



Participant Profile

Liberty, Missouri

2019

America in Bloom Participation History:

Year	Rating	Recognized Criterion	Outstanding Achievement (Criterion) Award or Other Award
2019	TBD	TBD	TBD

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Introduction to Liberty, Missouri

Welcome!

We are delighted to have you and thank you in advance for your time. Liberty is far from a new community; it's story began in the early 1800s with the arrival of American settlers. Fast-forwarding the backstory, it was named the county seat for Clay County in 1822, was incorporated in 1829 and is the second-oldest incorporated town west of the Mississippi River. For the full story, the book, "Liberty for All," written and compiled by resident writers and historians, will be available in your rooms for your perusal.

At last count (2017), the city had 31,507 residents and spans 29 square miles. Served by two major interstates (I-35 and I-435) and two main highways, Liberty is easily accessible for new residents and businesses.

With ongoing business and residential developments in northern and southern parts of the city, the continued vibrancy of the historic business district, an award-winning school district, highly ranked college and excellent municipal services, the city is expected to keep growing. While preserving the historic districts and residences, Liberty continually strives to offer new, as well as enhance current, economic opportunities, diverse housing, safe streets, an active community center/theatre, parks and a strong, supportive sense of community.

Speaking of parks and given the purpose of this visit, please know that Liberty has 13 parks, 17 miles of trails, a beautiful nature sanctuary and a plethora of other related places. As the community profile will detail, there are also many visual and environmental endeavors in place. The City has had a Tree City designation since 2005 for its commitment to its community forest and is open to Community Improvement Districts. CIDs are able to use the tax-generated funds for a variety of improvements, including landscaping. It's just one of the many ways the City is involved in strengthening its visual and environmental beauty.

We hope you find your visit enjoyable, and we appreciate and welcome any feedback and advice you can give us in the ongoing quest to improve our city.

Sincerely,

The Liberty in Bloom Committee



Community At A Glance

Community name: City of Liberty, Missouri

Population: 31,507

Website: www.libertymissouri.gov; www.libertymissouri.gov/LibertyInBloom

Contact name: Tom Garland, Parks & Recreation Assistant Director

AIB committee chair contact: Shea O'Dell

County: Clay County

Form of government: Mayor-City Council-Administrator form of government

What jurisdiction(s) operates the public-school system? Liberty Public School Board

What jurisdiction operates the utilities (water, sewer, electrical, trash, recycling, etc.)?

The City of Liberty operates water and sewer utilities and contracts with a third party for trash and recycling collection. Electric and gas utilities are offered by local companies.

Area in square miles: 28.928

Acres of parkland: more than 500 acres

Do you have a volunteer coordinator? No, we have staff that coordinate several volunteer programs, but the City does not have a designated volunteer coordinator.

Have there been any challenges this year weather-related or otherwise, that the judges should know about? The Liberty area experienced a wetter than normal winter and cooler spring, which affected planting schedules.



Community Vitality

Leadership & Policy

CV.a.01 - Municipal volunteer boards are in place

Citizen involvement is essential for strong local governance. The City of Liberty promotes this involvement through numerous boards, commissions, task forces and special projects/programs. Volunteers on the [20 City-appointed advisory boards, commissions and committees](#) support the Mayor, City Council and staff in carrying out the many programs and services offered by the City. These include the Arts Commission, Citizen Sales Tax Committee, Historic District Review Commission, Parks & Recreation Board and Tree Board.

CV.a.02 - Clean Air (such as No Smoking) policies implemented

After a group of Liberty residents presented the Deputy City Clerk with a proposed ordinance and petition to prohibit smoking in enclosed places of employment and public spaces in April 2009, the Liberty City Council voted to put the issue before the voters that fall. Liberty voters approved the smoking ban with 70.43 percent of the vote. With this in place, smoking and vaping are prohibited inside Liberty businesses.

CV.a.03 - Municipality offers grants to neighborhood associations for enhancements

The City's Neighborhood Enhancement Grant Program helps residents reinvest in their neighborhoods. With \$10,000 in the City's budget annually, this matching program allows residents to identify priorities for their neighborhood and undertake the enhancement project together.

Grant awards range from \$500 to \$10,000 depending on the scope of the project, the number of grant proposals received and the funding available. Grant awards are competitive and selected by the City's Preservation and Development Commission, which considers feasibility, need and potential impact to the neighborhood and community.

See also Tree Grants under EE.a.01 - Environmental Advisory Board(s) and/or Green Team(s) in place

CV.a.04 - Master plan in place for public green space and parks

In 2014, the Liberty Parks & Rec Department developed [The Trails and Greenways Plan](#) to serve as a guide to achieving the goal of a citywide, interconnected, multiuse trail system. The plan was guided by a Staff Advisory Team, informed by previous and ongoing parks and trails planning efforts and developed through a public participation process consisting of community meetings and online information and feedback.

The purpose of this plan is to establish the framework for a citywide multiuse trail system, enhancing opportunities for accessible recreation and non-motorized transportation for Liberty's citizens.

The implementation of the plan is expected to provide a suite of community benefits, including an overall increase in active outdoor recreation, with the many associated mental and physical health benefits for people of all ages. The plan includes a map of the citywide trail system with nearly 80 miles of trails along streets, streams, upland greenways, former roadways within rail corridors and other rights-of-way. This plan includes a discussion of the priorities, processes and standards to be followed in trail development projects. Completion of the system of trails and greenways identified in this plan will require new partnerships, funding sources and construction mechanisms. As the trail system grows across the city, Liberty will become a healthier, greener and better-connected community with abundant opportunities for accessible transportation and outdoor recreation.

CV.a.05 - ADA accessibility in public outdoor areas including play equipment

Liberty Parks & Rec is currently working with a design team to rejuvenate one of its parks to include an inclusive playground. In addition, when the Public Works Department undertakes major roadway improvements, any necessary ADA improvements to sidewalks and crosswalks are included as well.

CV.a.06 - Promotion of alternative transportation: pedestrian, bicycling, car/van pools, ride sharing, and/or mass transit

Funded in part through grants from the Mid-America Regional Council and Clay County Senior Services, the City is able to provide the [Liberty Access Bus Service](#) to all senior citizens age 60 and older for free transportation to doctor appointments, pharmacy and the grocery store within city limits. Liberty Access is also available to seniors for nonessential trips to the Liberty Silver Center, banks, etc., for \$1 each way. Physically challenged individuals (ages 18-59) who do not have access to their own transportation may also utilize Liberty Access for a nominal fee. The service operates Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. In 2018, the Liberty Access Bus provided 7,324 one-way medical and Silver Center trips.

Facilities & Events

CV.b.01 - Outdoor recreation facilities meet community needs: parks, playgrounds, splash pads, dog parks, sports fields, sports courts, swimming pools, golf courses, kayak/canoe trails, public access to water bodies, etc.

The [Liberty Parks & Rec Department](#) maintains more than [500 acres of parkland](#), which include 10 neighborhood parks, two destination parks and a nationally recognized sports complex. Within these facilities, area residents can enjoy a wide variety of activities and amenities.

- One of the community's largest and busiest parks, the 112-acre Stocksdale Park, offers walking and biking trails, an [18-hole disc golf course](#) designed for all skill levels, [two dog parks](#) with one dedicated to smaller dogs, horseshoe courts, a cricket pitch, a playground and two picnic shelters. In addition, it serves as the home course for Liberty's high school and middle school cross-country teams.
- Other parks offer spraygrounds, playgrounds geared for a variety of ages, basketball courts, sports fields and tennis courts. Thanks to a voter-approved use tax in April 2018, Liberty's parks system is receiving some major updates in 2019 and 2020. With input provided from park neighbors and patrons, 10 neighborhood parks will see amenities updates and upgrades in 2019 in the form of new playgrounds, clearing of park land, benches, restrooms, water fountains, swings and more. City Park, one of the community's most popular parks, will undergo a dramatic transformation over the next two years with a new inclusive playground, a themed sprayground and other upgrades. This year will also see the construction of three to four pickleball courts at the gateway to the Westboro/Canterbury Greenway.
- The City has 17 miles of [trails](#) within its parks system, many of which connect with neighborhood sidewalks to extend the trail network outside of the City's parks.
- The [Liberty Community Center](#) (LCC) offers an outdoor pool and a kiddie pool for summer fun. The outdoor pool also is home to the Liberty Storm swim team.
- [Fountain Bluff Sports Complex](#) is a nationally recognized facility that brings in baseball, softball and soccer teams from the region and beyond for league and tournament play. It also offers covered playgrounds and seating, two miles of walking trails and eight ponds for fishing.



*Bad Rock Creek Disc Golf Course
at Stocksdale Park*



*Liberty Summer Band concert
in front of the James S. Rooney Justice Center*



*"Make Music Liberty" is held
annually on June 21.*

[Martha Lafite Thompson Nature Sanctuary](#) is a private, nonprofit nature sanctuary with 100 acres of land, nestled on the east side of Liberty. In addition to offering environmental and natural science education programs, the sanctuary offers nearly four miles of hiking trails, providing the opportunity to explore diverse habitats that include woodlands, recreated prairie, a frog pond and the beautiful Rush Creek. Two paved trails, including one that is accessible to everyone, give visitors a taste of the natural world near the interpretive center. The trails are popular with hikers, walkers, joggers, nature enthusiasts and photographers. A picnic shelter with seating for 100 is available for reservation.

The [Earnest & Edna Shepherd Youth Center](#) includes 62 acres encompassing woods, trails, meadows and creeks and offers educational, leadership, as well as recreational programs and facilities for youth and the community that foster character development and create a learning laboratory to help youth help themselves.

CV.b.03 - Performances/events for art, dance, theatre, music, and/or cinema

Opened in 1992, the [Liberty Performing Arts Theatre](#) (LPAT) is a 700-seat venue located within the City-owned and operated LCC. The LPAT provides quality acoustics, sightlines from any seat, free parking and one of the largest stages in the Kansas City area. It is the only professional live-performance venue north of the river and regularly hosts multidiscipline events. In 2018, the LPAT hosted 117 events/attractions, including middle school plays and musicals, orchestra and band concerts, dance competitions and recitals. These events brought more than 80,000 people to the facility.

