



City of Independence

Agenda

City Council Meeting

Tuesday, March 25, 2025 @ 6:30 PM

Civic Center - Event Center

Page

1. CALL TO ORDER - WORK SESSION (Event Center)
Note: This is a Work Session of the City Council. The general public is invited to attend and view the meeting; typically, no public input or comment will be received.
2. ROLL CALL
3. WORK SESSIONS
 - 3.1. Joint Work Session - City Council and Planning Commission, FEMA PICM (*Irvine*)
 - 3.2. Work Session - City Council, Budget Update (*Moody, West*) 3 - 50
[Answers to Questions from Feb 25 Work Session](#)
[Funding Sources and Community Feedback](#)
 - 3.3. Work Session - City Council, Urban Renewal Agency Financial/Budget Update (*Moody, West*)
4. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting Attendance Information:

The City Council will hold this meeting in-person in City Hall Council Chambers, via video conference (Zoom) or by phone. Meetings are also live-streamed on the City's YouTube channel at: <https://www.youtube.com/c/CityofIndependenceOR>.

- **To attend in person**, the City Hall address is 555 S. Main St.
- **For Zoom login** visit:
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86216457021?pwd=FznefBGs8EKL77BOaS8bIEG9RIYamX.1>
- To participate in the meeting **by phone**, dial **US: +1-253-215-8782** and enter **Webinar ID:862 1645 7021** and **Passcode: 415359**

Written comments are also welcome and may be delivered to City Hall or emailed to CouncilComments@ci.independence.or.us no later than 4:00 pm the day of the meeting.

The meeting location is accessible to persons with disabilities. A request for an interpreter for the hearing impaired, or for other accommodations for persons with disabilities, should be made at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting to Myra Russell, City Recorder, 503-838-1212/TTY: 800-735-2900.

ANSWER TO QUESTIONS FROM FEBRUARY 25, 2025

WORK SESSION

- 1) **What are the City's PERS rates for FY 23-24 through 24-25, and the expected rates for 25-26 and 26-27?**

	Emp PU	T1/T2	OPSRP Gen	OPSRP Police
2023-25	6%	26.69%	20.17%	24.96%
2025-27	6%	27.49%	23.48%	28.75%
Increase		0.8%	3.31%	3.79%

- 2) **What is the fund balance in each of the utility funds?**

- Water Fund – June 30, 2024 \$2.98 million
- Sewer Fund – June 30, 2024 \$3.97 million
- Storm Drain Fund – June 30, 2024 \$335 thousand

- 3) **Do we have data on number of distinct visitors to the museum vs. number of repeat visitors?** The City currently has no means to track visitor information in this way.

- 4) **What are the annual budgets for other cities of similar population?**

The information below was drawn from published budget documents and includes expenditures, transfers, contingencies, and unappropriated ending balances (total uses).

2024-25 Adopted Budget		
	General Fund	City Total
Independence	7,519,201	53,940,302
Stayton	8,483,846	38,275,358
Monmouth	7,933,127	51,525,867
Silverton	13,521,148	74,918,392
Molalla	10,619,145	84,460,459
Sweet Home	6,390,000	97,654,000
Sutherlin	9,275,690	40,187,252
Cottage Grove	11,953,945	55,925,637
Astoria	19,467,310	76,835,473
Milton	9,011,276	56,858,690
Freewater		

5) **What are the City's cybersecurity costs? Do we have a comparison to outsourcing these services? Do we carry cyber insurance and what is the cost?**

The City currently spends \$65,913 annually for cyber security, including insurance premiums, or 0.12% of the City's total adopted budget for FY 2024-25. A general benchmark for cyber security spending is the amount as a percentage of total revenue and 1-3% is typical for small or medium size businesses, and up to 10% for higher risk businesses. The City's spending for cyber security is 0.17% of total budgeted revenues for 2024-25.

Typical costs to outsource cyber security (known as a Security Operations Center or SOC) are \$3,000-\$10,000 per month. This covers basic monitoring, log management, and incident response. **Please note that this does not include the cost of software necessary for the SOC to monitor our systems.** Full incident response, threat intelligence integration, and compliance reporting are often additional cost factors. Our Police Department security is heavily regulated by Oregon State Police and the Federal Bureau of Investigation that require certain security controls and software to be in place. Failure to meet these standards will result in the removal of our Police Department's access to databases and services required to do their jobs (criminal history, information sharing platforms, access to other agencies' resources, and many other items).

Note that in 2010, MINET was paying a third-party cyber security company around \$7,000/month for basic upkeep and monitoring. Cyber security represents a small portion of overall IT operations and budget. We have also looked at costs to completely outsource IT operations to a third party Managed Service Provider (MSP). Pricing for such a service four years ago was \$250/hr or approximately \$520,000/yr for a typical year of full-time work (2,080 hours). This amount excludes necessary software costs.

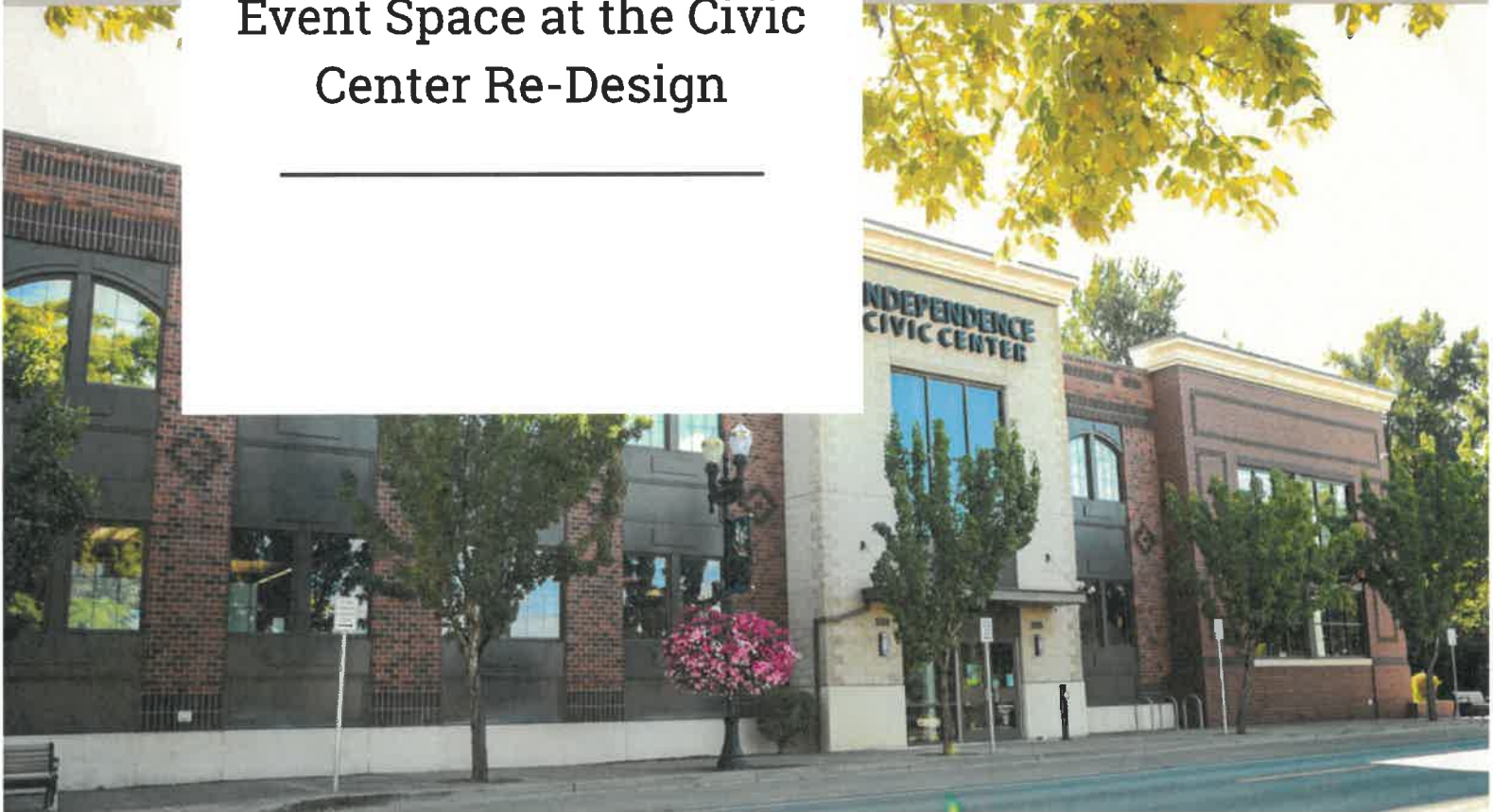
- 6) **What are the Costs to Upgrade the Event Center to Make it more appealing and potentially profitable:** \$77,522 - \$123,022 (see attached budget estimate for details)
- 7) **What is the value of the properties being considered for sale?** Please note, these are estimates and they could vary significantly based on additional information or changes in the market.
 - a. Museum Building - \$825,000
 - b. Gun Club & Ash Creek - \$200,000
 - c. Old Pool Site - \$210,000
 - d. Sport Park Site – Very unique property and unable to determine the value at this point.
 - e. Boise Park Site - \$300,000 - \$400,000
- 8) **How many AirBnBs and Hotels currently pay TLT to the City?** 7 AirBnBs and 1 Hotel.



