



OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER



TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

FROM: Patrick Urich, City Manager 

DATE: May 18, 2023

SUBJECT: Issues Update

The following are issues related to the City for the weekly Issues Update. Please let me know if there are additional items you believe should be included.



City to Hold Program for Freedom & Remembrance Memorial Park on June 14

Park is located near the previous site of Moffatt Cemetery in South Peoria



The City of Peoria will host a program on Flag Day, Wednesday, June 14 at 10:00 AM to acknowledge the naming of a parcel located at 3917 S.W. Adams Street as Freedom & Remembrance Memorial Park. The program will be held across the street at the corner of West Montana and South Griswold Streets. Street parking will be available.

In 1836, this parcel was part of a larger tract of land granted to Aquilla Moffatt and subsequently became known as Moffatt Cemetery. Between the 1850s and 1905, more than 2,700 persons were buried there as well as remains of unknown persons placed in a mass grave after being removed from another Peoria cemetery. In 1)1905, the Peoria City Board of Health ordered the closure of the cemetery which was then abandoned. Records show that by the 1950s the property was untended and overgrown, many gravestones had been removed or damaged, and the cemetery records were said to be lost.

The area was then prepared for commercial development and street expansion. Around 100 individuals are known to have been removed to other cemeteries from 1887-1936, including nine members of the Moffatt family. However, more than 2,600 Peoria residents remain buried at the site. Included are 52 veterans, 49 of whom are Union Civil War veterans, and Nance Legins-Costly, the first enslaved person that Abraham Lincoln helped free when he won her case before the Illinois Supreme Court in 1841. Several buried there have links to the American Revolution.

A group of local volunteers has led the effort to create Peoria Freedom & Remembrance Memorial, which includes three large Illinois State Historical Society markers, a lighted flagpole, and an information storyboard. The mission of these volunteers was to establish a “fitting tribute to these forgotten citizens of Peoria.” Their efforts have received national recognition from the Illinois State Historical Society, the Abraham Lincoln Association, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War, Sons of the American Revolution, Daughters of the American Revolution, and the William G. Pomeroy Foundation of New York.

The memorial site was donated by the United Union of Roofers Local #69 for a nominal amount and approved for purchase by the City Council at the February 22, 2023, meeting.

Peoria 2023 is here!

City of Peoria Schedules Strategic Planning Kickoff Events on June 1-2

In preparation to develop Peoria’s five-year strategic plan, the city of Peoria is inviting the community to Strategic Planning Kickoff Events scheduled for Thursday, June 1, and Friday, June 2 in the Peoria Civic Center Ballroom, located at 201 SW Jefferson Avenue. Parking will be free in the Marquee and Madison Street lots until 4 pm on both days.

There will be two sessions per day with a morning session from 9 a.m. to noon, and an afternoon session from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. The public is asked to select one session on Thursday and one session on Friday. Please RSVP on the [City's website](#) by Friday, May 26, 2023, by the close of business to confirm attendance.

Mayor Ali encouraged the public to attend the kick-off stating, “The success of our strategic planning lies in robust public input. Community members are encouraged to attend, to voice their thoughts, and contribute to the future of our city.”



The goal of the Strategic Planning Kickoff is to begin a process to establish the priorities of the city over the next two to five years with a two-day event that includes informational presentations and community dialogue about our future. This event is open to all Peoria residents, community/business leaders, commissioners, elected officials, employees, and other stakeholders.

The kickoff will focus on the critical issues facing our community and allow attendees to identify collaborative responses. These events will address topics including city-wide economic development, downtown vibrancy, neighborhood development, infrastructure, and the future fiscal health of the city. The sessions will also explore the public safety ecosystems, integration of diversity, equity, and inclusion within the focus areas, along with preserving, supporting, and expanding arts and culture opportunities within the city.

To track updates on the Strategic Planning Process and future community outreach, or to RSVP, visit [the City's Strategic Plan page](#).

Community Development – Down Payment Assistance Program is still Accepting Applications

The Down Payment Assistance Program is still accepting applications. This program provides homebuyers within Qualifying Census Tracts (QCTs) down payment assistance of either \$5,000 or up to 10% of the purchase price of a single-family home purchase at or below \$125,000 with a primary mortgage.