The [Liberty Arts Commission](#) (LAC) coordinates [Make Music Liberty](#) as part of the global Make Music Day that occurs annually on June 21, the first day of summer. This year will mark Liberty's fourth year as a participant. The event brings musicians of all ages and musical abilities together to showcase their talent while local businesses, churches, homeowners and the City provide the venues. From morning until evening, all genres of music can be heard throughout the city free to the public. Make Music Day is a festival that calls the entire community together to celebrate the musical arts.

The LAC has developed an [Art Grants](#) program to support arts events and projects designed to increase tourism and encourage participation in the arts by residents and visitors to our city. Grant winners are chosen based on artistic excellence, accomplishments to date and the promise of future achievement.

With a history dating back to the 1880s as the Corbin Opera House, today's [Corbin Theatre](#) has a storied history as a social and entertainment center of Liberty. Today, through the generosity of donors and the hard work of numerous volunteers, Corbin Theatre offers a variety of performances and events throughout the year, including live music by local Kansas City musicians, theatrical productions and Corbin Kids Camps. Recurring events include Poetry on the Square and Jazz on the Square, which has operated for 17 years.

Founded in 1971, the [Liberty Symphony Orchestra](#) presents a series of concerts at the LPAT, as well as community outreach concerts in other venues. More than 60 professional and amateur musicians, representing Liberty and the surrounding area, comprise an ensemble dedicated to the finest in symphonic performance. In fall 2010, the Liberty Symphony Orchestra was named the official orchestra of the City of Liberty.

With a history dating back to 1972, the [Liberty Summer Band](#) is one of the oldest community bands in the metropolitan area. At the heart of the band are its 65-70 players, ranging from teenagers to older adults, from Liberty and surrounding communities. The band gives four concerts each summer, and the first three concerts of each season take place on Tuesday evenings in June. The final concert is a patriotic concert in conjunction with the City's annual Independence Day celebration. The band represents the strengths of community partnerships with William Jewell College, Liberty Parks & Rec and the Liberty Public School District.

Founded in 2003, the [Liberty Community Chorus](#) is an 80-voice chorus open to singers 16 years of age and older. The chorus consists of volunteer singers from throughout the greater Kansas City area who prepare, rehearse and perform modern and ancient choral works from the world's great composers. The chorus performs a minimum of two concerts each year with extra performances added occasionally during the seasons.

In conjunction with the City of Liberty, William Jewell College and Mid-Continent Public Library, the LAC has developed [four gallery spaces](#) in Liberty that offer rotating art exhibits throughout the year. The LAC often hosts receptions for the public to meet the artists.

B&B Theatres recently opened their flagship theatre in Liberty. The theater houses ScreenX, the largest screen in the world at four stories tall and seven stories wide. This is one of four screens of this type in the United States. The theater also offers heated reclining leather seats in all theaters, an event space that can be rented for private parties and an on-site restaurant that features live jazz music and trivia nights. Based in Liberty, the family-owned B&B Theatres operates 50 locations with 400 screens across seven states. It's the seventh largest theater chain in the U.S.

CV.b.04 - Run/walk/bike/kayak/canoe events are held

In its third year, the [Liberty Hospital Half Marathon and Jewell 5K](#) continue to grow. In 2019, nearly 3,000 runners signed up for the event, which is held in early March and is part of the Heartland 39.9 series. The entry fees for the races support the Liberty Hospital Foundation's LiveWell grants. Since 2015, the foundation has distributed \$300,000 to local nonprofit agencies for health and wellness programs in Kansas City's Northland region.

CV.b.05 - Benches and seating available near walking, exercise, and playground areas

The Liberty Parks & Rec Department offers benches and seating along trails, in the dog park and around playgrounds and spraygrounds. With requests for additional benches by park patrons as part of upgrades to 10 neighborhood parks, Parks & Rec staff determined they could make and install better benches for less money than purchasing new. These new benches will be added to parks and along trails throughout 2019.

CV.b.06 - Structures, shade sails, or trees provide shade for spectators and/or participants

Liberty Parks & Rec utilizes gazebos, picnic shelters, trees and shade sails to provide shade throughout the parks and trails system.

CV.b.07 - Playgrounds exist and age-appropriate ranges of equipment are offered

Liberty Parks & Rec offers 16 playgrounds throughout the parks system geared for a variety of ages.

CV.b.08 - Public library/resources center is available

Already a popular place for residents of all ages, the [Liberty Branch of the Mid-Continent Public Library](#) will be building a new 18,500-square-foot facility on a six-acre property not too far from its current location. The facility will offer a variety of upgraded amenities, including a community programming room for classes and forums, enclosed meeting/study rooms, as well as teen and children's areas. Construction is tentatively scheduled to begin in late 2019, and the current Liberty Branch will remain open throughout construction.



Historic Downtown Liberty Farmers' Market is one of two markets that operates May-October.



The Liberty Hospital Half Marathon is one of the largest half marathons in the Kansas City metropolitan area.



One of two new playgrounds along the Westboro/Canterbury Greenway

CV.b.09 - Community center is available

The [Liberty Community Center](#) (LCC) offers a wellness center with cardio and strength equipment, along with two indoor pools, an outdoor and kiddie pool, as well as a multipurpose gym that is used for fitness classes, basketball, pickleball and more. A range of fitness and wellness programs for all ages, including land and water aerobics, is also offered. For the city's seniors, the LLC is home to the [Liberty Silver Center](#) where older adults (60+) come to socialize, participate in activities and special events and enjoy a hot, nutritious meal.

CV.b.10 - Farmers' Market(s) is available

Area residents can buy locally sourced produce, meat and more at two farmers markets in Liberty.

The [Historic Downtown Liberty Farmers Market](#) is open every Saturday morning May through October. Local vendors line the streets around the middle of the downtown square with fresh produce, flowers, eggs, baked goods and craft items. Sellers come from as far as 50 miles away to display their goods, and all produce sold is raised and harvested within a 100-mile radius of Liberty.

The Liberty Farmers Market is held on Wednesdays, May – October, in the parking lot of a local farm supply store. This market offers vendor-grown produce, flowers, herbs, eggs, a variety of homemade consumables like jams and breads, along with other vendor-created items.

Community Involvement

CV.c.01 - Community gardening sites are in use

Parks & Rec has a pilot community garden within its parks system that, with the help of a caretaker and neighborhood volunteers, has begun to flourish. The caretaker and volunteers tend the garden through the planting and growing season and share in the harvest.

In 2014, Parks & Rec partnered with The Giving Grove, an affiliate of the Kansas City Community Garden, to create an edible tree garden in Ruth Moore Park as a sustainable food production source for the community. Of the 14 trees that were planted in 2014, six trees are beginning to provide fruit.

CV.c.02 - Level of participation in food banks, hunger-relief, Plant a Row for the Hungry (GardenComm initiative), etc.

Area residents who are facing difficult times have several nonprofit or church-based food pantries that can provide some relief each week. All of the food pantries rely on donations of food and money to fulfill their missions to help our neighbors in need.

The City, in conjunction with the volunteer Liberty Community Christmas Tree Commission, annually organizes the [Liberty Community Christmas Tree](#) program to lend a hand to disadvantaged families and older adults who are facing a difficult holiday season. The success of this program is made possible through donations of money, food and hundreds of volunteers who collect and sort food, shop for presents for the children in the program and deliver food and gifts to the participating families. As part of the program, the Liberty Public School District coordinates food drives to gather thousands of nonperishable food items that are also distributed. The LCCT Commission raises thousands of dollars that are used in part to purchase perishable food items and other necessities for the participating families. In 2018, the commission raised \$44,134 to help 295 families with 760 children and 127 senior adult only households.

[Liberty Meals on Wheels](#) delivers much more than just a meal to its recipients. At the core of this service is a nutritious meal, friendly visit and safety check for seniors living within the city limits of Liberty. Meals are delivered on weekdays by permanent and substitute volunteer drivers who donate their lunch break to help recipients in need. In 2018, volunteers delivered 15,105 meals.

The [Liberty Senior Center](#) is a place where adults ages 60 and better come to socialize, participate in activities, special events and enjoy a hot nutritious meal at an affordable price. In 2018, the Silver Center served 10,283 meals.

Flowers

Leadership and Policy

FL.a.01 – Public or private management of flower displays.

Liberty shines with its numerous floral displays throughout the city. There are both public and privately managed flower installations in a wide variety of locations, including roadways, trails, neighborhoods, shopping districts, public buildings and recreation areas. The historic downtown is filled with newly planted beds and pots in the pedestrian areas and create a welcoming environment for all.

- **Municipal** – The Parks & Rec staff who manage the floral displays are led by a horticulturist and a part-time seasonal employee who works in the floral/landscaping field. They are responsible for landscape design, as well as maintenance and beautification throughout the city. Their efforts have a visual impact on the quality of life in our community. Some of the staff’s tasks include:
 - » Upkeep of the floral and landscape displays, turf maintenance and street tidiness.
 - » Design and installation of seasonal floral displays in City facilities such as City Hall, the LCC and Fountain Bluff Sports Complex.
 - » City maintenance of many right-of-way plantings at various locations throughout Liberty. There are median and island beds where a variety of annual and perennial displays provide color and texture to the streetways.
 - » Operation of a watering truck that makes regular rounds to keep flower beds and island plantings watered and fertilized.
 - » Creation of floral displays at City parks and trails.
- **Business** – Many businesses plant and maintain a variety of in-ground and raised beds, window boxes, trellises and hanging baskets both in parking and pedestrian areas. These can be found in:
 - » Historic downtown businesses.
 - » Liberty Commons, a newer shopping center.
 - » B&B Theaters, a new megaplex theater/restaurant.
 - » Seaport, a business complex.
- **Residential** – Many beautiful displays are maintained by private residences throughout the city. From luscious potted annuals and perennials to bright beds of flowers, there is color from one end of the city to the other.



A local business arranged this seating area in downtown Liberty.



Historic Downtown Liberty, Inc. plans and coordinates maintenance of the in-ground beds and pots around downtown.



Flowers and greenery cascade around this George Washington statue.