City of Independence

Budget Proposal

Event Space at the Civic
Center Re-Design



BUDGET ESTIMATE



Canvas Art

Location	Item	Quantity	Total Price
Entrance to Event Center	11"x17" Single Image	1	\$110
Riverview Room A	Multiple Large Panels 25"x12" each	10	\$250
	Small Single Image	1	\$35
Riverview Room B	5 piece panel set 22"x8" each	3	\$240
Riverview Room C	5 piece panel set 22"x8"	1	\$80
	Multiple Large Panels 25"x12" each	8	\$200
Heritage Room	Multiple Panels x2 each section 18"x36" each	18	\$700
Middle/Seating Area	Multiple Small Panels 8"x8" each	100	\$450
Ash Creek Conference Room	3 piece panel set 30"x16" each	1	\$85
TOTAL			\$2,150.00

BUDGET ESTIMATE



Plants

Location	Item	Quantity	Total Price
Entrance to Event Center	Table Top Flowers	3	\$100
Riverview Room A	Large Floor	2	\$500
Riverview Room B	Large Floor	1	\$250
Riverview Room C	Large Floor	1	\$250
Heritage Room	Large Floor	2	\$500
TOTAL			\$1,600.00

BUDGET ESTIMATE



Tables

Location	Item	Quantity	Total Price
Entrance to Event Center	Entrance table	1	\$1,410
Riverview Room A	Pull out table for sign in/multi-use	1	\$877
Middle/Seating Area	L shape table	1	\$1,350
	Drop down/folding tables on wall	5	\$14,160
TOTAL			\$17,797

BUDGET ESTIMATE



IT Equipment

Type of Upgrade	Item	Quantity	Estimated Price
1. Professional Video	Ability to display on any screen or multiple screens from multiple locations w/ easy to use control panel on wall.	1	\$45,000
2. Budget Video	Ability to display on a single screen or multiple from a single source. Does not support more than one group using the event center. May not work well for full motion video. May not work in Heritage room.	1	\$500
Professional Audio	20 wireless mics (18 tabletop, 2 handheld wireless), audio processors, wireless controller, and charging bases.	20	\$45,000
Wi-Fi	Provides additional coverage, speed, and user capacity	1	\$2,000
TOTAL		\$47,500 - 92,000	

BUDGET ESTIMATE



Miscellaneous

Location	Item	Quantity	Total Price
Entrance to Event Center	Metal Art Sign	3 pieces	\$200
	Acrylic Sign	1	\$180
	Welcome Video Work Time	2 days	\$350
Riverview Room A	Live Edge Wall Mounted Coat Rack	2	\$500
Middle/Seating Area	Stools for L Shaped Table	2	\$465
	Wood Frame for Large Map	1	\$300
All Rooms	Professional Painted	3 Colors	\$6,000
Hops Display - Front	Fake Hops for Display	1	\$30
Entrance to Event Center - Lights	1. New Wall Light Fixtures	7	\$1,450
	2. Replace Wall Light Covers	7	\$450
TOTAL			\$8,475 - 9,475

TOTAL FOR WHOLE PROJECT

\$77,522 - 123,022

The City of Independence is known for its beauty and history. The Event Center will display just that, a clean, well laid out environment that will showcase what Independence is about, both in history and the present.

The Event Center will be a place for gathering and entertaining in a welcoming atmosphere. This budget showcases the cost it will take to achieve those goals.

All amounts are reflected off todays prices with a more then enough increase. Most prices will be way under stated amounts in all categories with final purchase.



Independence
Oregon's Story Begins Here

FUNDING SOURCES AND COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Overview

Key Funding Ideas and Recommendations

Community-Generated Ideas from Interactive Event (3/19):

- Create Tax Districts: Separate districts for Library, Museum, Parks, or perhaps a combined Livability District.
- Opt-In Donation on Utility Bill:
 - Annual opt-in for each utility payor.
 - Funds go to Museum/Library/Parks, collected via utility bill.
- Reduce/Combine Police Services: Consolidate police forces to reduce costs.
- Update Fee Schedule: Review and adjust all fees in the General Fund.
- Sell Museum Building: Consider selling the building to generate revenue.
- Sell “Old Library”: Note: Restricted deed prevents sale; will revert to donor.
- Encourage Retirement: Incentivize retirement for employees at or near retirement age.
- Close City Hall (ICC) and Library on Fridays:
 - Option 1: Staff work 4 ten-hour days.
 - Option 2: Reduce hours Monday-Thursday and adjust pay accordingly.
- Combine Museum with Library: Merge operations to save costs.
- Sell Designated Parks: Consider selling underutilized park spaces.
- Toll Independence Streets:
 - Note: Funds might be required to go to Street Fund.
- Adopt a Staff Member:
 - For a set annual amount, people can “adopt” a staff member.
 - Receive periodic updates and information on department activities.
- Reduce Library and Museum Hours Seasonally: Adjust hours to match demand.
- Close Library: Consider full closure to reduce costs.

Alternative Revenue Generation (Survey & Interactive)

- Implement parking fees/metered parking, especially during high-congestion events like Independence Day celebrations.
- Introduce entrance fees for the museum and/or charge higher fees for non-residents.
- Establish usage fees for the library and museum, including a sliding scale or discount for residents.
- Traffic enforcement citation fees, particularly for speeding violations.
- Vendor fees for events and business activities in public spaces.
- Explore increased entry fees for summer events to help fund community services.
- Consider an additional utility fee to help cover budget shortfalls.

- Tax the wealthy or high-income earners, and consider implementing an income tax on businesses selling alcohol and cannabis.
- Charge fees on businesses with vacant properties to encourage active use and generate revenue.
- Sell surplus or unused city-owned properties to generate income.
- Fundraising events, such as bake sales or community events to raise funds for specific services.
- Enhance the friends of the library and museum groups to support funding through private donations.
- Encourage community donations and fundraising activities.
- Introduce arts fee passes for combined use of library, museum, and parks.
- Consider grants and community fundraising as key support measures.

Reduce and Prioritize Spending

- Cut non-essential services like the museum or reduce operating hours.
- Sell the museum or privatize it, as it may be considered a luxury.
- Cut staffing or salaries for non-critical positions.
- Reduce spending in other areas before increasing taxes or fees.
- Reduce police budget or consolidate police services with neighboring towns to save costs.
- Cut unnecessary personnel and focus on essential city functions.

Economic and Financial Concerns

- Community members expressed concern over raising taxes and fees during tough economic times.
- Multiple statements to live within the budget and stop raising fees and taxes.
- Suggestions to reprioritize spending and focus on the most essential services.

Potential Options – Pros and Cons

Combining Library and Museum

- Combine the library and museum into one building to reduce operational costs and maximize space efficiency.
- Sell the existing museum building to generate revenue and eliminate maintenance costs and mortgage expense.
- **Pros:** Significant savings on staffing, utilities, and maintenance.
- **Cons:** Potential loss of a dedicated museum space and some community resistance.

Sell Designated Parks

Pros:

1. **Relatively Quick Revenue:** Selling designated parks would generate a one-time influx of funds that can help address budget shortfalls.
2. **Reduced Maintenance Costs:** Eliminates ongoing costs associated with upkeep, landscaping, utilities, and staffing.
3. **Potential for Development:** If sold to developers, it could result in property tax revenue and economic development.
4. **Efficiency:** Reduces the city's overall maintenance burden and allows resources to be focused on remaining parks and essential services.