Applications will be reviewed and funded on a first come, first service basis until the funds are exhausted. Applications may be found at the [Down Payment Assistance Program page](#).

For more information, please contact the City of Peoria Land Bank at 309-494-8600 or [by email](#).

Community Development - Housing Rehabilitation Program is still Accepting Applications

The Housing Rehabilitation Program is still accepting applications. This program provides a 50/50 matching grant with up to \$15,000 of assistance to property owners of single-family residential properties within Qualified Census Tracts (QCT) for exterior building and site improvements.

To qualify for assistance, the homeowner must be located within a QCT and the total household income must be at or below 120% of the area median income by household size. Applicants must have homeowner's insurance, be current on their property taxes, cannot owe any fees or fines to the City of Peoria, and cannot have any environmental code violations.

To view income qualification requirements and whether the property is within a QCT, please visit the [Housing Rehabilitation Program page](#).

Applications, along with a brief training recording, are available at the above link. Applications will be accepted and reviewed until the funds are exhausted.

For more information, please contact Project Coordinator Lane Andrews at 309-494-8636 or [by email](#).

Peoria Fire Department – Arson Canines

Arson Canines Rock and Molly continue their training to detect flammable materials used to commit arson. They are waiting to take the Canine Accelerant Detection Association test to identify up to 12 flammable liquids ranging from paint remover to kerosene. Canine Molly is detecting a drop of flammable liquid in this picture.



Peoria Fire Department - Lateral Transfers

Peoria Fire Department is hosting a badge pinning and swearing-in of two new lateral transfer Firefighters. Firefighter Jakob Johnson and Firefighter Zachary Shubert will join the department's roster on Friday, May 26, 2023. Central House will be hosting a badge pinning and swearing-in at 10:00 am that day in our large conference room. All are welcome to attend.

Peoria Fire Department - Chief Baxter Visits Pleasant Hill School

Division Chief Lore Baxter visited Pleasant Hill grade school to read to a classroom of Pre-K and Kindergarten students and speak to 1st -5th graders about the importance of smoke detectors in the home. By bringing awareness to the importance of fire prevention, children learn about the Fire Department and how to handle emergency situations. Fire Prevention education opens dialog for young children to discuss the importance of early detection in the home.



Point Core-National Safety Stand Down

PointCore Construction held its National Safety Stand Down to discuss the importance of safety on the construction site. Falls are the #1 fatal injury on job sites. During this meeting, topics such as Fall Hazards Faced During an Emergency and Emergency Response To A Serious Work Injury From A Fall were discussed and preventive measures were explored. Chief Lore Baxter