- **Community Involvement** – Numerous private and not-for-profit entities provide planted areas throughout the city:
 - » Historic Downtown Liberty Inc. (HDLI) – A Missouri Main Street Organization
 - Designs and facilitates maintenance of the in-ground planter beds and pots surround the downtown square.
 - Manages the Historic Downtown Liberty Farmers Market that sells plants and flowers.
 - Placed a recently installed irrigation system in the planter beds around the square to simplify maintenance and provide more regular watering of in-ground planter beds.
 - » Martha LaFite Thompson Nature Sanctuary
 - Native flower installations throughout the property with numerous trails.
 - Maintenance of the butterfly garden, a registered Monarch Waystation, by The Master Gardeners of Greater Kansas City. They have also planted and maintain a garden in the parking lot island with native plants and shrubs that feed native birds year-round.
 - » William Jewell College
 - Maintains the campus, which has a wide variety of floral displays and landscaped beds.
 - » Liberty Town and Country Garden Club
 - Maintains the Rotary Plaza in the historic downtown business district. Volunteers plant and maintain the garden weekly. They removed invasive plants and have planted primarily native plants that bring nature to the downtown area planting for birds, butterflies and bees. This is also a registered Monarch Waystation.
 - Offers a free plant share mid-May where club members freely share their plants with the public. They have had free iris rhizome giveaways in July.

Plan of Action

FL.b.01 – Action plan developed each season for procurement, scheduling, planting, and maintenance of flower displays

- Parks & Rec staff develops landscape designs as well as planting and maintenance schedules for beds at parks, City facilities and medians.
- William Jewell uses perennial plants and shrubs in in-ground plantings to help limit planting time, maintenance and fertilization. Large pots in the growing season are planted with colorful annuals. They peak performance at May graduation and again in August when students return to campus.
- HDLI develops an action plan and coordinates a planting selection and schedule for three planting seasons in the first quarter of each year, which is then put out to contractor bid ahead of spring planning.
- Liberty Town and Country Garden Club members do a spring cleanup and work with Rotarians mulching the garden at Rotary Plaza. A color scheme is selected, annuals are purchased and a club planting day is arranged. Each year perennials are added, focusing on native plants.

Design

FL.c.01 – Unity and variety: plant combinations create visual interest and dramatic effect while appearing coordinated

FL.c.02 – Suitability of plant selections: plants selected for current and expected environmental conditions

Native plants are preferred and used throughout all programs. City-managed installations that include native plants are the Southview Trails and Canterbury Butterfly Garden.

FL.c.03 – Distribution and location: displays found throughout the community and at key locations

The City has distributed planted areas throughout the city and at all public buildings and parks throughout the community. Many of the main thoroughfares are lined with annual and perennial plantings.

FL.c.04 – Seasonal displays: seasonal displays with spring, summer, fall, and/or holiday displays

HDLI provides spring, summer and fall seasonal flower displays throughout historic downtown.

Maintenance

FL.d.01 – Watering procedures to maintain growth in place

- The City has a water truck.
- HDLI has an irrigation system around the square.

FL.d.02 – Fertilization: appropriate fertilization procedures using slow-release, liquid fertilizers, and/or soil amendments

The City strives to install as many perennial installations as possible to help keep planting, fertilizing and weeding to a minimum. Shredded organic mulch is used in garden beds, and as the mulch breaks down, nutrients are added to the soil.

FL.d.03 – Grooming: regular pruning, dead-heading, removal and replacement of dead plants

All programs provide regular maintenance including pruning, dead-heading and other efforts to keep all areas properly maintained.

FL.d.04 – Plant health strategies in place to monitor and manage pests and diseases (IPM)

Educated staff and volunteers visually inspect flowers during maintenance and remediate any pests and diseases with appropriate treatment.

FL.d.05 – Health and vigor: plants are robust and floriferous

Plant selection and sun/shade location are key to keeping plants vigorous, as well as planting and maintenance techniques. Planting the right plant in the right place is key. Since plantings need to survive the heat and drought common in western Missouri, low-water usage plants or xeriscape plants are often selected.

Community Involvement

FL.e.01 – Volunteers provide donations and/or funds and/or participate in the design, planting, and/or care of the flower displays

HDLI operates partially on donated funds. Until the recent Community Improvement District (CID) was approved, HDLI provided all of the flowerpots in the historic downtown with donations. HDLI now uses funds from the CID to manage and maintain both the pots and in-bed planters throughout the season.

FL.e.02 – Civic groups, garden clubs, master gardeners, school programs, etc., sponsor plant sales, plant swaps, provide info, or educational sessions that contribute to the quality and implementation of the community's flower display

- Liberty Town and Country Garden Club holds an annual plant share.
- Martha Lafite Thompson Nature Sanctuary holds many educational programs for children and adults.
- The Master Gardeners of Greater Kansas City offer many educational programs.
- Missouri Master Naturalists volunteer and teach classes at Martha Lafite Thompson Nature Sanctuary.

Landscaped Areas

Leadership and Policy

LA.a.01 - Management of planting public landscaped areas

Seven of the new and refurbished shopping areas and strip malls in Liberty have chosen to be CIDs, which allows for various improvements garnered from an additional one-percent sales tax. Several of these areas are using funds to refurbish and update parking lots and landscaping. In addition, the downtown business district property owners implemented a CID to enhance funding for a variety of items, including landscaping, banners, benches and attractive trash receptacles.

Staff from Parks & Rec provide annuals/perennials at several municipal buildings, in nine of the City's medians and at several major intersections and traffic islands. There is also a planting bed at the corner of Leonard and Mill streets that highlights one of the Great American Project statues. One major, recent enhancement was implemented when Liberty Drive was widened to include a sidewalk, bike lanes and a large retaining wall with Virginia creeper draping to soften the hardscape, along with a landscaped median.

The City also has three roundabouts that park staff landscape each year. Two of those are located in the Liberty Triangle shopping area. The attractive landscaping in these roundabouts highlights kinetic wind sculptures created by internationally known artist Lyman Whitaker. The organic forms of each unique piece are sculpted in metal that is designed to patina over time and move gently in the wind.

LA.a.02 - Municipal landscape ordinance requires landscaping and maintenance for new and/or improved commercial development

To ensure that new development preserves and enhances the natural beauty of Liberty by including trees, shrubs and colorful plants, the City adopted a landscaping ordinance in 2013 and encouraged owners and developers to "exceed the minimum standards and include annual flowers for color."

Several of the older strip malls and the downtown business district have set up CIDs to provide funding to keep facades and appearances of these important retail areas at a high level. One of the facets is upgrading landscaping. The most obvious and dramatic change in landscaping has occurred in the historic downtown area, which underwent a \$5 million reconstruction in 2016-17. This project included the installation of planting beds and containers.

Plan of Action

LA.b.01 - Planning for restoration of natural areas

Liberty's water source is an aquifer that runs south of the city near the Missouri River, with 11 wells on 100+ acres. For a few years, the City leased the land to an adjacent farmer for his corn crops. Then a park employee noted the land was being air-sprayed with fertilizer and other materials that, at least theoretically, could risk the City's water supply. The City ended the lease and planted 20 acres with approximately 10,000 native trees along Shoal Creek; the rest of the land is planted with native prairie grasses. The City is also adding a solar farm that will power the 11 water pumps, as well as power the ball field lighting in the nearby Fountain Bluff Sports Complex.

LA.b.02 - Strategy for management of invasive plants

"Goats on the Go," a goat rental franchise, was utilized in 2018 and will continue in 2019 as an effective way to clear out acres of overgrown weeds and invasive plants at Stocksdale Park. It is a sustainable, innovative brush-management system. The goats are fenced in small areas and take down poison ivy and invasive weeds without the use of chemicals. Goats on the Go takes the goats to a location, sets up temporary fencing and lets them eat until the weeds are under control.

LA.b.03 - Demonstration/display gardens with interpretive signage (pollinator, wildlife, native, low-water use, etc.) in place and promoted

Liberty is unique in having its own nature sanctuary which began with a vision of a gardener and nature lover, Martha Lafite Thompson. The sanctuary became a reality in 1975.

The Martha Lafite Thompson Nature Sanctuary is 100 acres, and its mission includes providing engaging hands-on environmental and natural science education for all ages, biodiversity of native plants and animals through wise management of our natural resources, understanding that all Earth's inhabitants are part of complex, interdependent ecosystems and opportunities for reflection and reconnection with the natural world. A large butterfly garden in the sanctuary is a registered Monarch Waystation, and the parking lot island is designed with native plants that feed birds.

Another of Liberty's 12 registered Monarch Waystations is located just off the historic square in Rotary Plaza. At this garden, Liberty's Town and Country Garden Club has removed invasive plants and planted pollinator-friendly, pesticide-free plants. There also are backyard wildlife habitats in Liberty. One very visible to the community is located on Wilson Street and displays signage by the National Wildlife Federation.

LA.b.04 - Effective communication to residents of "Right Plant in the Right Place" and/or invasive plant issues

The City's monthly newsletter periodically includes information about planting trees, conserving water and recycling. Information is also shared on the City's website, weekly NewsFlash, monthly Parks Destination Connection and quarterly Historic Liberty Living e-newsletters. In addition, the City shares information on its Facebook page, which has 11,992 followers, and its Twitter feed, which has 6,065 followers.

Four pages on tree initiatives can be found on the City's website. They are Champion Trees, the Heritage Tree Program, a comprehensive 2014 Tree Management Plan and a thorough listing of appropriate street trees to be planted both for free standing and under power lines.

The City website lists trees that should be planted and also lists trees that are prohibited to be planted. The site has links to the Missouri Department of Conservation website for proper planting of trees and shrubs. The Tree Board hosts an Arbor Day training at one of the local middle schools to give kids some basics about what to look for in a tree and how to decide which tree would grow best in different locations.

LA.b.05 - Recognition program for attractive landscapes in place

In planning for Liberty's first year with America In Bloom, the group developed a garden stick logo for anyone wanting to participate in AIB in order to facilitate interest in the program.

Design

LA.c.01 - Unity and Variety: plant combinations create visual interest while appearing coordinated

Coordinated visual interest combinations can be found in these settings:

- William Jewell College's transition to a more pedestrian campus created the opportunity for coordinated landscaping along walkways and the historic Grand River Chapel located on campus.
- The landscaping in three Liberty roundabouts highlights kinetic wind sculptures.
- Landscaping beds around welcome signs at each of Liberty's 13 parks.
- The George Washington monument (Great Americans Project).
- The Historic Downtown Liberty business district flowerbeds and pots are coordinated to present a fluid landscape, which underwent a \$5 million reconstruction in 2016-17. This project included the installation of planting beds and containers

LA.c.02 - Suitability of plant selections: plants selected for existing and anticipated environmental conditions

The City's [Unified Development Ordinance](#) requires new subdivisions and new commercial developments to plant

trees and shrubs that can survive and prosper in the City's USDA Cold Hardiness Zone 6a as, well as the American Horticultural Society Heat Zone 7. It also states that the plants should be able to tolerate the soil conditions and other site-specific conditions. The park staff review proposed plans to ensure the plants that are proposed meet the City code. They also look to make sure that plants near the street or parking lot can handle summer, radiant heat and winter salt. In addition, Parks & Rec staff review the trees that are required to make sure they meet with the approved tree list that the Tree Board has established.