Cons:

1. **Loss of Green Space:** Reducing the number of parks could negatively impact community well-being and recreational opportunities.
2. **Community Backlash:** Residents may oppose losing public spaces.
3. **Long-Term Impact:** Once sold, it is difficult to reclaim green spaces if community needs change or population grows.

Create Tax Districts

Pros:

1. **Dedicated Funding Source:** Tax districts create a consistent and reliable revenue stream specifically earmarked for essential services like parks, museums, and libraries.
2. **Community Control:** Voters decide on funding levels and have a direct say in maintaining community services.
3. **Financial Stability:** Reduces reliance on the General Fund, making critical services less vulnerable to budget cuts.
4. **Flexibility:** Separate districts can be tailored to specific community needs and funding priorities.

Cons:

1. **Not a Quick Fix:** Establishing a tax district requires a public vote and can take months or even years to implement.
2. **Increased Tax Burden:** This is an additional tax burden on community members.
3. **Complex Administration:** Managing multiple tax districts adds administrative complexity and may require additional oversight.
4. **Risk of Rejection:** Voters may reject the proposed tax, leaving the funding gap unresolved.

Opt-In Donation on Utility Bill:

Pros:

1. **Voluntary Participation:** Residents have the choice to contribute or not, making it more acceptable to the community.
2. **Minimal Impact on Low-Income Residents:** Since it is optional, those who cannot afford it are not forced to pay.
3. **Potential Community Support:** Residents who value services like parks, libraries, and the museum may be willing to contribute.
4. **Ongoing Revenue Stream:** Regular, even if small, contributions can add up over time.
5. **Flexible Implementation:** Can be adjusted annually to reflect changes in community support or financial needs.

Cons:

1. **Uncertain Revenue:** The amount of revenue generated may vary significantly and is not guaranteed.
2. **Administrative Costs:** Implementing and managing the opt-in program can incur extra expenses.
3. **Lower Participation Rates:** Not all residents may be willing or able to contribute, especially during tough economic times.
4. **Complexity in Billing:** Integrating the donation into existing utility bills may require system updates and coordination.
5. **Community Perception:** Some may view it as an indirect tax or an attempt to avoid making hard budget decisions.

Survey and Interactive Event Data Summary

Overview

This presentation provides a summary of community feedback collected through two data-gathering methods: a survey and an interactive event. The presentation covers the following:

1. Survey Data Statistics
2. Interactive Event Data Statistics
3. Combined Insights (where applicable)
4. Key Takeaways and Recommendations

Survey Data (228 Respondents)

Most Important Departments - All Respondents

- Library: 46%
- Parks: 46%
- Museum: 8%

Most Important Departments - Independence Residents Only

- Library: 53%
- Parks: 42%
- Museum: 6%

Departments to Reduce - All Respondents

- Museum: 65%
- Library: 20%
- Parks: 15%

Departments to Reduce - Independence Residents Only

- Museum: 66%
- Library: 19%
- Parks: 15%

Preferred Revenue Sources - All Respondents

- Fees: 34%
- Levy/Tax: 26%
- Other: 60%

Preferred Revenue Sources - Independence Residents Only

- Fees: 37%
- Levy/Tax: 28%
- Other: 57%

Interactive Event Data (30-35 Participants)

Most Important Departments

- **Library:** 23 votes
- **Museum:** 20 votes
- **Parks:** 15 votes

Funding Preferences

- **Separate Tax District:** 13 votes
- **Levy:** 6 votes
- **Utility Fee:** 6 votes
- **None (Do Not Fund):** 3 votes

Combined Insights

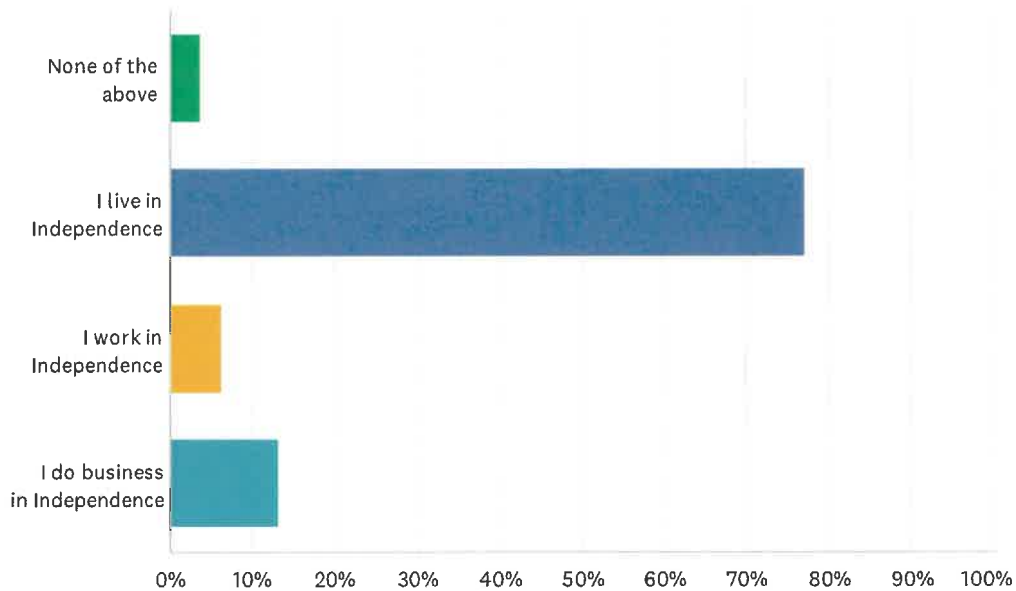
- Across both events, the Library and Parks generally emerge as the most important departments.
- The Museum generally ranked lowest in importance and highest for potential reduction.
- Fees and other funding sources are preferred over levies and taxes among both survey and interactive event participants.
- Independence residents are slightly more supportive of fees and taxes compared to general respondents.

FUNDING IDEAS – INTERACTIVE EVENT

- Create Tax Districts (Museum, Parks, Museum, Livability)
- Opt-In Donation on Utility Bill
 - Annual Opt-in for each utility payor
 - Funds would go to Museum/Library/Parks
 - Collected via utility bill
 - Pros:
 - Voluntary
 - Cons:
 - Not guaranteed
 - Costs to administer
- Reduce/Combine Police
- Update Fee Schedule for all fees in the General Fund
- Sell Museum Building
- Sell “Old Library”
 - [Note: Restricted Deed so cannot sell the building as it will revert back to the donor.](#)
- Encourage retirement for those employees at retirement age
- Close City Hall (ICC) and Library on Fridays
 - City Staff would work 4 – 10 hour days, or
 - Reduce hours M-Thursday and reduce pay accordingly
- Combine Museum with the Library
- Sell designated parks
- Toll Independence Streets
 - [Note: These funds might be required to go to Street Fund](#)
- Adopt a Staff Member
 - For a set amount annually, people could “adopt a staff member”
 - They would receive a biography of the staff member and a written letter periodically updating the individual on what is going on in their department in the city.
- Reduce hours in the Museum and Library Seasonally
- Close Library

Q1 Which of these describe you

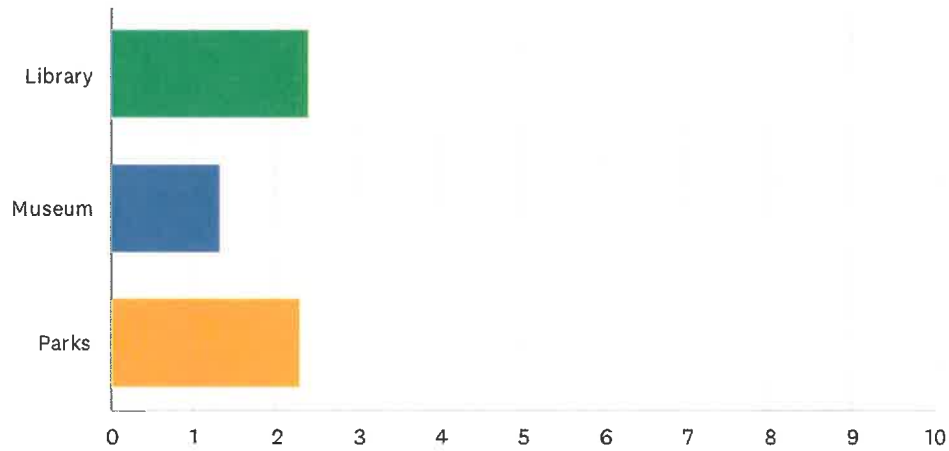
Answered: 227 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None of the above	3.52%	8
I live in Independence	77.09%	175
I work in Independence	6.17%	14
I do business in Independence	13.22%	30
TOTAL		227

