really good feedback from the U.S. Department of Transportation that we scored really high on our BUILD grant application to fund the engineering for the remaining 30 miles of the 82-mile-long trail. We will resubmit early next year and hopefully secure the \$6 million grant in 2026.
- ✚ We continue blowing leaves off the trails. Crack sealing should be complete except for the Maumee Pathway. We've just hired T-E, Incorporated to fix three small asphalt sections on the trails.
- ✚ We recently completed the nearly 5-mile-long Covington Road Trail from West Hamilton Road to Getz Road. We started working on the project in 2006, and 8 phases later, it's complete!
- ✚ We are currently seeking nominations for the 2025 Trail Volunteer of the Year award.
- ✚ The County just had a ribbon-cutting on 10/29 for the Bass Road project, which included a 4.5-mile-long trail connecting neighborhoods to Buckner Park. Allen County will have a ribbon-cutting for the section of the 8-mile-long Cedar Creek Parks Trail that connects to North Metea Park along Hursh Road on 11/10 at 3 p.m. Fort Wayne Trails will hold a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Covington Road Trail hub on 11/11 at 5 p.m. to recognize the donor, Jan Venderley. The City will have a ribbon-cutting in early December for the Pufferbelly Trail: Washington Center to Ice Way/Lima.
- ✚ November 17th is National Take a Hike Day. We'll lead a hike on the Pufferbelly Trail starting at the Salomon Farm Park and the Parkview YMCA.
- ✚ We recently attended a planning meeting in Waynedale to discuss trails and other public works projects planned for the area.
- ✚ Board of Works, Redevelopment, and City Council all approved the \$9 million Illinois Road and Trail Improvements. So, the contractor, Bunn Excavating, will receive the Notice to Proceed soon. The 2-mile trail will stretch from Rockhill Park to the intersection of Illinois and Getz. Completion will be conducted in the Fall of 2027.



Division News and Media Coverage:

[October 2025 – Parks & Recreation](#)

[Fort Wayne Monthly - October 2025](#)

<https://www.nxtbook.com/nrpa/ParksRecreationMagazine/november-2025/index.php#/p/1>

WPTA, Public meeting to be held next week for future project on N. Clinton St.

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2025/11/03/fort-wayne-allen-county-officials-holding-public-meeting-north-clinton-street-improvements-project/>

WBCL, Leaf collection has started

<https://www.wbcl.org/news/fort-wayne-leaf-collection-starting-nov.-3>

WANE, Residents concerned about Google

<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/residents-gather-for-town-hall-ahead-of-idem-air-permit-public-hearing/>

FW Bus Weekly, Public meeting to be held next week for future project on N. Clinton St.

https://www.fwbusiness.com/news/article_cad8782d-77b7-41a9-8c66-cbaa7dec2047.html

WANE, City Clerk update

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/allen-county-democratic-party-calls-on-city-clerk-to-resign-over-conflicts-of-interest/>

WPTA, Southeast Fort Wayne residents react to city budget cuts

[Southeast side community members react to next year's city budget cuts](#)

WANE, NE Ind. and Indy named in study as best places to put a casino

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/northeast-indiana-and-indianapolis-named-in-study-as-best-places-to-put-a-casino/>

WANE, Café Flora opens at the Conservatory

<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/warm-up-at-new-foellinger-freimann-botanical-conservatory-cafe-flora/>

WPTA, Reaction to passage of 2026 city budget

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2025/10/29/city-leaders-react-cuts-after-contentious-city-council-budget-meeting/>

WFFT, Illinois Rd. project update

https://www.wfft.com/news/9-million-illinois-road-project-to-improve-safety-and-add-new-trail/article_119bdc28-c628-4ae9-abe1-8ea861f94791.html

WOWO, Russ Jehl on budget passage

<https://wowo.com/fort-waynes-2026-budget-council-president-russ-jehl-explains-the-8-million-in-cuts/>



City TV, News Around Town program – Features on Fairfax Avenue project ribbon cutting/Bombardier announcement/Meridian Health ribbon cutting

<https://acpl.viebit.com/watch?hash=bezeglFRuaavv4rm>

WELT, Investing in the City of Fort Wayne program with interview with FWFD's Jonathan Flickinger

<https://soundcloud.com/mayorfw/fort-wayne-fire-department>

FW Bus Weekly, Op-ed by GFW's John Urbahns – Debates are good – Results are better

https://www.fwbusiness.com/opinion/article_68588281-6c16-4595-9f8e-2174108c0dfa.html

FW Bus Weekly, National award for City Utilities

https://www.fwbusiness.com/news/article_cf48ee96-5cc8-400d-92bd-816e0cea090c.html