LA.c.03 - Distribution/Locations: landscaping found throughout the community and at key locations

Key attractions include:

- William Jewell College campus: Landscaping is especially developed around the driving entrance on Mill Street, highlighted by the Terry Barnes Fountain, around Gano Chapel, the quad and Grand River Chapel.
- Second Baptist Church Memorial Garden: There is a memorial garden where deceased members names can be placed on a brass plaque within a landscaped alcove.
- Neighborhood Entrances: Bent Oaks, Liberty Run and Huntington Ridge have landscaped entrances. Huntington Ridge received a Neighborhood Enhancement Grant to plant trees as a buffer between houses and the post office across the street.
- Norterre: A multi-generational apartment complex adjacent to Liberty hospital offers Performance Park, which includes naturally landscaped gardens highlighted with lavender and eucalyptus.
- Tree House: One feature of this temporary housing for families of patients at Liberty Hospital is a paved walking trail, located on the east side of the hospital campus. In addition to the trail landscaping, the northernmost end has the Garnett M. Peters III garden arbor.
- Around the signs of Liberty's 13 parks.
- Around the three Liberty roundabouts.
- The median at MO-291 and West Liberty Drive.
- A walking trail at the Heartland Meadows industrial park.
- The historic downtown Liberty business district.

Maintenance

LA.d.01 - Grooming: pruning of plants, removal and/or replacement of dead plants

The City has designated staff who manage Liberty's landscaping program. This includes planning landscaping each year, mulching, weeding and the care and removal of dead plants.



Garnett M. Peters III garden arbor and walking trail on the Liberty Hospital campus



William Jewell College landscaping leading up to the Grand River Chapel

LA.d.02 - Plant Health: strategies such as IPM (Integrated Pest Management) in place to monitor and manage diseases and pests

Emerald ash borer (EAB) is now established in Missouri and virtually every state north and east. In May, 2015, EAB infestations were confirmed in the city. Every ash tree in our area is now at risk of being attacked and killed in the near future. The City has developed a management strategy for ash trees in parks and along city rights-of-way. The plan includes treatment of the highest-value trees and removal and replacement of all others.

LA.d.03 - Weed Management: strategies in place to manage weeds (removal, mulching, etc.)

Historic Downtown Liberty, Inc. has a team of volunteers who serve as weed warriors, removing them once or twice a year in the downtown business district.

LA.d.04 - Health and Vigor: plants are robust

Park staff monitor all planting beds and lawn areas, as well as natural areas for vegetation health all year. They keep a close eye on them in the spring to assess any possible winter damage, as well as prune trees and remove shrubs that have been damaged by winter storms.

LA.d.05 - Turf Care: proper mowing, edging, and replacement of dead turf

Lawn areas are mowed by park staff on a five to seven-day cycle, and natural areas that require mowing to keep invasive growth down are cut on a cycle of 15 to 30 days. In addition, staff will reseed lawn areas that show signs of damage and try to aerate the soils on a yearly basis.

LA.d.06 - Turf Health: procedures such as IPM (Integrated Pest Management) in place to monitor and manage diseases, pests, and weeds

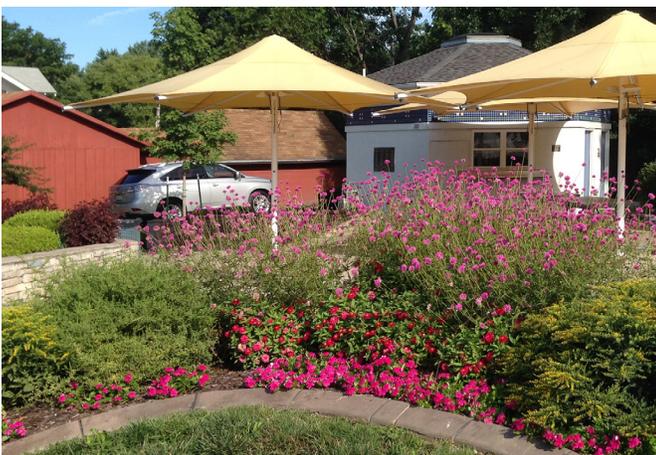
Parks & Rec has three employees who are Missouri certified pesticide applicators, who test to renew their certification every three years. However, they do not use controlled chemicals, as they prefer to use over-the-counter and environmentally friendly products that are available to the average homeowner.

If a pest or a disease is noted, only organic treatment methods are utilized if necessary or economically feasible. Due to the high-use pattern at the Fountain Bluff Sports Complex, playing turf is under an inorganic fertilization schedule.

Community Involvement

LA.e.01 - Volunteers assist in funding, design, installation, and/or care of landscaped areas and/or turf in public areas

After a major vandalism situation at Fairview Cemetery, the City established a cemetery committee with one of their tasks being to mobilize a larger volunteer cadre to keep the cemetery markers cleaned, repaired and free of weeds.



The Town and Country Garden Club maintains the Rotary Plaza landscaping.



Landscaping around the Terry Barnes Fountain at one of the main entrances to William Jewell College

William Jewell College has a strong culture of service to others with fraternities and other campus groups working with City parks one to two days annually.

Several churches have serve days that provide volunteers for outdoor maintenance.

Last fall, a boy scout troop working with Liberty Parks & Rec cleaned back years of invasive trees and vines encroaching on a large open area in Fairview Cemetery that has recently been revealed to be the final resting place for more than 650 African Americans in unmarked graves.

A local citizen worked with Parks & Rec, regional biking groups and the Missouri Department of Conservation to develop a [5.75-mile trail](#) within Stocksdale Park and the Walnut Woods Conservation Area. This trail, built and maintained by volunteers, offers a natural landscape for hikers, cyclists and trail runners.

With funds raised through the [Liberty Arts Foundation](#), the China Slaughter Reading Park was developed across the street from Franklin Elementary School, honoring a man who served for 47 years as a crossing guard and custodian. The treed park has a meandering sidewalk with benches. With the transition of ownership of this park to the City in 2019, City landscapers have just begun to add plantings. As part of this effort, staff worked with the Delta Kappa Gamma Women's Educator's Society in Liberty to add rose bushes. The rose bushes not only celebrate the society's 50th anniversary but also honor China Slaughter, who instilled a love of reading and books in Liberty students.

Begun in 2018, there are two streets in Liberty with volunteers doing periodic trash cleanup. Signs acknowledging a William Jewell College fraternity and a Liberty High School honors group are posted.

The Liberty Cemetery Committee partnered with the VFW and the American Legion in 2013 to construct a landscaped retreat area honoring all branches of the American military and those who have served the country.

The Town and Country Garden Club has adopted the landscaping of the Rotary Plaza between the historic downtown business district and the Dougherty Historic District. One aspect of this work is flower beds that surround the sidewalk edges of the plaza.

Added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2012, Mt. Memorial Cemetery is part of the William Jewell College campus. It was Liberty's original cemetery established in 1836 on one and a half acres when Liberty's population was 700. Since then various groups have created and maintained a landscaped entrance to the cemetery.



William Jewell College unveiled a new entrance on the campus' west side that features an impressive entry sign, light pole banners, landscaping and flowers.

Privately maintained Landscaping at entrance to Bent Oaks subdivision

Urban Forestry

Leadership and Policy

UF.a.01 - Qualified personnel are on staff or accessing trained individuals such as arborists and/or urban foresters

Parks & Rec has two certified arborists. One has both International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) and Kansas Arborist Association (KAA) certification, and the other staff member has KAA certification. For consultation, Liberty can use the services of two metro Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) urban foresters. In addition, Liberty is fortunate to have a retired urban forester who serves on the Tree Board and is often consulted by the City.

UF.a.02 - Tree board/commission and/or department is active

We have an active five-member Tree Board that meets monthly and follows an annual work plan to accomplish goals. The board is responsible for coordination of the annual Arbor Day Celebration. The board also recommends the distribution of a Tree Fund to plant trees in the city, fund neighborhood tree grants and purchase mulch.

UF.a.03 - Municipal ordinance(s) enacted/enforced for tree preservation on public property

Liberty's tree preservation ordinance is in the development code and pertains to all development projects. This includes residential subdivisions when they are being built, as well as commercial and industrial projects. This does not include public improvement projects.

UF.a.04 - Municipal ordinance(s) enacted/enforced for tree preservation on private property

Several years ago, a mayoral task force met for over a year to improve the landscape ordinance, which includes tree preservation, as well as improve plantings on private commercial development sites. A Tree Board member and a TreeLiberty member served on the task force. Developers are now rewarded for preserving eight-inch caliper and greater trees on site. Large trees that are removed must be replanted two for one. If trees cannot be accommodated on-site, developers pay into a Tree Fund, which is used for reforestation in other sections of the City and has allowed the planting of over 400 trees. Liberty has trees incorporated into the City Code, including the unified development ordinance.

UF.a.05 - Municipal ordinance(s) enacted/enforced for protection of trees during construction

Selected trees are protected during construction with protective fencing at the tree dripline. Fencing can be removed only after all construction and grading is complete.

UF.a.06 - Currently a Tree City USA community and/or has the Growth Award designation

In 2004, the City decided to apply to become a Tree City USA, necessitating the formation of a Tree Board. Liberty became a Tree City USA for the first time in 2005, and 2018 is our fifteenth year to be designated. In addition, the City received the Tree City USA Growth Award in 2011, 2013 and 2018.



Educational display on tree topping at the Liberty Community Center



Tree-lined street leading up to the William Jewell College campus



Parks & Rec staff and volunteers planting trees along South Liberty Parkway.

Plan of Action

UF.b.01 - Tree inventory for public areas is complete and current within the past ten years

A partial tree inventory on the south side of the city was done in December 2013, and a previous, more comprehensive, tree inventory was done in 2006. Much of the follow-up work from both inventories has since been completed, including the removal of imperiled trees.

UF.b.02 - Annual tree planting program for public areas

Many trees are planted in the city each year with Neighborhood Tree Grants, Neighborhood Improvement Grants, civic club tree plantings, MDC TRIM grants, Arbor Day trees, emerald ash borer tree replacements, City Tree Fund plantings, Heartland Tree Alliance Tree Fund plantings, the Heritage Tree Program and memorial trees.