Q2 Which General Fund city services are most important to you? (1 is most important, 3 is least important)

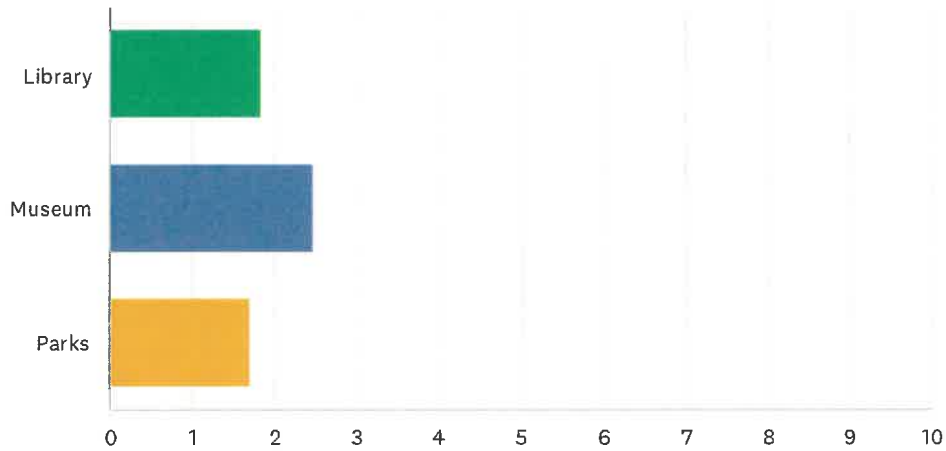
Answered: 225 Skipped: 3



	1	2	3	TOTAL	SCORE
Library	45.78% 103	47.56% 107	6.67% 15	225	2.39
Museum	8.00% 18	16.89% 38	75.11% 169	225	1.33
Parks	46.22% 104	35.56% 80	18.22% 41	225	2.28

Q3 If the city needed to reduce spending in the General Fund, which areas would you prefer to see budget cuts in? (1 is most important, 3 is least important)

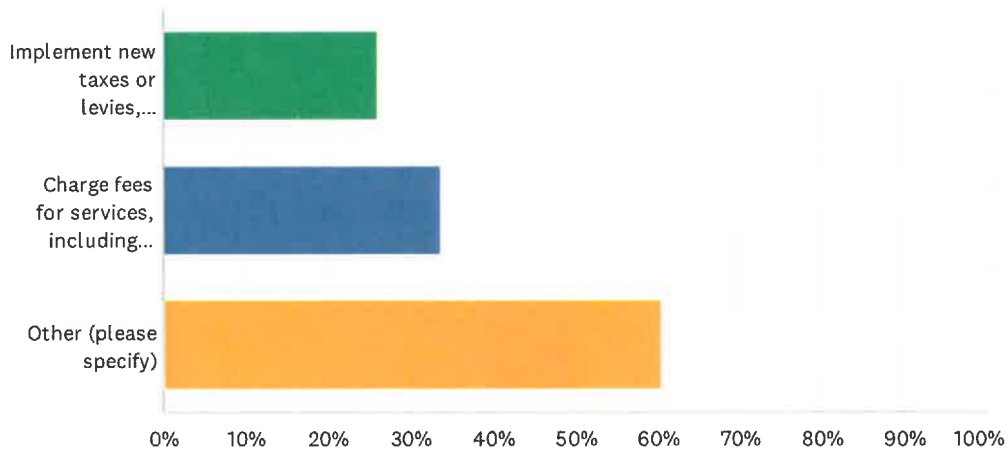
Answered: 220 Skipped: 8



	1	2	3	TOTAL	SCORE
Library	19.55% 43	44.09% 97	36.36% 80	220	1.83
Museum	65.45% 144	16.82% 37	17.73% 39	220	2.48
Parks	15.00% 33	39.09% 86	45.91% 101	220	1.69

Q4 What ideas do you have for generating additional revenue to support city services? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 219 Skipped: 9



ANSWER CHOICES

RESPONSES

Implement new taxes or levies, including a livability levy, library levy, sales taxes, or income tax on high earners	26.03%	57
Charge fees for services, including parking fees, increased business license fees, and increase charges for using parks	33.79%	74
Other (please specify)	60.27%	132

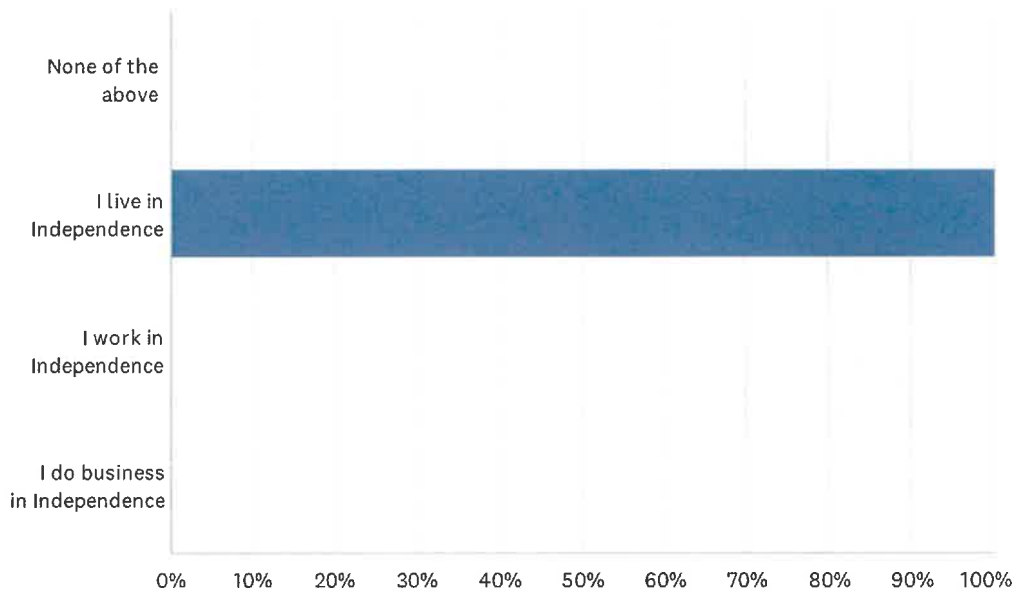
Total Respondents: 219

Q5 Do you have any additional comments or suggestions on how the city can balance the budget while maintaining essential services?

Answered: 132 Skipped: 96

Q1 Which of these describe you

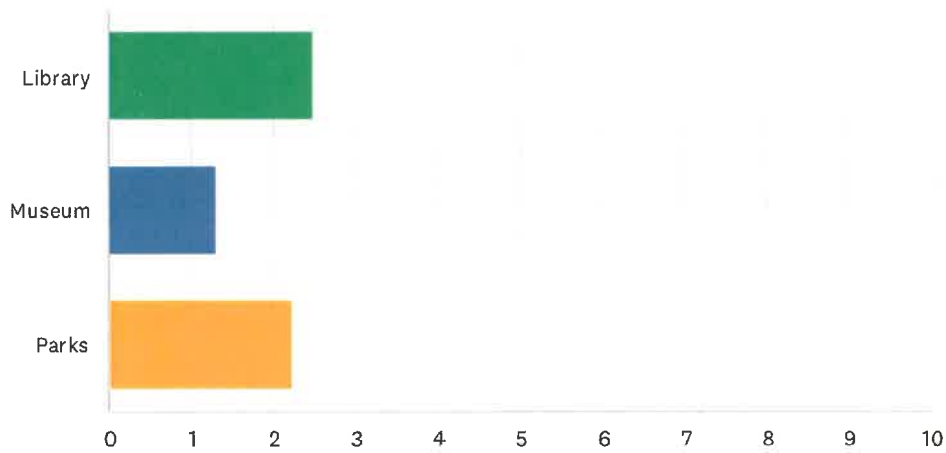
Answered: 175 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None of the above	0.00%	0
I live in Independence	100.00%	175
I work in Independence	0.00%	0
I do business in Independence	0.00%	0
TOTAL		175

