

New Historic Homes Roadshow Episode;  
Police Welcome New Officer

# River City Briefs

December 5, 2025

The city of Independence, Oregon | 555 S Main St, Independence, OR 97351 | 503 838-1212

Para La Versión En Español

## 60-Second Council - November 25, 2025



On November 25, the Independence City Council covered several important topics during a full agenda:

-The meeting opened with public comments, including a reminder from Parks Board Chair Erin McIntosh that there are vacancies on the Parks Board, as well as openings on several other Boards and Commissions. Those interested in serving are encouraged to apply before the next round

of appointments on January 13, 2026.

-The city council received an update from grant-funded financial consultants reviewing the city's financial position. After discussion, the consultants confirmed that changes made under the current management team have aligned the city more closely with state law and best practices, and that progress is moving in the right direction.

-Finance Director Emeritus Rob Moody then presented a Financial Recovery Report outlining state, national, and historical influences on the city's finances and offering options for Council to consider.

-The council created a new Ad Hoc Committee for Community Services and Parks Sustainability. Congratulations to the Mayor's appointees: Jasper Smith, Vicki McCubbin, Nathan Christiansen, Erin Seiler, and Bradley Karkanen.

-The public hearing on the revised mobile vending ordinance remains open and will continue at the December 9, 2025 Council meeting.

For more details, visit the City of Independence website.

[Watch Video Here](#)

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## Five Things to Know from the City's Financial Recovery Report

# INDEPENDENCE FINANCIAL RECOVERY REPORT 2025



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## INDEPENDENCE

*Oregon's Story Begins Here*

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### **Our Budget Reality**

The city of Independence, like many communities across Oregon, is facing a long-term budget challenge. The cost of providing services is rising faster than the revenue available to fund them, leaving our General Fund at its lowest point in years. Without action, this gap will continue to grow.

### **Why It's Happening**

Oregon's property tax system limits annual growth to 3%, while the cost of running the city—staffing, equipment, maintenance, and operations—continues to rise at 7–9% each year. This mismatch creates a structural deficit. If no changes are made, the city's General Fund reserves could be depleted as early as the 2028–29 fiscal year.

### **What We've Already Done**

The city has already taken several steps to slow the decline of the General Fund, including:

- Reducing Library and Museum hours.
- Cutting staff in multiple affected departments.
- Closing City Hall on Fridays to save on operating costs.

- Implementing a Public Safety Fee.
- Updating service fees to more accurately reflect costs.
- Listing city-owned properties for sale to rebuild reserves.

These actions have helped, but they are not enough to fully resolve the structural deficit.

### **Path Forward**

The city is actively pursuing long-term strategies to stabilize the general fund and protect services. These efforts include:

- Working with HUD experts who provided financial analysis and a forecasting model to guide spending decisions.
- Investing in economic development to grow long-term revenue.
- Pursuing grants wherever possible to support projects.
- Evaluating programs and services to ensure resources are used efficiently.
- These steps are designed to create a stronger, more sustainable financial foundation for the future.

### **Options We May Need to Consider**

To protect city services, several options are under consideration:

- Rebuild the General Fund using one-time revenue from property sales.
- Exploring a 5-year levy or fee to support Community Services.
- Determining which services are "essential" and which may need to be scaled back.

We're committed to transparency, careful planning, and keeping residents informed every step of the way. Read the full Financial Recovery Report by clicking the button below.

[Read Full Report Here](#)

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**Inside Independence's Historic Sloper House**



Episode 2 of Historic Homes Roadshow takes you inside the Sloper House, a 1914 home connected to two of Independence's most influential early families. Community Planner Fred Evander and Museum Director Amy Christensen share how the Sloper family helped shape the city's identity, from operating early mills and pioneering hop farming to running a downtown hardware store that became a hub for community events for decades.

The episode also explores the remarkable life of Prushia Sloper, who went on to become Independence's first woman City Councilor, as well as the era-specific architecture and changing streetscape of South Main over the past century.

[Watch Video Here](#)

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## Independence Police Welcome New Officer



We're thrilled to welcome Officer Bella Federico to the Independence Police Department!

From a young age, Bella knew that she wanted a career helping people and giving back to her community. After earning a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Western Oregon University, Bella began her law enforcement career on patrol with Marion County, where she discovered her passion for serving the community on the front lines.

In her free time, Bella enjoys camping, riding quads, and spending time with family and friends.

Bella says she feels blessed to join IPD and looks forward to building friendships with everyone in our community. Congratulations, Officer Federico!

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**Help Prevent Street Flooding During Leaf Pickup**



**REMINDER:** Please leave about 6 inches to a foot of space between your leaf pile and the curb. When leaves are pushed directly against the curb, rainwater can't drain properly and pooling occurs. During heavy storms, these leaves can wash down the street and block storm drains, creating large puddles and hazardous conditions.

Additionally, a quick reminder that only leaves should be placed in the street for pickup. Grass clippings, branches, and other yard debris can trap water and worsen flooding.

Thank you for helping keep our community safe and our streets clear!

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## Upcoming Public Hearings



The city of Independence encourages residents to stay informed and take part in upcoming public hearings that help guide local impacts:

**December 9, 2025** - Annexation and Redesignation/Rezone of 12.4 Portion of 6675 Corvallis Road, and Neighboring Southern Pacific Railroad Right-of-Way - City Council - 6:30 pm

**January 13, 2025** - Consideration of Changes to Standards for Single Room Occupancies and Other Requirements to address recent State Legislation - City Council - 6:30 pm

[Learn More Here](#)

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**Upcoming Museum Event**



# HERITAGE MUSEUM PRESENTS WINTER SPEAKER SERIES

DECEMBER FEATURED SPEAKER

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11<sup>TH</sup> AT 6:00 PM**  
@ THE VALKYRIE WINE TAVERN



## MARILYN MORTON

**GHOSTS OF CHRISTMAS PAST: INDEPENDENCE HAUNTINGS**

Join us as local historian Marilyn Morton shares chilling and charming ghost stories from Independence's past.

Just as Dickens' A Christmas Carol reminds us, the holidays are a perfect time for a good ghost story!

### SUGGESTED DONATION AT THE DOOR

Drinks are not included in your donation  
All proceeds support the Heritage Museum Society

JOIN US MONTHLY THROUGH FEBRUARY FOR MORE  
ENGAGING SPEAKERS AT THE VALKYRIE WINE TAVERN  
301 S MAIN ST, INDEPENDENCE

-No minors or outside drinks permitted-

2C1C December 2025



# Ella Curran Food Bank



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