UF.b.03 - Management strategies for removal of dead, imperiled, and invasive trees

Winter months are used to identify and remove dead and imperiled trees. At present, there is no comprehensive plan to remove invasive trees. The City operates a limb yard, which is open for citizens twice a year, as well as after damage-producing storms.

UF.b.04 - Policy for recognition and protection of heritage trees in place

A Champion Tree Program was established in 2017 and is still in its early stages. Just as Liberty's historic buildings define our shared cultural legacy, our oldest and largest trees remind us of our unique natural heritage.

UF.b.05 - Effective communication to residents of recommended trees, proper planting, "Right Tree in the Right Place," and/or maintenance

The Community Forestry and the Tree Board sections of the City's and Parks & Rec's websites, social media platforms, as well as print or electronic newsletters are utilized to communicate good tree care practices and acceptable tree lists to citizens.

Design

UF.c.01 - Variety: current practices include appropriate selection of tree species being planted and UF.c.02 - Placement: current practices include appropriate spacing and planting area for optimal root and canopy growth

Developer plantings have left us with too many ornamental pear, pin oak and maple trees, especially on private property, yet Liberty still retains a good variety of trees.

A recent application for a residential neighborhood tree grant requested a monoculture of 11 October Glory Red Maple trees. The Tree Board asked that the neighborhood change its grant application to another large shade tree and suggested swamp white oak. The neighborhood grant site is across the street from a line of 15 October Glory Red Maple trees that were funded by a caring TreeLiberty member before he retired from the group.

Landscape plans are reviewed by a Parks & Rec staff member, and current plantings try to follow the 30-20-10 family-genus-species rule. Tree diversity is a consideration in tree grants and city plantings. A recommended tree list and a "do not plant" list is located on the community forestry portion of the website. Smaller tree lawns or plantings under power lines allow only small-growth trees.

UF.c.03 - Planting: current practices include correct tree planting depth (trunk flare at/above grade)

Trees planted in Liberty follow the Missouri Department of Conservation Tree Planting guidelines with respect to planting holes, removal of circling roots, planting root flares slightly above grade and mulching. Developers have planting guidelines, and contractors planting trees are supervised by City staff.

UF.c.04 - Arboretum in place with labels and descriptive signage

A native tree trail is located in the Westboro/Canterbury Park. For several years, the Tree Board has discussed various signage methods due to concerns with vandalism of plant tags, small calipers preventing adjustable screw signs and tripping/mowing hazards of in-ground signage. In the future, we hope to make a cell phone app utilizing

a geographic information system (GIS) that will locate these trees. Tree identification and specific tree information can be added to the app to inspire our citizens and enhance their knowledge of urban forestry.

Maintenance

UF.d.01 - Tree Health: strategies in place to monitor and manage diseases and pests

In 2008, emerald ash borer (EAB) was found in southeastern Missouri at a campground which is some 300 miles away. In 2012, EAB was found in an adjacent county, and it was suspected to have been present there for five-to-seven years. This was located 15 miles from the city of Liberty. Ash was added to the Liberty's "do not plant list" in 2008.

As soon as it was identified, the City quickly updated the Parks & Rec website with [EAB information](#). At a community meeting with Animal, Plant, Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Missouri Department of Agriculture (MDA) and MDC, Liberty was praised for the comprehensive EAB information on their website. Liberty also adopted a five-year EAB action plan with removals and treatment to stagger the costs. Since many of the ash trees were in parks, the organic method, TreeAzin (azadiractin), treatment was chosen. In the summer of 2015, APHIS, MDA, a Parks & Rec employee and a Tree Board member released three different parasitic wasps known to attack different stages of the EAB in Liberty's Bennett Park. The young ash trees have been removed from the city.

In their routine work, Parks & Rec staff visually check trees for some of the pests on the horizon such as Asian longhorned beetle and gypsy moth, as well as look for symptoms of thousand canker disease in walnut trees.

UF.d.02 - Watering, Mulching, and Pruning for New Trees: procedures for watering and proper mulching in place

New trees are watered in the summer by City staff. Young trees are pruned and mulched by City staff and volunteers as time allows. Information about the detriment of volcano mulching is on the City's website, although this practice is seen on commercial and residential properties.

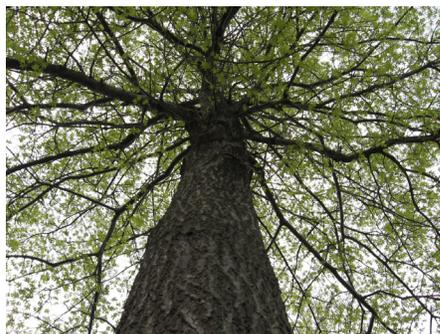
UF.d.03 - Pruning for Established Trees: appropriate pruning, removal of dead limbs, and canopies raised adequately above vehicle and pedestrian areas

City ordinances require an eight-foot height clearance on sidewalks and a 12-foot clearance on roadways. The City sends letters to those citizens who violate this, requiring them to have trees pruned as mandated in City ordinances. Large shade trees on City property are not often pruned since the City does not own a bucket truck at this time.

Related: Liberty has applied for and was awarded several different MDC TRIM Grants, which assisted in funding key community forestry efforts. TRIM is a competitive cost-share tree care program administered by the MDC. Some of these grants have helped with the removal of imperiled trees, preparation of a tree management plan for the city, which included emerald ash borer (EAB) management and a partial tree inventory, tree planting in the historic district after tornado damaged the tree canopy and the first TRIM grant of its kind, a community forestry conservation assessment with the goal to preserve high-value forestry tracts in the face of development pressure.



Liberty Parks & Rec staff injecting TreeAZIN into a ash tree in one of the City's parks.



A pin oak grows strong and tall in a Liberty subdivision.



Park staff & Tree Board members released parasitic wasps to combat EAB in Bennett Park.

Community Involvement

UF.e.01 - Policy for donations to tree planting in public areas (memorial trees, etc.) in place

The Park Board Foundation has a Heritage Tree program, and the names of the honored are placed on a plaque located in the Liberty Community Center. Occasionally there is a request for a low-key memorial tree planting in a specific park or for one to be planted where needed. The Parks & Rec staff handle these requests and does the planting. For example, a request was made for a tree to be planted in Place Liberte' Park where a child once played, and a much-loved citizen who was a former City councilwoman and charter member of TreeLiberty requested memorial contributions to TreeLiberty for trees to be planted in her honor at the Fairview/New Hope Cemetery.

UF.e.02 - Community participates in Arbor Day activities

Arbor Day is a time to reflect on the value of trees and to inspire the upcoming generation, and City celebrations have been varied over the years. Our most successful celebrations have been in the past four years in partnership with Liberty elementary schools to inspire and educate the future generation. A staff member from Heartland Tree Alliance has gone to the school and taught their "Trees are Terrific" Program. After learning about the trees, the students choose a location for planting, along with the genus and species, and each classroom has a tree planted for them.

A typical Arbor Day celebration has at least one tree planted, a Proclamation read by the Mayor, a verbal description and historical accounting of Arbor Day, presentation of the Tree City USA flag and the Growth Award by the MDC Urban Forester. The Tree Board members are in attendance, and tree seedlings are distributed to the students.

UF.e.03 - Volunteers assist in tree planting and/or care

Liberty has been fortunate to have volunteers assist in many aspects of tree care over the years, such as planting, mulching, pruning and removing tree stakes. Some of the groups that have assisted are TreeLiberty, Heartland Tree Alliance, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, William Jewell College fraternity members, Tree Board members, Master Gardeners, Master Naturalists, garden club members and Liberty citizens.

In addition, community members have been invited to various educational programs on the topics of proper tree planting, pruning, pruning field practice and EAB information for homeowners.

Other Community Involvement: Liberty has a rich history in its love of trees. During 1998 and 1999, citizens met to formulate "Blueprint for Liberty: A Future Land Use Plan." Citizens called for "trees, trees, trees." A group of citizens formed the first nonprofit tree volunteer group in the Kansas City area called TreeLiberty and worked with the City to plant, mulch and prune young trees. After ten years, TreeLiberty merged with a larger and newer metro-wide organization, Heartland Tree Alliance, which has similar goals.

Missouri is fortunate to have an outstanding agency, the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC), available to assist communities and citizens with many different conservation efforts. Their forestry division has been a wonderful resource. Their leadership in education, native tree seedling offerings, leadership recognition and Tree Resource Improvement and Maintenance (TRIM) grants has been invaluable to the community forest in Liberty. The City has been honored with the Missouri Arbor Award of Excellence in the Municipalities/Government category, and two Liberty citizens have been awarded the Missouri Arbor Award of Excellence in the Individual category. These awards are given by the MDC at the Missouri Community Forestry Council (MCFC) annual conference.

Environmental Efforts

Leadership and Policy

EE.a.01 - Environmental Advisory Board(s) and/or Green Team(s) in place

The Liberty Tree Board's mission is to develop and maintain the community's trees and forest in a strong, healthy condition for today and the future. The board advises and supports the city's Community Forestry Program.

The Tree Board, with support from the Liberty City Council, offers annual Neighborhood Tree Grants to homeowners associations or organized neighborhood groups with a goal of promoting the health and safety of Liberty citizens by improving air quality, reducing stormwater runoff and providing a more pleasant and attractive environment. This program encourages neighborhoods to plant trees to increase the community forest canopy, which will ensure the continued health, social and environmental benefits trees provide to our community. The purpose of the Neighborhood Tree Grants is to assist Liberty residents with a coordinated and planned program of tree planting on public and private neighborhood property to further enhance the community forest.

EE.a.03 - Electric vehicle charging station(s) provided

There are several locations in Liberty and within minutes of city limits that offer electric vehicle charging stations:

- HyVee, 109 Blue Jay Dr, Liberty, MO
- Walgreen's, 1191 W Kansas St, Liberty, MO
- Liberty Hospital, 2521 Glenn Hendren Dr, Liberty, MO
- Price Chopper, 9717 N, Ash Ave. Kansas City, MO
- WalMart, 8301 N. Church Road Kansas City, MO

EE.a.04 - Stormwater management policies in place Stormwater Management/Quality:

The City received its first Municipal Storm Sewer Permit in March 2003, which was renewed in June 2008 and again in April 2017. As part of the permitting requirements, the City developed a Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP), that includes public education and outreach, illicit discharge detection and elimination, construction site stormwater runoff control, post-construction stormwater management in new developments and redevelopments and pollution prevention/good housekeeping in municipal operations. The City submits biennial reports to the Missouri Department of Natural Resources with information regarding the goals outlined in the SWMP.