Q2 Which General Fund city services are most important to you? (1 is most important, 3 is least important)

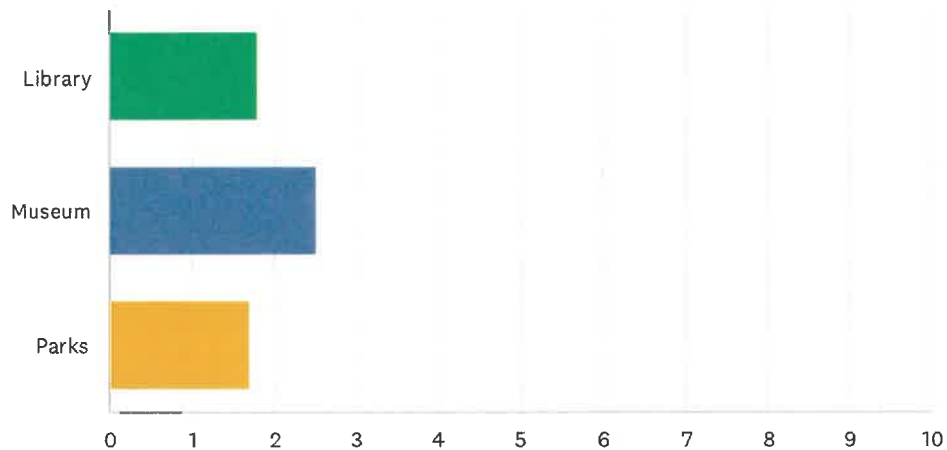
Answered: 173 Skipped: 2



	1	2	3	TOTAL	SCORE
Library	52.60% 91	42.77% 74	4.62% 8	173	2.48
Museum	5.78% 10	19.08% 33	75.14% 130	173	1.31
Parks	41.62% 72	38.15% 66	20.23% 35	173	2.21

Q3 If the city needed to reduce spending in the General Fund, which areas would you prefer to see budget cuts in? (1 is most important, 3 is least important)

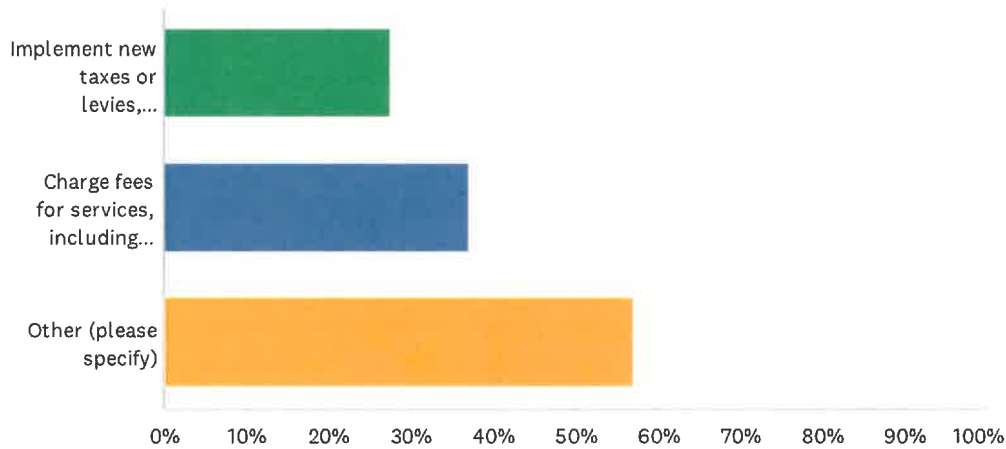
Answered: 167 Skipped: 8



	1	2	3	TOTAL	SCORE
Library	18.56% 31	42.51% 71	38.92% 65	167	1.80
Museum	66.47% 111	17.96% 30	15.57% 26	167	2.51
Parks	14.97% 25	39.52% 66	45.51% 76	167	1.69

Q4 What ideas do you have for generating additional revenue to support city services? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 167 Skipped: 8



ANSWER CHOICES

RESPONSES

Implement new taxes or levies, including a livability levy, library levy, sales taxes, or income tax on high earners	27.54%	46
Charge fees for services, including parking fees, increased business license fees, and increase charges for using parks	37.13%	62
Other (please specify)	56.89%	95

Total Respondents: 167

Q5 Do you have any additional comments or suggestions on how the city can balance the budget while maintaining essential services?

Answered: 112 Skipped: 63

Q4 – OTHER REVENUE COMMENTS

- Reduce services and live within a budget like the rest of us. No new fees!!!
- Cut police budget to spare library, museum, and parks. Consolidate and reduce by merging with Monmouth and Indy police and maybe other services. Create a family support district to fund library, museum, parks and recreation for Monmouth and Indy. Raise property tax.
- Small entrance fee for the museum. Also increase a business fee for just these three services. All three services bring tourists and customers to the businesses.
- The city needs to look internally. Cutting the things the public uses daily (parks and library) should not be where you cut first. Taxes are too high.
- Reduce politicians wages.
 - Mayors, City Councilors, and Board Members do not get paid. They are volunteers.
- Sell the museum. If the town is struggling to fund it, it may be a luxury we can no longer afford. Sell the museum to a private entity who can run it and use the funds to help the library. Also, the police budget makes up 50% of the cost of the general fund. While law enforcement is a critical role in any town, luxuries like new cruisers and an unmarked Tesla seem to be luxuries we also cannot afford.
 - Police vehicles are taken out of service on a schedule as they become no longer fit for service.
 - The City does not own a Tesla.
- Having separate levies for each area. I voted no on the last levy, simply because I only care to see the parks get funds and don't care to fund the other two. Charging entry fees for the big summer events.
- None work with the budget you have. We already voted NO on this.
- User fees, development of land and build houses and generate more property tax money.
- Let the city have a bake sale. No new taxes.
- Reducing expenses in other areas
- The shortfall needs to be looked at internally. Taxes and levies are not the answer. Look to other current items that should be cleaned up in-house. Cutting basic services like parks and the library are out of the question.
- As a small business owner we are inundated with fees for everything!
- Tax the rich.
- Increase taxes for those higher income
- Get a new manager for money

- Reallocation. Get more creative with your existing structures.
- Charge usage fees for the museum and library.
- The museum should definitely charge a fee if you don't live here. What about a pump tax that is added to each gallon of gas you purchase in town?
 - Any revenue from a gas tax would have to be used for street maintenance and cannot be used for General Fund departments like the library, museum, etc.
- Neither of the above seem fair to me.
- Do without for a little bit.
- Cut, cut, cut. No more taxes, fees!
- Re-prioritize other spending.
- Cut spending elsewhere.
- Parking fees/metered parking downtown
- Cut unnecessary personnel like the downtown coordinator
- Stop wasting money. Like the \$500,000 park. Find the waste, cut it. But of course your two options listed above are about taxing more and hurting small business. Not surprised.
 - The park was not built with General Fund money. It was built with grants, donations, community work, and dedicated SDC funds (these SDC Funds cannot be used for General Fund operations like the library and museum)
- I think there should be an outside audit done on the books and make sure there is no unnecessary spending and jobs.
 - The City's "books" are audited by an outside firm every year as required by law.
- Encourage and support existing and potential support for tax generating businesses.
- Don't go into debt.
- Consolidation of some services
- What kind of use taxes are the hotel and major apartment complexes paying?
- Charge for the museum or cut it. Increase cost of Indy days. Charge for movies/concerts in the park.
- Privatize or get rid of the museum. There is no reason we should spend tax money on it. The parks are vital for bringing business (4th of July) and the library is nice but not a necessity. Both are more important than the museum.
- None. We can't afford more outgoing for anything. This includes parks. Cut and do without.
- None
- Make cuts.
- If people did not vote to pass new funding then make cuts and let the people deal with the consequences.
- Sell undeveloped city property. We need more housing.
- Turn that broken building into a paid parking garage.