WANE, Budget cuts proposed

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/fort-wayne-budget-more-than-17m-proposed-in-cuts/>

WPTA, Councilman Chambers disagrees with proposed budget cuts

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2025/10/28/shortsighted-fort-wayne-councilwoman-decries-proposed-2026-budget-cuts/>

WPTA, Unhoused and unseen – A report on homelessness

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2025/10/27/21investigates-unhoused-unseen/>

WANE, City's Hope Through Heat program

[City of Fort Wayne opens applications to replace faulty heating systems for qualifying homeowners | WANE 15](#)

WANE, Leaf collection to begin soon

<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/what-to-know-about-leaf-collection-in-fort-wayne/>

WANE, Illinois Rd. project

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/illinois-road-trail-funding-preliminarily-approved-by-city-council/>

WANE, How social media is changing crime response in Fort Wayne

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/from-screens-to-scenes-how-social-media-is-changing-crime-response-in-fort-wayne/>

WPTA, City launches new website with interactive map of traffic-related events

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2025/10/22/city-fort-wayne-launches-new-website-with-interactive-map-traffic-related-events/>

WFFT, Trec the Fort offers real-time traffic alerts and detours

https://www.wfft.com/news/fort-waynes-trecthefort-site-offers-real-time-traffic-alerts-and-detours/article_ed281040-69c3-46dc-a481-a5ab63ce01e7.html



City TV, Mayor Tucker's City Beat program

<https://acpl.viebit.com/watch?hash=XEuI4l0XMfCuO9ft>

WPTA, Leaf collection 2025

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2025/10/07/city-fort-wayne-lays-out-2025-leaf-collection-schedule/>

WPTA, City Council recap – Illinois Rd. project

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2025/10/22/fort-wayne-city-council-preliminarily-approves-9m-illinois-road-trail-project/>

WANE, 2026 budget – Preparing for final act behind the scenes

<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/fort-wayne-2026-budget-preparing-for-final-act-behind-the-scenes/>

WANE, Illinois Road project gets committee approval at City Council

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/illinois-road-trail-funding-preliminarily-approved-by-city-council/>

WFFT, Unified fire district plan update

https://www.wfft.com/news/allen-county-commissioners-to-discuss-unified-fire-district-plan-friday/article_c624a54e-60a0-4218-80ac-2f4d4a5d8034.html

WANE, Pufferbelly Trail update

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/golden-spike-of-pufferbelly-trail-almost-completed/>

Indiana Capital Chronicle, Utility panel reviewing applications for 3 open seats

<https://indianacapitalchronicle.com/briefs/22-applicants-to-be-interviewed-next-week-for-indiana-utility-regulator-openings/>

WPTA, Passenger rail update

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2025/10/17/city-leaders-regional-partners-raise-money-restore-passenger-rail-fort-wayne/>

WFFT, Fort Wayne celebrates Fairfax Avenue upgrade in Mount Vernon Park Neighborhood

https://www.wfft.com/news/fort-wayne-celebrates-fairfax-avenue-upgrades-in-mount-vernon-park/article_500fbf90-00cd-4b63-9120-7721e77e3099.html

WANE, Conservatory feature

<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/enjoy-the-sights-of-october-at-the-botanical-conservatory/>

AVAILABLE NOW!

Here are some exciting upcoming events and programs that your organization can sponsor this year!



SANTA'S WORKSHOP

Wednesday **NOV 26**

Community Center, 233 W. Main St.

4:30
until
7:30

**Make-n-Take Crafts Refreshments "Buddy" the Elf
Christmas Shopping Lighting at 6:10 p.m.**

Donate a new or gently used bear for a chance to win a giant elf bear.



Headwaters Ice Rink

Clinton & Superior • 427-6000

Opens for the Season in November!

For extended holiday hours please visit fortwayneparks.org





The Headwaters Park Ice Rink is accepting dasher board sponsors for the 2025-26 season. You can see your business featured on the boards surrounding the rink all season long!



Contact us at 260-427-6000 to learn more about joining the wintry fun!



Christmas on the Farm

SAT DEC 6 1-5 PM
Salomon Farm Park, 817 W. Dupont Rd.

- Santa Claus**
- Farm Animals**
- Kids Crafts**
- Holiday Music**
- Christmas Shopping**
- Horse-Drawn Wagon Rides**





FIND YOUR AUDIENCE WITH FORT WAYNE PARKS AND RECREATION!

Our team offers safe and fun recreation programs through the support of donors, charitable organizations, and sponsors like you!

With Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation, you can find sponsorship opportunities that allow you to support your community while reaching the people you're seeking.