Plan of Action

EE.b.02 - Effective education about environmental efforts

The City of Liberty uses a variety of tools to communicate with residents and customers including e-newsletters, website, monthly printed newsletter, cable channel and social media about environmental efforts. Communications cover volunteer opportunities to beautify our community, steps residents can take to safeguard our waterways, recycling tips, promotion of biannual community-wide cleanup weeks, Regional Household Hazardous Waste Collection Program, prescription drug drop box, and more.

[Martha Lafite Thompson Nature Sanctuary](#) is a private, non-profit nature sanctuary that offers educational programs for preschoolers, school groups, scouts and adults, as well as children's summer camp and special events

EE.b.03 - Litter and/or environmental clean-up procedures in use

In 2018, the City launched an [Adopt-A-Street program](#) in an effort to fight litter and keep our roadways beautiful. The City of Liberty Public Works Department maintains more than 350 miles of streets year-round. Unfortunately, the best of care does not stop people from littering our roadways. A fraternity at William Jewell College was the first group to sign up to help clean the roadways, followed closely by a service group from the Liberty Public School District. The Public Works Department works with groups to identify areas in need and provides trash bags, gloves, reflective vests and litter crew signs if needed. Once the clean up is completed, Public Works crews collect and dispose of the trash bags.

In 2018, Parks & Rec began coordinating the community-wide [Team Up to Cleanup](#). In an effort to help keep our parks clean and to encourage community stewardship of our natural resources, the program invites neighborhood residents, city residents, families, friends, nature enthusiasts and anyone else to join staff for a single-day park and community cleanup each quarter. Parks & Rec provides trash bags and gloves. Once the cleanup is completed, Parks crews collect and dispose of the trash bags.

EE.b.04 - Brownfield clean-up policies in place

The state of Missouri Department of Natural Resources has a Brownfields cleanup program to provide oversight for the cleanup of properties contaminated with hazardous substances.

Resource Conservation

EE.c.01 - Buildings are LEED certified and/or follow the standards

Rather than requiring LEED certification, the City of Liberty has adopted the provisions of the [International Energy Conservation Code](#) for all new building construction.

EE.c.02 - Bio-swailes and/or rain gardens to reduce pollution in place

These practices are provided as options in the regionally accepted Stormwater Best Management Practices Manual as a way to reduce pollution, downstream erosion and flooding. This manual has been formally adopted by the City.

EE.c.03 - Home energy audit/incentives available

Electricity is provided to the City by Kansas City Power and Light (KCPL). KCPL offers a [free program to install energy-saving products](#) in a customer's home. Funding for the program is on a first-come, first-served basis.

EE.c.04 - Program makes rain barrels available

Although not provided locally, rain barrels are encouraged as a way to store water for use during times of dry weather. Information on their purpose and how to construct them is provided on the City's [website](#) and through social media tools.

Rain barrels can also be purchased at local hardware stores.

EE.c.05 - Low-flow water device incentives available -

The [use of these devices is encouraged](#) to conserve water, but no incentives are provided.



Area residents and employees from the local Ford plant at a recent Team Up to Cleanup event



On Liberty in Bloom Spring Cleanup Day more than 300 people helped pick up litter, plant flowers, mulch trees and more.



Trash, Recycling, and Reuse Management

EE.d.01 - Residential curbside trash collection is required and EE.d.02 - Residential curbside recycling collection and/or collection points are in place and EE.d.03 - Standardized labels on trash/recycling bins and/or carts and EE.d.05 - Yard waste composting pick-up and/ or drop-off available

The City prides itself on having a comprehensive solid waste management program. This program includes semi-automated trash and yard waste collection, curbside and drop-off recycling, as well as participation in a household hazardous waste collection program.

The City's trash collector provides new customers with two 65-gallon, lidded and wheeled carts. One cart is for trash, and the second, which has a yellow lid, is for recyclables. The lid on the recycling cart includes an infographic showing what can and cannot be recycled.

Glass cannot be recycled curbside, but through a partnership with [RippleGlass](#), there are several glass recycling collection bins throughout the city. RippleGlass, which has recycling containers throughout the Kansas City metropolitan area and beyond, has a Kansas City area customer who converts the recycled glass into fiberglass insulation and a business in Tulsa that turns amber glass back into bottles, including those used by Boulevard Brewing Company, Kansas City's largest craft brewery.

Liberty residents can opt in to a curbside, voluntary yard waste collection program made available through the City's trash/recycling collection contract. Liberty residents can also take advantage of a regional brush/yard waste facility in nearby Gladstone.

The City offers a drop-off site for Christmas tree collections for a limited time during the holidays. The trees are mulched and used to line natural trails within City parks and mulch is available to residents if supply allows.

EE.d.06 - Prescription drug drop-off available

Our residents can safely dispose of expired or unneeded prescription drugs in a secure drop box at the Liberty Police Station. The police station's drug drop box is available 24/7, 365 days a year. Anything dropped in the box is safely disposed of by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency.

EE.d.07 - Hazardous waste and/or electronics waste collection or drop-off available

To help keep hazardous materials out of landfills and local waterways, the City participates in a regional HHW collection program. Through this program, Liberty area residents can safely dispose of HHW at mobile collection events in Liberty and other participating communities, as well as access permanent facilities in two other communities in the metropolitan area.



Liberty Police Department offers a prescription drug drop box.



In 2018, Liberty residents responsibly disposed of 81,210 pounds of household hazardous waste at mobile collection events and facilities.



The little library at Liberty City Hall offers free books for kids and adults.

The City also offers a free recycling program for cell phones and rechargeable batteries. Citizens can drop off their old rechargeable batteries and cell phones at three municipal buildings. The Liberty Public School District also offers an annual electronics-recycling event.

EE.d.08 - Plastic bag and/or foam container collection available

Area grocery stores have collection containers for plastic grocery bags.

EE.d.09 - Reuse opportunities are available (clothing, books)

Liberty is home to several thrift stores that offer quality, gently used clothing, accessories and household goods.

ReBuilding Together Kansas City, a volunteer organization that is focused on transforming the homes and lives of low-income families, seniors, people living with disabilities and veterans, runs a home improvement thrift store in Liberty that is dedicated to recycling, reusing and repurposing building materials.

The Liberty community is home to a number of official and unofficial little libraries, which operate under the premise of take a book, share a book as a way to inspire a love of reading, build community and spark creativity. One of these little libraries is a repurposed newspaper box that is now located inside Liberty City Hall.

EE.e.01 - Participation in Earth Day celebrations, and similar events that enhance public awareness of environmental issues

See Info under EE.b.03 - Litter and/or environmental cleanup procedures in use regarding Adopt A Street and Team Up To Clean Up programs

On May 5th of this year, the Liberty in Bloom committee worked to galvanize residents, churches, businesses and service organizations to spend 2 1/2 hours beautifying our community. Volunteers helped pick up litter in parks, as well as along main thoroughfares, mulched trees, planted flowers, engaged in yard work at their homes and in their neighborhoods, painted and much more. The turnout of over 300 volunteers for this first-time project was encouraging, as it reconfirmed that Liberty residents and others care enough about the city's beautification and environment to help create and maintain it. It also showed they cared about each other, as yard work for "Meals on Wheels" recipients was part of the event. It also happens to be our "Best Idea," so please see that section of the profile for the specifics.

EE.e.02 - Garden clubs, Master Gardeners, school curricula, and/or Soil and Water Conservation District, etc. provide educational opportunities for rain barrel usage, backyard habitats, and other environmental initiatives

The Master Gardeners of Greater Kansas City offers educational programs in the Kansas City metropolitan area several times each year. A recent program discussed maintaining a functioning and resilient biodiversity in landscapes.

Liberty and Kansas City area residents can tap into a "green" resource through [Greenability](#), which is a website and e-newsletter that provide a list of educational programs and events that promote green living.

Other Related Info

Going Green for Electricity: In 2019, the City of Liberty approved a contract for the installation of solar arrays at Fountain Bluff Sports Complex and beside the City's water utility wells. Once installed, the project will reduce the City's reliance on the local electric company for the sports complex and water wells and, as a result, is expected to generate an annual savings in electric bills and put the City in a position to attain solar rebates.

Celebrating Heritage

Leadership and Policy

CH.a.01 - Historic preservation ordinance provides commercial and residential district designation and protection from demolition

By ordinance, any proposed alteration to the exterior of a property, new construction and demolition of a property located in the city's historic districts or designated as a local landmark is subject to review by the City's Historic District Review Commission (HDRC).

CH.a.02 - Historic preservation ordinance provides commercial and residential individual structure designation and protection from demolition

Per the City of Liberty's Historic Preservation Ordinance, demolition, in whole or in part, of individual landmarks or any contributing primary structure within a historic district is not permitted. Deterioration caused by neglect or lack of routine maintenance by the existing owner does not provide grounds for the approval of demolition. Exceptions will be considered only if:

- The structure has been substantially damaged through fire, deterioration or natural disaster.
- The structure does not possess the integrity, originality, craftsmanship and age to merit preservation.
- There is substantial evidence that it would not be physically or economically viable to rehabilitate the structure.

CH.a.03 - Design guidelines in place to preserve the character of historic neighborhoods and/or structures

The City's Historic District Design Guidelines were written to assist property owners when planning an improvement project to ensure that the proposed work will help preserve the historic character of the property and the neighborhood. Exterior changes to property located within the historic districts are subject to review before the project begins.

The guidelines have been written to help preserve the historic integrity of the original architecture of the buildings in the historic districts, while allowing for flexibility in meeting the practical needs of the residents and property owners. Change is allowed when it is accomplished in a sensitive manner that maintains the special character of the property and the historic districts. The guidelines are based on accepted practices for historic preservation, outlined in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings.

CH.a.05 - Incentives offered to promote preservation: tax credits, waived permit fees, eased setbacks, rebates, etc.

The City offers tax abatement programs for residential and commercial property owners in historic downtown Liberty. These are designed to help property owners within a specific area preserve and enhance their homes or buildings. In return for making improvements that meet the requirements of the program, property owners may be eligible for an abatement of real estate taxes.

