

City Council Meeting Highlights; Economic Development Discussions in Polk County

River City Briefs

April 24, 2026

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

Para La Versión En Español

Budget Committee Meeting Recap



On April 22, Independence held its first Budget Committee meeting to review and discuss the proposed budget for fiscal year 2026-27. At the meeting, Miranda Garrison was re-appointed chair by unanimous vote of the committee. Visitors had the opportunity to give public comment, and several community members attended to speak in favor of **a proposed \$20 fee to support the operations of community services, including the Library, Museum, and Parks.** If adopted, this fee would appear as a dedicated new line item and would be used exclusively to fund those services.

The budget review process kicked off with a presentation of Public Works funds by Director Gerald Fisher. Director Fisher discussed work plans for the upcoming year, including the Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrade, the Chestnut Street Bridge project, Main and Polk Street intersection improvements, the Corvallis Road Waterline project, and the Surface Water Treatment Plant project, among others. The facilities budget for fiscal year 2026-27 includes the purchase of two vehicles for the Police Department, following a one-year deferral of replacement due to budgetary constraints.

Director Fisher also shared plans for early debt retirement in the Water fund, including a 2016 bond that funded infrastructure improvements and a bank loan for water rights, which will save the city \$110,000 in interest.

The next meeting of the Budget Committee will be held next Wednesday, April 29, 2026, during which the committee will discuss revenue and the city's General Fund.

[Read Full Budget Here](#)

Touch-a-Truck Event Returns



PRESENTED BY SEDCOR & THE CITY OF INDEPENDENCE

FREE EVENT

RIVERVIEW PARK IN INDY

MAY 9

9AM-2PM

SEE | TOUCH | HONK

SATURDAY, MAY 9, 2026 - 9:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.

RIVERVIEW PARK @ 50 C STREET, INDEPENDENCE

The poster features a central image of a yellow dump truck with the text "Touch-a-Truck" arched above it and "Riverview Park Independence" below it. To the left are logos for the City of Independence and SEDCOR. To the right are balloons with the date and time. The bottom of the poster is framed by two orange and white traffic cones. The entire poster is set against a background of black and yellow diagonal stripes.

Rev up your engines, Touch-a-Truck is rolling back into Riverview Park on Saturday, May 9, 2026, from 9 AM-2 PM for a day packed with family fun and excitement. Get up close and personal with all your favorite vehicles, from construction behemoths to emergency service transports. As part of the festivities, a helicopter will land in Riverview Park—stay tuned for the

timing! We'll be offering a quiet hour sensory (no horns or sirens) from 1-2 PM for anyone with sensory sensitivities. The **The Monmouth Independence Family YMCA** is also returning with their free Mother's Day card making station!

Admission is FREE, but we encourage you to bring food donations for the **Ella Curran Food Bank**.

Thank you to our partners at **SEDCOR** for making this event possible.

[Learn More Here](#)

60-Second Council - April 14, 2026 Meeting



City Council Meeting Recap

On April 14, the city council covered a range of updates and actions impacting the community:

-The mayor shared that Congresswoman Salinas has included the Regional Water Treatment Plant in a request for \$5 million through the Community Project Funding process. Final award amounts may vary, but the project's inclusion is an important step.

-During the city manager's report, updates included MI Trolley ridership, with nearly 134,000 riders from March of last year to March of this year, and a reminder that the Independence Civic Center is serving as a donation site for the Les Schwab Diaper Drive through the end of April.

-The council adopted ordinances updating fence requirements for governmental uses and approved the Parks System Master Plan.

-The council heard a presentation on a proposed solid waste rate increase and approved a 3.5% adjustment.

-The council approved a liquor license for Golden Hop Saloon under new ownership, adopted a budget adjustment, and appointed Christine Primrose to the Museum Advisory Board.

The next meeting is a work session on April 28, 2026, with the next regular business meeting on May 12, 2026. For more information, visit the city of Independence website.

[Watch Video Here](#)

Regional Leaders Discuss Pathways for Economic Development in Polk County



Earlier this week, city staff and Mayor Schwarzler participated in a Polk County economic development roundtable with Oregon's Chief Prosperity Officer, Tim Knopp. This new state-level role is focused on advancing the Governor's priorities to grow GDP, create family-wage jobs, and support Oregon businesses.

The discussion ranged from city budget constraints to improving industrial sites to attract industry and support job creation better. We look forward to

continuing these conversations with state partners to strengthen the economic future of our city and region.

Walking Tour Highlights State-Funded Transportation Progress



Earlier this week, city staff welcomed officials from the Oregon Department of Transportation for a walking tour through Independence, offering a firsthand look at how state investments have shaped, and continue to form, our community on the ground. Moving from site to site, the group saw how these projects connect neighborhoods, improve safety, and lay the groundwork for future growth.