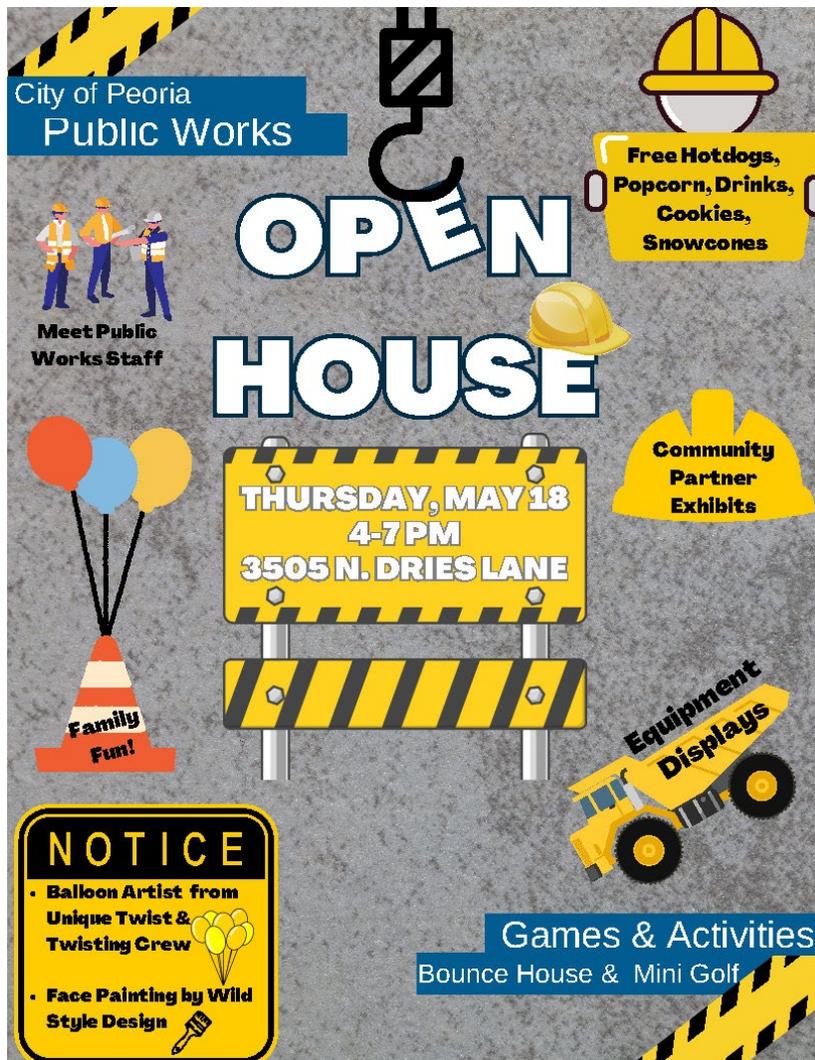
joined this gathering to demonstrate how our company officers use an aerial truck to respond to such emergencies.

Peoria Public Works –Open House Scheduled for Thursday, May 18

To kick off National Public Works Week, the Department of Public Works is hosting an open house from 4-7 pm on Thursday, May 18 at the Public Works Facility, 3505 N. Dries Lane. The Public Works Open House is an all-ages family event that will feature activities and games.

The open house is an opportunity to meet the Public Works crew and learn about the various Public Works divisions through interactive demonstrations and displays. Multiple community partners will also be present with fun, educational exhibits.

Balloon and face painting artists from the Unique Twist & Twisting Crew and Wild Style Design Company will be on hand. A bounce house and complimentary food and drinks will be offered. Visitors will also have the chance to check out the inner workings of plow trucks and street sweepers, as well as have the opportunity to paint a snow plow.



Since 1960, American Public Works Association has sponsored National Public Works Week. Across North America, more than 30,000 members in the U.S. and Canada use this week to energize and educate the public on the importance of public works to their daily lives: planning, building, managing, and operating at the heart of their local communities to improve everyday quality of life.

For more information about the Department of Public Works Open House, contact 309-494-8800.

Peoria Public Schools Update

A huge congratulations to our graduating College and Career Pathway Endorsement Scholars! The Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Act includes a process for school districts to award College and Career Pathway Endorsements to high school graduates. Students earn endorsements by completing an individualized learning plan, a career-focused instructional sequence, and professional learning opportunities. The Illinois State Board of Education has adopted this initiative because they saw the value in students achieving skills to better their job potential and reach career goals. The CNA, Fire Science and Culinary students have received the endorsement by completing the pathway courses including the dual credit hours, clinical hours, career exploration and development experiences, team-based challenges and proof of your academic readiness for college. In addition, two of those students met the College and Career Scholar's attendance and GPA requirements. This is truly a great achievement that helps direct our Peoria students' future career path and ultimately the occupation that they choose.

Congratulations to the following graduating seniors on their completed chosen endorsements and remarkable career paths.

Javon Cox, Culinary

James Johnson, Culinary

Caden Ghidina, Fire Science/EMT

Camrie Gilbert, Fire Science/EMT

Kaleigha Grant, Nursing/CNA

Ke'Asia Gwin, Nursing/CNA

Jorge Romero, Culinary

Ciasiab Yang, Nursing

Alacion Wilson, Fire Science/EMT

Special thanks to Peoria Public Schools' Innovation and Grants Officer, Dr. Susan Grzanich, Woodruff principal Arnold Spiker, and the countless staff members investing in students every day.

With gratitude,



Sharon Desmoulin-Kherat, Ed.D
Superintendent