Beyond the local incentives, the property owners also may be eligible for state and federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits. The Department of Natural Resources' State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) works actively with historic property owners, developers and architects to promote financial incentives and provide advice on appropriate rehabilitation. SHPO staff review applications for state and federal tax certification and make recommendations for approval.

CH.a.06 - Land trusts and/or conservation easements are available

The Conservation Easement in the City of Liberty is utilized to protect natural areas in the city from development pressures. A conservation easement is used for floodplains, steep slopes and natural green areas. As development occurs, a percentage of the overall development is required to be designated as open space. A conservation easement is placed on sensitive natural areas or areas that are unique and are a benefit to be protected. The City

has a standard marker sign that every developer is required to post on every property line that intersects with the conservation easement.

CH.a.07 - Historic Preservation and/or Architectural Review Board in place

The [Historic District Review Commission](#) (HDRC) is a panel of nine appointed Liberty residents who each have some knowledge or special interest in historic preservation. The group is responsible for preserving the character of Liberty's historic districts.

The HDRC reviews applications for Certificates of Appropriateness to ensure that exterior changes made to properties in the historic districts maintain historic integrity and reflect the intent of the design guidelines. All meetings of the HDRC are open to the public.

An HDRC subcommittee of experienced preservationists is available to meet with applicants on site before or during the application process. The design subcommittee provides feedback on proposed applications, at no charge to the applicant.

CH.a.08 - Historical Society is active

The [Clay County Museum and Historical Society](#) has occupied its historic 1860's building at 14 N. Main on the Liberty Square since 1965. All of the artifacts in the three-story museum have been donated by area residents and are exhibited on a rotating basis to provide the community a connection to its past. Quarterly and annual programs offered by the historical society educate local residents and visitors on the people, places and events that created and sustained Clay County. To promote local history, volunteers create exhibits, welcome visitors and partner with businesses and nonprofits. In addition, the society engages local authors to write books, available at the museum, on the vital role Clay County played in Missouri's past.

CH.b.01 - Effective communication of ordinances, policies, and restoration methods

The Historic Preservation staff produce a quarterly e-newsletter, Historic Liberty Living, that shares information relevant to residents who live in historic districts, including information about the City's historic preservation ordinance and guidelines, when a Certificate of Appropriateness is needed and more. These newsletters include links to specific areas on the City's website related to historic preservation.

CH.b.02 - National Register of Historic Places district and/or individual designations in place

The City of Liberty has [six historic districts and eight individual properties](#) listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Listing on the register is an honorary distinction that signifies a property or district is historically, culturally or architecturally significant.

Each of the National Register Districts in Liberty has its own unique story:

The two oldest districts are the West Liberty Courthouse Square District and the South Liberty Courthouse Square District. These districts are located on the Liberty square and contain commercial buildings from the 1870s and 1880s.

The Dougherty-Prospect Heights District encompasses late 19th and early 20th century houses from the west end of the square to Fairview Street, where the former Liberty Ladies College was located, now the home of Heritage Middle School. This district has some of the finest examples of prairie and craftsman architecture in the city.

The Jewell-Lightburne District stretches from the square east to William Jewell College and contains excellent examples of Queen Anne Victorian, Georgian and Tudor Revival architecture.

Five blocks north of the Square on Main Street is the Garrison School District. This district is centered on the historically African American neighborhoods of Liberty. The cornerstone of the district is Garrison School, the first public African American school in Liberty that now serves as home to Clay County African American Legacy, Inc.

The Arthur-Leonard District features many large homes, set farther back off the street to enjoy stately views. Leonard Street offered the most direct route from the square to the Missouri River and Liberty Landing steamboat

dock. Many wealthy merchants built their homes on Leonard to show visitors to the city the wealth and prosperity found here.

In addition to the six historic districts, Liberty is home to eight individual properties that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and a number of properties that are recognized as local or county landmarks.

CH.b.03 - Natural and/or agricultural areas are protected

The City development code protects city streams and riparian corridors, the vegetated areas adjacent to the stream. These natural riparian areas of vegetation along stream banks and in floodplains reduce the velocity of floodwaters, lessening the erosive force of the water.

CH.b.04 - Archives, artifacts, cemetery records, and/or oral histories in place and properly stored

At the bequest of a local businessman and philanthropist, Liberty's first library was built at 201 E. Franklin in 1940. Since the mid-1980s, the building has been the home of the Clay County Archives and Historical Library, which is operated by an all-volunteer staff who extract information from many sources to preserve maps, pictures, documents, obituaries and personal information integral to the history of the county. The information, much of which can be found nowhere else, is entered into a large, regularly updated database. Though not a lending library, visitors are welcome to read, browse, do research and copy documents. The building was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1993.

CH.b.05 - Education: historical publications/websites, interpretive signage, and programs in place

Nine books on Liberty and Clay County history are available at the Clay County Museum.

There are several historical markers throughout Liberty that highlight facets of the community's history, including:

- The Liberty Arsenal: Active from 1836 to 1861, the arsenal was a depot for the U.S. Army on the western frontier of Missouri. Located west of the present-day intersection of Missouri Highway 291 and old 210 Highway, it was seized twice by southern sympathizers, once during the "Bleeding Kansas" era in 1855 and again shortly after the outbreak of the Civil War. In October 2012, an historical marker was placed at the site, although nothing remains of any of the buildings except one partial wall. The land is privately owned.
- The Liberty Spring: When the founding members of the town of Liberty had to decide where to build a town, they considered the site carefully. They settled upon an area that was four miles from the Missouri River, protected by hills on three sides and near an endless supply of cold, pure water – the Liberty Spring. The Alexander Doniphan Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution dedicated the site with a plaque inscribed, "Around this inexhaustible spring was founded the City of Liberty, July 1, 1822." The sign is



The Freedom Fountain celebrates African American pioneers in Clay County



Clay County Savings Bank, also known as the Jesse James Bank Museum, is one of eight properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



There are a number of markers throughout the community that detail historic figures or events.

located just south of the Liberty square on Missouri Street.

- Lewis & Clark Expedition: Commissioned by President Thomas Jefferson, the Lewis & Clark expedition left St. Louis in 1804 and traveled along the Missouri River adjacent to this site. This marker, located within the Fountain Bluff Sports Complex, shows the route taken by the expedition and describes what the explorers likely saw in the area.
- Freedom Fountain Monument: Located at the corner of Water and Franklin streets, this monument and fountain honors and celebrates African American pioneers and their contributions to Clay County. The Freedom Fountain is placed near the location where enslaved people were regularly bought and sold more than 175 years ago. The general-use fountain reminds citizens of an earlier era when residents drank from segregated fountains. The back of the monument lists Clay County African American businesses, churches, schools and pioneer families from the 1800s to the present day for all visitors to see. Dedicated in June 2001, this monument was made possible by Clay County African American Legacy Inc.

Commemoration

CH.c.01 - Signage in place for historic neighborhoods and/or structures

Established by Liberty Historic District Review Commission, with the support of the Liberty Preservation and Development Commission, the Century House Project celebrates the rich history of architecture in Liberty. Owners of Liberty houses and commercial buildings 100 years or older are invited to participate in the voluntary program. Once the age of the building is confirmed, a custom plaque showing the building's construction date is ordered and prominently displayed on the front of the home or building. The owners are encouraged to document interesting anecdotes about their home, creating an ongoing history of the building.

Each registered Historic District is marked with signs that denote the district.

CH.c.02 - Historical museum(s) and/or interpretive displays maintained

See also CH.a.08 – Historical Society is active for information about The Clay County Museum and Historical Society

In 1966, Jack Wymore, a Liberty attorney, purchased the Clay County Savings Bank, at which a gang of men, one of them allegedly Frank James, pulled off the first successful peacetime daylight bank robbery in US history. A descendant of the student slain in the robbery, Wymore created the Jesse James Bank Museum with period furnishings and tour guides portraying Greenup Bird. Visitors can peer into the original green vault and view numerous photos and documents of the time. This is one of eight properties in Liberty that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



The Frank Hughes Library is one of eight properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is home to the Clay County Archives and Historical Library.



The Liberty Square Historic District and other historic districts in the city are marked with signs that denote the district.

At 216 N. Main sits the [Historic Liberty Jail and Museum](#) on the original site of the Liberty Jail, built in 1833 and known for its most famous prisoner, Joseph Smith, first president and prophet of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints. During his four months at the Liberty Jail, Smith penned reflections to his followers, portions of which were later canonized as doctrine. In 1963, the grandson of prisoner Hyrum Smith dedicated the museum and visitors' center, which displays a cutaway reconstruction of the jail cell where the Mormon prophet suffered the cold winter. The museum is owned and maintained by the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints.

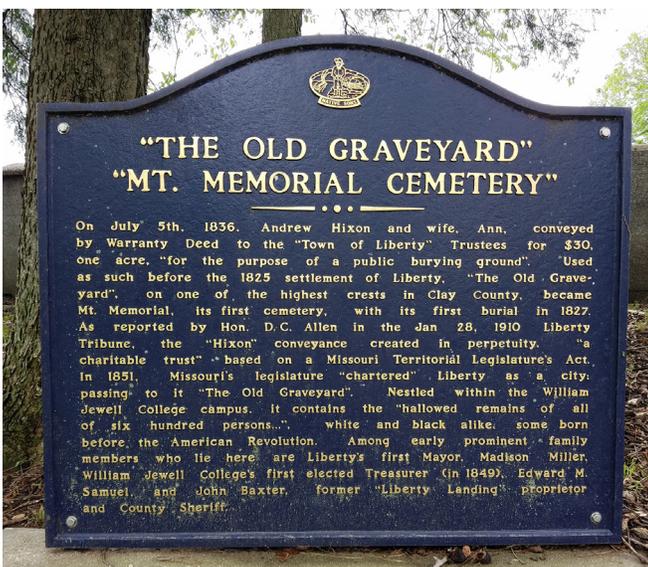
[James Country Mercantile](#) opened in 1996 at 111 N. Main. The retail store grew out of Jean and Del Warren's sutlery services, known as James Country Muzzleloading, which had grown since its founding in 1985 to outfit living historians of the Civil War era. While not a museum, James Country Mercantile helps to preserve Civil War and settler history and is now one of the largest sutleries in existence, offering a full line of historically accurate goods, custom sewing, research, consultation and associated services.

