

B-CLEAR DATA SET SPOTLIGHT: PUBLIC CONTRACTS

“B-Clear” is short for *Bloomington Clear*, a web-based, one-stop site for data about the City of Bloomington, its services, and its neighborhoods. The site is open to the public and includes over 200 data sets about everything from park trails to police calls to paving schedules. This month, I’m spotlighting the *Public Contracts* data set. Who supplies the uniforms for Parks & Recreation staff? What did Neidigh Construction charge to build the new club house at Cascades Golf Course? How much did we pay for monument restoration in Rosehill Cemetery? It’s all here!



FIND OUT MORE:

<https://data.bloomington.in.gov/dataset/bloomington-public-contracts>

UREPORT: ON LINE REPORTING AND HELP REQUESTS

See a swing set at the park that needs to be repaired? A sidewalk that’s blocked by overgrown vegetation? A street light that’s not working? A pothole that needs to be patched? Have an idea for a program that you’d like to share with the Parks Department? Have a compliment for a city staff member? **Use UReport!**

This online portal is a quick, easy way to communicate with the city about non-emergency issues like those above. The site is easy to navigate with drop-down menus, open fields to record your comments, and even a place to upload your photos of whatever needs attention. When you submit your reports or comment to the City it will be sent to the appropriate department and you’ll hear back from the staff who are working on the issue (generally within a day or two). You may also send an e-mail directly to info@bloomington.in.gov or call the City at 812.349.3400, (but I’ve found UReport to be a lot faster!)

FIND OUT MORE:

<https://bloomington.in.gov/ureport-about>

PARKS & RECREATION FIVE-YEAR MASTER PLANNING PROCESS COMMUNITY-WIDE SURVEY

As a first step in updating its *Master Plan*, the Department of Parks & Recreation is gathering feedback through an online community-wide survey. [Please see the link below or, if you prefer a paper copy, you can pick one up at the Twin Lakes Recreation Center, Cascades Golf Course pro shop, Banneker Community Center, and the Parks and Recreation office in City Hall.] Your input will help inform the department’s *2021-2025 Master Plan*, scheduled for completion by January 2021. For this first step, the goal is to collect at least 600 survey responses by September 18th. The master planning process will also include additional opportunities for public engagement including stakeholder meetings, public meetings, and pop-up input events.

Since 1996, the department has used a master planning process as a way of integrating community needs and fulfilling eligibility requirements for national accreditation and grant awards. The department has twice (in 2018 and 2007) been awarded the National Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management by the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration, in partnership with the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA).



FIND OUT MORE AND COMPLETE THE SURVEY:

bloomington.in.gov/parks



PROPOSED LOCAL INCOME TAX INCREASE

What is a "LIT"?

The Local Income Tax or "LIT" is one of the few revenue sources beyond the state property tax allocations that is available to local government units to help fund their operations. This tax is applied to the Indiana Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) of the residents of a county that has imposed the tax. The Maximum Rate is 2.5% with a few exceptions. The LIT has three separate components: Certified Shares, Economic Development (EDIT) and Public Safety (PS LIT).

What is being proposed?

Mayor Hamilton is proposing a 0.25% increase in the Local Income Tax. If approved, this LIT would take our total LIT rate from 1.345% to 1.595%. For the individual taxpayer, this amounts to an increase of about \$25 annually for every \$10,000 in taxable income.

FIND OUT MORE:

<https://bloomington.in.gov/recoverforward>
[Plus tune in to the City Council meeting on Wednesday, September 9 at 6:30 pm on CATS (or view the archived video later) to hear the Mayor's presentation and Council questions.]

BLOOMINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT



In mid-August, the City of Bloomington released a report by The Novak Consulting Group that assessed the Bloomington Police Department and made several recommendations. Among them: Increasing the number of sworn officers, and expanding the number of Neighborhood Resource Officers and Social Workers.

No doubt many of you have heard the debate swirling around funding/defunding BPD. This report is an important piece of the puzzle as we try to make these budget decisions.

FIND OUT MORE: *(I know. Sorry it's such a long link!)*
<https://bloomington.in.gov/sites/default/files/2020-08/Bloomington%20Police%20Assessment%20Report%20Final%20August%202020.pdf>

GET READY TO VOTE!

EARLY VOTING STARTS: TUESDAY OCT 6TH
ELECTION DAY: TUESDAY, NOV 3RD

Check On Your Voter Registration Status

Go to indianavoters.com, scroll down and click on the blue box labeled "Check Voting Status". Enter your name, birthdate, and county and click submit.

You'll be able to find out immediately whether or not you have an up-to-date voter registration on file.



Register If You Need To (and pay attention to deadlines!)

To register online for the next election, your voter application must be submitted not later than 11:59p.m. (local prevailing time), Monday, October 5, 2020. If you choose to register in person instead, your paper voter registration form must be hand delivered to Election Central (401 W Seventh Street across from Johnson Creamery) before close of business on Monday, October 5, 2020. Voter registration forms may be *mailed* to the county voter registration office or the Indiana Election Division, but the envelope must be postmarked on or before October 5, 2020.

Request an Absentee Ballot if You're Eligible

Anyone 65 or older may request an absentee ballot with no further reason required. To find out more about other reasons for eligibility and to request your absentee ballot, visit indianavoters.com.

PILOT PROJECT: LOWER CASCADES SO WHAT'S THE LATEST?

Two groups ultimately have the authority to decide what to do with the road in Lower Cascades: (1) the **Board of Park Commissioners** (BPC), and (2) the **Board Public Works** (BPW). **On Tuesday, September 1st, at the request of Parks staff, the BPW voted to extend the pilot period for road closure to June 30, 2021.** The issue does not come before City Council, and so I don't have a vote. What I CAN do is help as many people as possible take advantage of opportunities to share their views.

SHARE YOUR OPINION:

<https://bloomington.in.gov/parks/parks/lower-cascades>
Complete the new survey when available and share your thoughts during public comment at the meetings of the BPW and BPC.