- The City does not own “that broken building”, it is owned by a private party.
- Consolidate departments, sell property, reduce budgets for other departments.
- This is not a time to increase taxes. You could issue an arts fee pass to use the library, museum, and parks. The museum should charge to visit.
- Sell unused or surplus city owned property
- Parking fees should target high-congestion events that bring in a lot of non-residents, like the 4th of July events. How much are we spending on police and public safety? Are developers and landlords paying their fair share of all these fancy new apartments going up? Rent already seems to be a problem in keeping desirable small businesses on Main Street. Residents are willing to pay for *new* things — they don’t want to pay more in taxes just to keep what they’ve already got.
- None
- Force legislators to overturn 5/50
- Cut staffing
 - Staffing was strategically reduced in fiscal year 2023-2024 within the Finance Department, Economic Development Department, and Library.
- How about a fee on empty business buildings and vacant lots
- Charge for taking the trolley and going to the museum
- Cut salaries of PW Director, City Manager, not try to do everything the same time.
- Parking meters? Tourist revenue is not panning out?
- Check all your budget items not just on what people like in a community.
- Close the library. Close the museum. Only necessary maintenance on the parks.
- Reduce funds going to the museum.
- Income tax on high earners and businesses; consider sales tax as everyone uses these places.
- Fundraising events for those who ARE willing to support these services.
- Create or further implement a friends of the library or museum to gather private funds to fund either or both of those entities.
- Prioritize spending on essential services. The museum is not an essential service. Make the museum pay for its operating costs.
- Stop paying for the museum. Charge a fee to enter and make it self-sustainable in the next few years or shut it down completely.
- Reduce library time and staff, turn over museum to non-profit to operate.
- Reduce spending in other areas.
- Charge a sliding scale fee for library cards. Not a revenue stream but if the Library needed to reduce its hours/days of operation perhaps collaborate off days/times with Monmouth so between the two we are covered (now that we

have the trolley people can commute quickly and free). The museum is a money sink and should be shut down.

- The Library has reduced service days by collaborating with the Monmouth Library.
- Admission for museum, fees for some services at the Library.
- Restore resources that have supported the General Fund in the past or reduce the utility rates in the enterprise funds by the windfall amount they experienced when the transfers were ceased.
 - There are both State Statutes and City Ordinances that do not allow enterprise funds to be used for something other than what those monies were collected for...water and sewer rates paid by the community are required by law (State and City) to be used for water and sewer only....not the Library, Parks, Museum, or Police. Street funds are the result of gas tax monies and are required by law to be used only for streets not for Library, Parks, Museum, or Police.
 - In addition, there is no "windfall". Because funding was pulled from enterprise funds for years there was significant deferred maintenance on infrastructure (water, sewer, streets) which was not completed resulting in failing infrastructure. All enterprise funds are now being used to improve the failing infrastructure.
- Make the wages of the city officials transparent. City manager annual salary/benefits package how much is this?
- Reevaluate current projects that the city "wants" to do and use funds for what the city "needs" to operate without a budget shortfall. Ask DOGE for help if needed.
- Sell police cars
- Hold more events in River Park with entrance fee of \$10 or more. I suspect this would bring in more out of town people, who would patronize local stores and restaurants. Also public safety fee for police and fire, because everyone is in favor of those services. Finally, it seems like there are an average of 4 cars per household in this town - how about a levy on 3rd, 4th, etc. cars, whether roadworthy or not. Permanently street-parked cars, trucks and trailers are especially annoying, including RVs parked in driveways.
- I'd rather see funds raised through "gestalt" means, such as levies and income tax, rather than "point of use" means such as sales tax and parking fees. I won't notice if my taxes or water bill go up slightly, but I would be continually annoyed if I have to pay to park.
- Maybe instead of always trying to generate more revenue, actually make some hard cuts. With the free trolley that runs between Monmouth and independence, do the two cities that are so close together need duplicates of everything? Start thinking outside the box instead of just always thinking asking for more money.
- No new fees. Spend less.
- Sell the gun club property and/or the pool property.

- Fees on businesses selling alcohol and cannabis.
- Traffic enforcement, citation fees
- Income tax on high earners
- Apply for grants!!
 - The city has prioritized securing grants for every department.
- Grants and community fundraising.
- Continue to apply for grants.
- Cut spending in other areas.
- I don't like choosing an entire list of options. I believe it will have to be a combination of things possibly from both lists.
- Have DOGE do an audit
- It's more expensive to do business here than Salem. Don't think they should get a break but targeting business isn't right. Look at the number that have had to close up shop. Where does the tax revenue go for all the new build houses in the last five years. Why are we not getting any more new house? (You're charging too much) You should be looking at attracting growth in both housing and commercial yet you're pushing them away.
- Ask for donations, apply for grants, some parking fees
- Defund the police department. Having more cops is less important than public services
- Entry fees for museum. Grant funds.
- Reduce operating hours for library and museum, set up secure donation boxes at all 3 areas and City Hall.
- Levy that goes to the voters that does NOT include the Museum.
- No more taxes
- Cut spending.
- Cut Urban renewal
- Parking fees during Independence Day Celebration only. Entrance fee for the museum. Increased charges for using parks. Targeted user fees.
- Tax the wealthy, they can afford it.
- None. City to get its act together.
- No increases. Make the needed cuts.
- A mix of the two.
- Cut the museum and charge more for Indy days.
- I don't have any answers, but what I do know is the residents of this town are struggling to keep up with all the extra charges for water. Parking fees is a good place to start although its not going to generate enough to make a dent.
- Charge people to use the trolley
- Limit two hours for parking downtown. Exceptions for workers who need to be at their business place. Put up speeding cameras so they catch people and people would need to pay if they go over the speed limit. People speed all the time through town. Or go way under the speed limit. Off gun club road, 12st, picture st

we constantly have people speeding through the streets, a speed camera would help this issue tremendously

- Vendor fees
- Only charge non-residents fees
- Charge fee at Museum
- Parking Fees
- I'd hate to see reduced hours for the library but if necessary, I suggest that the hours of the Indy and Monmouth library be staggered, to maximize the amount of time that at least one of the two local libraries is open

Q5 COMMENTS – CITY ADDED INFORMATION

Economic Concerns and Financial Hardship

- These are difficult economic times. People are struggling to buy food and shelter.
- Unfortunately I don't know where the money is being spent. There must be waste somewhere, Oregon taxes are ridiculous.
- Choosing to add more taxes is only going to drive people out. My family and I are listing our home and moving in part due to these types of decisions.
- Sorry but no. Higher taxes and fees might make struggling businesses have to close which would result in losses instead of gains.
- Stop raising rent. Apply for grants.
 - [The City does not have control over rental prices.](#)
- Increasing our property taxes will make me look to move out of Independence. Charge for free activities like the trolley and the museum.
- No additional taxes.

Budget, Financial Management, and Staff

- Work within your budget
- Stop wasting money! Spend only what you have. Cut services if needed. No new taxes or FEES! We're tapped out!
- You are adding fees to everything which will drive people from the community. We are not even getting good services for what we are paying for. Time to stop and live within a budget. Cut hours of employees if needed. Run the city as a business.
- The math just doesn't work. Enhanced public messaging showing the breakdown of where the money goes and where it is short might help future bonds pass. And I guess lobbying to improve property tax revenue.
- No information has been provided here about the budget so its hard to be specific. However, I think the city should not increase fees or taxes, they're already outrageous. The money has already been spent on things like the new city hall, now you want us to cut library/parks/museum? Please cut something else. Library and parks are essential services.
 - [There was a link to the City's budget provided on the digital survey.](#)
- Have a respectable finance advisor look at city funding, ie cabinet members, law enforcement, school boards, etc

- Provide a line item budget for the residents to see. I'm sure we would have some great ideas for cutting the budget.
 - A line item budget is prepared each year and a link to that budget was provided as part of the survey.
- It may be that only essential services can be provided. The city has to live within it's means. Poor financial management previously has broken trust with the community. The government, like it's citizens, needs to learn that income is finite and must be spent with wisdom on essentials. For me the essentials are emergency services, water, and roads. I think that is what the city needs to focus on.
- Reduce city manager vehicle allowance. Consider consolidating services (library, street maintenance, utilities, police department, etc) with Monmouth. Utilize city property downtown core for fee parking during celebrations. Condemn Stonehenge, convert to covered food court and entertainment venue. Sell city parcels to commercial tenants for revenue generating businesses. Lower business fees on vacant commercial properties in order to attract new business, do not permit new commercial properties in downtown core.
 - The City does not own "Stonehenge" and has no grounds to condemn the property.
- Spend less. Waste less.
- Again, cut fluff jobs.
 - The City cut jobs in Finance, Economic Development, and the Library in FY 2023-2024. Further staff reductions would result in reduced services.
- Focus on what is needed to run our town and not what makes it appeal to others
- Re-determine what is actually essential. Your tax based proved this last election how fed up we are with taxes.
- Pay administrators less; all of them.
 - The City Manager and some Department Heads have already declined cost of living or merit increases, and further reductions could put salaries below average levels, risking loss of experienced leaders and higher costs to hire replacements.
- Folks need to take a hard look at city staffing levels. We need parks and the library but perhaps there are other efficiencies in the marketing or other areas. I do not support selling the pool land. Residents have said over and over that this need(sic) to be brought back. We want a library, parks and a pool. We don't need high quality videos for marketing on social media.