State funding has supported efforts across the city, including our Safe Routes to School project, the F Street bridge, the South Riverfront pathway plan, the Southwest Independence Concept Plan area, the Central Talmadge Plan area, and the Independence Landing Project.

We appreciate our continued partnership with the state and thank them for investing in projects that are making a tangible difference for Independence residents today and into the future.

Explore New Exhibit at the Heritage Museum

ALL ABOARD

Stories from the Rails

A new exhibit exploring railroad history
in Independence and Monmouth



*Opening April 27th in the
Independence Public Library Lobby*

In Memory of Ken Fetters

whose craftsmanship, friendship, and generous spirit helped
bring this exhibit and many others to life

Join the Independence Police Department

NOW HIRING

POLICE OFFICER

Integrity
Excellence
Courage
Compassion

Join our team today!



Want to make a difference by serving your community?

The city of Independence is seeking a dedicated and community-focused Police Officer to join our team. This role involves patrolling city streets to maintain safety, investigating crimes, enforcing laws, and collaborating with community members to address the root causes of crime. This position offers a dynamic work environment, requiring excellent problem-solving, communication, and interpersonal skills, as well as a commitment to public safety and community well-being.

Join our team today!

[Apply Here](#)

Help Stitch Together Independence's Story



Our Community Story STITCHED TOGETHER

A Community Quilt Project to Celebrate America250

WHAT IS IT?

Create one 8.5" x 8.5" quilt square that reflects who you are or what it means to you to call Independence or Monmouth home. Your square will become part of a community quilt installation displayed across Independence and Monmouth.

Feel free to use your own fabric. Tell your story with stitching, collage, fabric markers, photo transfers... Be creative!

WHERE DO I GET A QUILT BLOCK?

Starting April 2 you can pick up a quilt block kit at:

- Independence Heritage Museum
- Independence Public Library
- Monmouth Public Library
- Ash Creek Art Center



WHEN ARE BLOCKS DUE?

Return your block, along with the information sheet included in the kit, to the location where you picked it up by: **MAY 30**



WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Quilt panels will be created and displayed Summer 2026 at:

- Civic Centers
- WOU's Campus
- Public Libraries
- Independence Heritage Museum

Panels will become part of the Heritage Museum collection.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS:

Rotary
Club of Monmouth-Independence



QUESTIONS?
Contact the Heritage Museum
orheritage@ci.independence.or.us
503.838.4989

Independence Bridge Repair Open House

County Commissioners

Colm Willis, Chair
Kevin Cameron
Danielle Bethell

Chief Administrative Officer
Jan Fritz



Director
Brian Nicholas, PE

Deputy Director
Dennis Mansfield

MARION COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS

Willamette River Independence Bridge Repair

Marion County, in coordination with Polk County and the City of Independence, is working to keep people, vehicles, and trucks flowing across the Willamette River.

The Independence Bridge, designed in 1947 and opened in 1951, is the only bridge over the Willamette River between Albany and Salem and is currently posted with weight restrictions. It connects Salem, Independence-Monmouth, and Western Oregon University, and serves as the sole truck route into a major agricultural area due to height restrictions on routes from other crossings.

This project will strengthen and rehabilitate the Independence Bridge over the Willamette River to eliminate weight restrictions, repair safety features, extend its lifespan, and lower future maintenance costs. Work includes reinforcing girders and beams, fixing bridge rails, removing rust, applying protective coating, replacing deck joints, and replacing bearings.

Bridge work is broken into two phases: **Phase 1: Preliminary Engineering: 2025-2026**, and **Phase 2: Construction: 2027**

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE PLANNED REPAIRS
COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE
Tuesday, May 12, 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.
Independence Civic Center
555 Main St
Family friendly with light refreshments
The facility is accessible to people with disabilities
For additional information and project updates, please visit:
<https://www.co.marion.or.us/PW/Engineering/Projects/Pages/5789Loading.aspx>
or contact the Project Manager:
Steve Preszler, Marion County Project Engineer
SPreszler@co.marion.or.us
503-588-5036



You may request this in another language, request a translator, or other accommodation by contacting Maribel Pena Leon at 503-588-5036, or email MPenaLeon@co.marion.or.us a minimum of two working days prior to the meeting.

Puede solicitar este comunicado en otro idioma, solicitar un traductor, u otras peticiones. Para hacerlo favor de ponerse en contacto con Maribel Pena Leon al 503-588-5036, por lo menos 2 días de trabajo hábiles antes de la fecha de la reunión.

5155 Silverton Road NE Salem, OR 97305 • www.co.marion.or.us • Phone: (503) 588-5036 • FAX: (503) 588-7970

[Learn More Here](#)

This Newsletter Brought to you by

INDEPENDENCE

Oregon's Story Begins Here



City of Independence | 555 S Main St | Independence, OR 97351 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!