- Increasing taxes does NOT increase the livability of our town! We are already paying the additional “safety” fee recently attached to our water bill without any public input.

Museum and Library Specific Concerns and Suggestions

- The museum should never have been operated by the municipality. Indy is too small. It needed to be a 501c3 with benefactors, an independent board, museum members, paying visitors and so forth. It is- despite a small group of people's passion for it- an obvious service Independence cannot afford and should be removed from the budget first. If you can't afford police, you can't afford a museum.
- If anything on this list is essential it probably should be the library. However, if the “the people” do not vote to maintain such things its not the municipality's obligation to work around the people to make funding happen. Consequences will hopefully teach us the value of the things we had to go without. Its not a fun lesson but a necessary one.
- Maintaining the history of our region and the city of Independence is vitally important to future generations. Do not let the museum get swept up in budget cuts!
- Having attended the budget work session recently, I believe the plan suggested by the Library and Museum Directors seems to be the “least worst” option as the City Manager put it. It allows us to keep both services in as best a way as possible.
- Times are hard right now. Treat the budget as you would do your home one, if there isn't way to get more money (which the voters spoke and said no) then sometimes have to cut spending on things even if really want them as the funds just aren't there. The conversation is always about how can get more money and not making hard decisions and stop spending. I haven't looked line by line on the budget yet but suggest that is what the committee does to see where spending can be tightened and if there isn't enough money then either the library, museum, or parks will need to be downsized (limited hours, etc). The museum used to get grants before the person working before filled them out, go back to doing that as well! But, if there isn't enough money then maybe there isn't two libraries in Monmouth and independence anymore and work together with Monmouth to determine the best library to keep open.
 - The Museum and the Library have both reduced service hours and both are operating with reduced staff.
 - All departments are actively pursuing grant funds
- Fund raisers for the museum. Huge downtown garage sale in blocked off streets. A well planned outdoor auction in the downtown park with other entertainment

before and after. Same with the downtown garage sale, lots of other activities to draw people to town, like the Hop festival, ghost walk, and 4th of July. It would lots of planning and volunteers but could be fun and raise money for the museum. I love the museum but feel that parks and library have to come before the museum.

- Charge for museum entry or find a way to generate revenue for the museum.
- Move Museum materials to Polk. Co. Historical Society, sell the building to someone that will generate revenue.
- The museum is not an essential service. Shut it down. Keep the parks open and do what you can for the Library.
- Cut the museum. It isn't sustainable, and isn't used. Combine libraries with Monmouth, we don't need two for this area. Don't increase taxes on the community, there is a reason the levy didn't pass.
- Get rid of the museum first. Get rid of the trolley or charge for rides. Charge extra taxes on the local hotels for all the traveling athletes and people for the WSU activities and what not. Sell that monstrosity by the library so someone can actually develop it.
 - The Trolley is not operated by General Fund monies. It is currently operating under a grant from the State and other grants for the continued operation are currently being pursued.
 - The City does not own "that monstrosity by the library", it is owned by a private party.
- Only keep the trolley if a grant is given, charge a min(sic) fee for trolley .50. Get civic groups and business to sponsor, maintain the parks.
- Consolidate the library and museum for long term preservation of the departments.
- Furlough days for city workers. Wage freeze for city employees. Sell Art Center (old library). Make museum self-supporting or close it.
- I'd like to see metrics on community use of each service, along with info on costs. I've seen stats for digital library use, and see its usefulness. I don't have kids, but definitely support parks for kids. What does the museum cost us? I've seen the place, and frankly, whatever we're spending, it's too much.
- Create or further implement a friends of the library or museum to gather private funds to fund either or both of those entities.
- Maintaining the history of our region and the city of Independence is vitally important to future generations. Do not let the museum get swept up in budget cuts!

- Why were there no other options for general fund services in this survey? Its mentioned in the introduction that the three (library, museum, parks) are some of the services paid for through the general fund, but no others are up for consideration. What are they and why are they not part of this consideration?

Revenue Generation and Funding Ideas

- Look at current revenue, generating events and activities. Independence Days is a self-funded event sponsored by the city and those access dollars should be utilized to help support Park maintenance. I have seen any pilots but what would the projections be if paid parking meters were installed?
 - Independence Days is currently housed within the City's Tourism and Events Fund, not the General Fund and is planned and operated by City staff including T&E, Finance, Police, and Public Works employees.
- Maybe look into available grant opportunities.
- I like the idea of charging fees for services – MINUS adding an additional fee to small businesses.
- Find a way to reduce water and sewer rates then use the equivalent savings to add or increase general fund fees.
 - Water and sewer fees are separate from the General Fund and are calculated based upon the needs of each system...maintenance, operations, etc. A reduction in these rates would result in a reduction of services from water and sewer.
- Lower system development fees back to a normal and competitive rate to draw builders back. This increases property taxes opportunity. Whoever thought making ours the highest in the state should be let go.
 - SDC are calculated based upon the capacity increasing needs of the city. If there aren't enough SDCs in the system then the city cannot build needed infrastructure and cannot supply water/sewer/streets/storm to any new homes being built. In addition, this would leave the current residents of the city paying the full brunt of the increased demands on the system that are being brought to bear by the new construction.
 - In addition, as new construction comes in the city must also increase staff, including police, to serve the new residents which can cost more than the taxes brought on-line from the new development due to revenue constraints put in place by Measure 5/50.
- Parking fees are an excellent way of raising funds from individuals who are the most likely to comfortably afford an additional cost. Individuals taking public transportation or walking may have a harder time paying additional fees than local drivers.

- Property management tax for entities owning more than 3 long or short term rental units.
- Revenue generating events or partnerships that would increase tourism.
- Charge for parking.
- I like the idea of charging for events and providing locals a discount.
- Benefit dinner, benefit concerts, asking local artists to donate time to perform, with a portion of sales going to needed services.
- Creation of a sports park/basketball field complex to draw fees for tournaments as well as the business those types of events would bring.
- Develop city owned power. Have city leaders pay double the taxes they wanted passed.
- Support local businesses in the downtown district, which will translate into tax revenue.
- Add an annual fee to property taxes, \$300 = \$25/month.
- Try putting each service on the ballot separately. "\$X/\$100k valuation would support current service levels at the library" and two additional ones about the parks and museum.
- Make the developers and home flippers pay more and/or fees. They are benefitting money wise but do not live here or contribute to the community.

Police Budget, Public Safety Fee, and Spending Concerns

- We don't need to be spending half our budget on police. Not the best use of funds right now. Create a new taxing district to fund the three services and expand recreational activities (sports, arts, music). It will have a bigger impact on community safety and well-being than police will.
- Review expenses of law enforcement, brand new cruisers and an unmarked Tesla appear to be luxuries ill afforded to a town with an unsustainable budget deficit.
 - The city replaces the police vehicles on a schedule based on when they wear out and become unsafe to operate.
 - The city does not own a Tesla
- Reduce police spending.
- The police department spends over 50% of the general fund while all the community services combined spend around 15%. Even if you eliminate the library, parks, and museum completely, you would still have hundreds of thousands of dollars in shortfall. Furthermore, creating a fee on our WATER bill

for the cops and then not putting their dept in consideration for spending cuts is irresponsible, irrational, and insulting. We must have a police dept as a LEGAL essential service in order to receive state tax funds. That doesn't mean the police get exempted from consideration during a general fund budget crisis. Essential doesn't mean protected. Also, what's the taxpayer material return on the police budget? It doesn't matter how much or how little money you throw at the police (high or low, underpaid or competitive) it never actually moves the crime numbers. The police have no appreciable statistical effect on overall public safety metrics. But they are protected during a budget crisis? How does that make even a little bit of sense? Make ALL general fund departments part of the service cuts. Police, museum, library, parks, finance, IT, planning, HR all of them. A diversified strategy will make all cuts more manageable.

- Strategic staff reductions were made in multiple General Fund departments during the fiscal year 2023-2024 budget cycle. In addition, every department that serves the General Fund has made as many cuts and reductions as possible. This was the first step taken upon determining that the city was headed for a fiscal crisis.
- Merge Independence and Monmouth police into the Polk County Sheriff's office to become one unified agency. This dramatically cuts overhead and creates a unified command over public safety, eliminates overlap and duplication. Troutdale, Fairview, Wood Village did this with Multnomah County Sheriff's office several years ago to save money. Should do the same here.
- The "fully funded" service level the police department's budget received seemed a bit excessive when everyone else is tightening their belts and going without.
- Increasing the police budget without a ballot measure while relying on citizens to vote for an additional tax on themselves to fund the library was wrong. The library, and access to education in general is an essential service and something I expect my local government to prioritize. This town is faltering and pouring more and more money into "public safety" while ignoring everything else that makes for a holistic community not the answer. But at least we can buy guns without even venturing off Main Street.
- Merge police with Monmouth.
 - The current fiscal crisis requires a quick response. Merging the police is a long term (5-10-15 year) process which may or may not result in cost savings.
- Beyond my paygrade but what would it take to have one police department cover the two towns? We only have one fire dept? Maybe impossible since they're two different towns. But I know the city of Adair contracts out the sheriffs. Not sure if that is more cost prohibitive.

- Cut back on essential services as well. Spend less on the police department. Merge Independence and Monmouth police departments. Get the community more involved in volunteering opportunities. Wave the safety fee for any residents that volunteer 2 hours a month for the city. This survey is too narrow.

Other Suggestions/Comments, Community, and Volunteering

- Continue to brainstorm as much as possible with the intent on save (sic) these essential services.
- I love all three on the cutting block. Surely there's something else besides cutting any of them? How about a go-fund me page?
- Ask residents to voluntarily contribute to an investment fund to support city services. It would need to be very transparent and responsibly managed by a reputable fiduciary. Perhaps we have such a resident (or committee of residents) who would volunteer their services to manage it. I'd be willing to participate (though I have no investment credentials other than managing my own retirement fund) and contribute to it on an annual basis, say \$50/month equivalent. Call it something like the "Indy Excellence Fund." Hold an annual fundraiser event to solicit contributions through raffles, a silent auction, etc. Perhaps local musicians would play at it.
- Develop city owned power. Have city leaders pay double the taxes they wanted passed.
- Oh and definitely tax the rich, I am appalled that people over a certain income amount do not pay into certain taxes yet still use the services, shame on them - tax up at 55% of recreational equality and for being a domestic "dick" (Short for Robert of course).

Service Prioritization and Cuts

- Cut and do without for a while. We are a rural community that seems to be trying to have big city mentality. No one can afford anything additional right now.
- Combine usage spaces if there is enough room in buildings to do so.
- Selling of some property to builders for low income apartments, affordable senior living would be a great advancement for the City and its Residents.
- Cut school bus service to a certain radius to school and have those kids walk, bike or parents drop off to school.
 - The City does not own or control the school bus service; that is the purview of the School District.
- Perform an essential personnel audit to identify positions that may be eliminated if the budget is not enough to support additional personnel.

- Furlough days for city workers. Wage freeze for city employees. Sell Art Center (old library). Make museum self-supporting or close it.
- Reduce routes on the trolley to save on gas, and don't run on Sundays. Validate all city expenses to ensure necessity and reduce or eliminate where necessary.
 - The trolley is not operated by General Fund monies. It is funded by a grant from the State.
- Every department can trim something back. Community services can't be responsible for the entire shortfall. Responsibly make cuts, cut excess properties, consolidate the library and museum for long term preservation of the departments.
 - Strategic staff reductions were made in multiple General Fund departments during the fiscal year 2023-2024 budget cycle. In addition, every department that serves the General Fund has made as many cuts and reductions as possible. This was the first step taken upon determining that the city was headed for a fiscal crisis.
- Cut back on essential services as well. Spend less on the police department. Merge Independence and Monmouth police departments. Get the community more involved in volunteering opportunities. Wave the safety fee for any residents that volunteer 2 hours a month for the city. This survey is too narrow.

Livability and Community Impact

- Independence looks like and acts like it wants to be an upscale suburb to Salem, Corvallis, Albany. We are not. Most citizens are lower middle class watching posh housing developments and classy personal services come in while long-term shops can't stay open. Let's be realistic with the new developments and price out generational residents.
- Only those living in Independence should be making budget decisions for Independence.
 - The Budget Committee and City Council make all budget decisions for Independence. Both require that the members be residents of the City of Independence.
- City Council should stay off community pages and let people express opinions without interfering.
- Support local businesses in the downtown district, which will translate into tax revenue.
- I do not like the idea of ranking the three community services because it pits these against each other. I much prefer to find ways that they can all be saved

with creative ideas such as the recent suggestion to combine library and museum services.

- I truly believe there is so many ways we could cut spending, if not you need to start shutting down depts.
- Why were there no other options for general fund services in this survey? Its mentioned in the introduction that the three (library, museum, parks) are some of the services paid for through the general fund, but no others are up for consideration. What are they and why are they not part of this consideration?
- I understand you're seeking input from citizens but to choose which services would be cut and the priority is difficult since the museum, library and Parks are all important to this city.
- I like the idea of charging for events and providing locals a discount.

Transparency and Public Involvement

- Enhanced public messaging showing the breakdown of where the money goes and where it is short might help future bonds pass.
- Open admission that the reason the services we expect from the City (library, parks, museum) are no longer covered is because money is being spent other places. Then the public should be asked what they want to support, which expenditures are necessary now, which can be slowed, what are the consequences of delaying some projects. What is the cost of litigation for property for a new water treatment plant, what is the possibility of grants--or why does Independence not qualify for grants?
 - All General Fund monies are being spent on General Fund services. There are no General Fund monies being spent on any non-General Fund services, employees, etc.
- Allow the two prior city managers an opportunity to explain directly to the City Council how they would recommend the budget be balanced. They have years of experience and should be heard.
- I'd like to see metrics on community use of each service, along with info on costs. I've seen stats for digital library use, and see its usefulness. I don't have kids, but definitely support parks for kids. What does the museum cost us? I've seen the place, and frankly, whatever we're spending, it's too much.
- Ask residents to voluntarily contribute to an investment fund to support city services. It would need to be very transparent and responsibly managed by a reputable fiduciary. Perhaps we have such a resident (or committee of residents) who would volunteer their services to manage it. I'd be willing to participate (though I have no investment credentials other than managing my own retirement

fund) and contribute to it on an annual basis, say \$50/month equivalent. Call it something like the “Indy Excellence Fund.” Hold an annual fundraiser event to solicit contributions through raffles, a silent auction, etc. Perhaps local musicians would play at it.

Miscellaneous and Creative Suggestions

- Use a time machine to prevent Measures 47/50 from occurring in the nineties
- Creation of a sports park/basketball field complex to draw fees for tournaments as well as the business those types of events would bring.
- Where is the covered wagon? Use it someplace for education and to raise funds.
- Benefit dinner, benefit concerts, asking local artists to donate time to perform, with a portion of sales going to needed services.
- Pickle ball court near boat launch grass area.
- Get a republican governor!!
- I love the trolly(sic) and I do think we should have a bus pass/ trolly pass for families/students/ etc (sic) that charges an annual fee and goes to support the funding for maintaining the trolly(sic).
- Small increases over time are easier to stomach than a single big jump. And people are more willing to pay more if you demonstrate you’ve exhausted every other option to trim the fat in the budget. There are a lot of people who don’t live in Independence but benefit from these services – how are we ensuring they pay their fair share? Especially during high demand/popular events in the parks. And how can we develop a progressive tax/levy structure that ensures lower income residents aren’t unduly burdened?