CH.c.03 - Cemeteries, monuments, and/or plaques in place and well-maintained

[Fairview Cemetery](#) was established in 1857. The name derived from the fairgrounds to the south, a site used as an encampment by Union soldiers during the Civil War. In 1901, the City acquired the fairgrounds, and the extension was named New Hope Cemetery. Now 30 rolling acres, it serves as the final resting place of some of Liberty's early prominent citizens, including Col. Alexander Doniphan. It has more than 3,000 burial sites, including those of approximately 2,000 veterans.

Located in the middle of the William Jewell College campus on one of the highest points in Clay County, [Mt. Memorial Cemetery](#), originally known as "The Old Graveyard," is believed to be the oldest cemetery in Liberty and possibly Clay County. Records indicate that the 1 1/2-half acre site was sold to the city for \$30 in 1830 "for the purpose of a public burying ground." However, it had been used as such as far back as the 1820s. Many graves were never marked, and traces of other stones have been obliterated. However, at least 10 of the remaining gravestones bear dates of birth in the 1700s. Mt. Memorial is the final resting place of six Civil War soldiers as well as many who were pioneer settlers of Liberty. In acknowledgment of its historical significance, Mt. Memorial was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2012.

The Garrison Cultural Center is a visual and educational center preserving African American history, celebrating the culture and promoting human relations. It is listed on both the National and Local Registers of Historic Places. Established in 1877, Garrison was the first public school for African American youth and had been named in honor



Located in the middle of the William Jewell College campus, Mt. Memorial Cemetery is believed to be the oldest cemetery in Liberty and possibly Clay County.



In the Clay County Historical Museum, housed in an 1860s building on Main Street, volunteers develop three floors of exhibits that feature artifacts donated by area residents.

The Clay County Historical Society offers regular educational program to local residents and visitors on the people, places and events that created and sustained Clay County.

of William Lloyd Garrison, a New England abolitionist. It is the only historically African American school still standing in Clay County.

CH.c.04 - Community heritage promoted through tours (guided or self), brochures, Smartphone apps, etc.

There are a number of ways that people can engage with and learn about Liberty history, architecture and heritage.

The City, in conjunction with Historic Liberty, Inc., offers monthly tours each year May to October that highlight Liberty’s culture, architecture and history. Led by volunteers, the topics vary from year to year but often include historic districts, public art, cemeteries, churches and more.

The HDLI website provides eight virtual tours with audio: Historic Downtown Liberty Tour, Alexander Doniphan Tour, African American Story Tour, Jesse James Tour, Lightburne District Tour, Jewell District Tour, William Jewell College Tour and Dougherty District Tour.

The City website also offers downloadable/printable self-guided walking tours and virtual tours on a number of historically and architecturally significant areas and districts: African-American History Tour, Alexander Doniphan Tour, Dougherty District Tour and a Jewell-Lightburne Tour.

CH.c.05 - Parades, festivals, events, programs commemorating a community’s heritage are held

As mentioned earlier (CH.a.08), the Clay County Museum strives to enhance awareness of the community’s past through preservation and presentation of our community’s history. Currently, the museum is planning to celebrate Missouri’s upcoming bicentennial year by creating special displays and programs, as well as a documentary, that highlight Clay County and Liberty’s role in the settlement and expansion of the country. The museum was the subject of a [blog](#) on the [VisitLibertyMo.com website](#).

LibertyFest celebrates our nation’s independence with fireworks, family friendly activities, a concert, food trucks and more. It has grown to become the community’s largest single-day festival. The volunteer Liberty Summer Band presents a patriotically themed concert around the July 4th holiday.

Community Involvement

CH.d.01 - Volunteers participate in planning and implementing recognition of a community’s heritage through historical tours, parades, festivals, etc.

A steering committee of citizen volunteers appointed by the mayor was responsible for planning events for Liberty’s 175th celebration in 2004. The yearlong celebration included the publication of “Liberty for All,” a 12-chapter book written by Liberty citizens on areas of historical interest ranging from business and commerce to transportation and education. While still a few years away, the Liberty City Council and area residents are already looking to the city’s bicentennial in 2029.

See also CH.c.04 - Community heritage promoted through tours (guided or self), brochures, Smartphone apps, etc.

CH.d.02 - Volunteers participate in maintaining historical sites and structures

With no paid staff, volunteers are the lifeblood of the Clay County Archives and Historical Library. Volunteers collect, preserve, organize, index, make available and present this information to the benefit of the archives’ loyal patrons.

The Clay County African American Legacy, a 501 (C)(3) community-based organization, was founded in 2000 during the Kansas City Sesquicentennial “Celebration of the Heart.” As a project for this celebration, the organization erected a Freedom Fountain Monument on the north side of the Clay County Courthouse honoring African Americans from Liberty and surrounding cities who made contributions to the growth and development of Clay County.

Overall Impression

Leadership and Policy

Ol.a.01 - Signage ordinances enacted and enforced and Ol.a.02 And Ol.a.04 - Design style determined, applied, and consistent for: site furnishings, crosswalks, gateway entry features, banners, wayfinding signage, etc. and Ordinances are in place to address overgrown lots, abandoned vehicles, unscreened dumpsters, public nuisances, unregulated garage sales, empty storefront windows, etc. As a growing community on the edge of a large metropolitan area, the City leaders, staff and residents take great pride in the character of our city. With the help of ordinances and guidelines, City staff and volunteer committees work to protect our community's charm, character and the quality of life our residents, businesses and visitors expect.

Because signs have an obvious impact on the character, quality and economic health of the city, there is a section in the City Code (Article XIV) that the Code Enforcement officer uses to regulate signs in order to maintain and enhance the character of the city and to protect the public from hazardous and distracting displays.

Ordinances are also in place to address overgrown lots, abandoned vehicles, unscreened dumpsters, public nuisances, location and duration of temporary signs. Snipe signs and posted flyers are not allowed in the right of way.

The City's Design Guidelines are in place to help ensure that all items are designed in keeping with the overall architecture and character of the environment in which they are located. Uniformity of design for trash receptacles, benches and planters is strongly encouraged.

In addition to the City's design guidelines, Historic Downtown Liberty, Inc. (HDLI) has a design team, made up of downtown business and property owners, as well as other residents. They work to create an inviting and inclusive atmosphere, celebrate historic character and foster accessible, people-centered public spaces. They support our community's transformation by enhancing the physical and visual assets that set the Liberty Square Historic District apart.

Ol.b.01 - Site furnishings in place: water features, lamp posts, benches, bicycle racks, drinking fountains, trash and recycling receptacles, containers, planters, and cigarette receptacles

The City, with input from downtown businesses and HDLI recently added permanent seating, attractive planting beds, garbage receptacles, new LED street lighting and bike racks. In addition to the plant beds, Historic Downtown Liberty maintains a number of plant/flower containers throughout the downtown. Several downtown businesses have also placed additional outdoor benches or seating.

Ol.b.05 - Effective use of banners, murals, and/or public art & Ol.b.07 - Effective use of non-plant seasonal decorations (lights, ornaments, etc.)

HDLI has recently taken on the deployment of seasonal streetlight banners around the historic downtown. Each light pole in the downtown area sports two banners that celebrate the vibrancy of the downtown, special events, community partners or the seasons.

During the winter holiday season, downtown Liberty buildings and trees are adorned with twinkling white lights. A large 30+ foot Christmas tree stands on a platform in front of Liberty City Hall, resplendent with large red, green and gold ornaments and white lights providing a holiday backdrop for many families' Christmas photos. In July, downtown planters are adorned with American flags and many downtown businesses add bunting to their building fronts to celebrate Liberty and Independence Day.

Downtown Liberty also offers a delightful backdrop for public art, from murals to statues to sculptures.

The City and the LAC have developed an [annual sculpture program](#) that is designed to expand a permanent collection of public art by featuring additional pieces that are on display for a limited period of time. Six sculptures are currently on display through July. Each year, the City has the option to purchase at least one piece of art from

the pieces on display to add to the City’s permanent art collection. Two sculptures have been purchased in the program’s first two years, and the first, “Plumb Twisted,” has been installed at the Liberty Community Center. The second, “Open Heart,” is currently located at the corner of Main and Kansas streets and will be relocated later this year to one of the City’s popular parks. Visitors and art buffs can download the Otocast app, which will guide them on a walk that includes narrations from each artist describing his/her work. Printed maps of the walking tour are available at City Hall, the Historic Downtown Liberty, Inc. Visitors Center and Visit KC Visitors Center

The **Great Americans Statue Project** honors great figures in our history and contributes to Liberty’s aesthetic appeal to residents and tourists. Through private fundraising, the project has brought two life-sized bronze statues to historic downtown – George Washington and Missouri’s most famous writer, Mark Twain. This year, the subject of the third statue will be a woman, to be chosen from a field of five, to commemorate the 100th anniversary of women’s suffrage. This will be installed on the inside of the Liberty square at the corner of Kansas and Water streets.

The [Garrison Cultural Center](#), which was originally a school for African-American students during segregation, is now the home to a museum of Clay County’s African American history, the offices for Clay County African American Legacy, Inc., and an 800-pound bottle tree. Bottle trees are believed to trap evil spirits after dusk and vaporize them in the heat of the morning sun.

The center also recently unveiled two new murals that adorn exterior walls of the building. “Stony The Road We Trod” features the history of education of African Americans in Liberty, with images of early educators, administrators, students, Linda Brown and Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall and focuses on the famous landmark case Brown vs. Board of Education. “Sing A Song Of The Hope The Present Has Brought Us” depicts children of all races reading, researching, playing and walking to school.

At the corner of Mill and Water streets, a mural was commissioned to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Lewis and Clark expedition. It depicts the Corps of Discovery’s landing just south of Liberty on the Missouri River. The exterior walls of Clay County Buildings on Water Street are adorned with a series of ceramic murals that highlight scenes from the county’s history.

In 2018, two artists provided color for and created photo spots on an unsightly plywood wall that cordons off the site of a building collapse that occurred in 2016. One of them, a whimsical mural is inspired by events and relationships and highlights a number of community partners and events. The photo spot on the last remaining panels includes a cityscape showcasing downtown buildings and the Visit Liberty logo.

Inside Liberty City Hall, the mural “Liberty, The Heritage Years” offers a timeline of significant events in the city’s history, including the arrival of settlers at Liberty Landing in the 1820s and the first daytime robbery committed during peacetime by the infamous Jesse James Gang in 1866. The mural was dedicated in 1983.



“Out of the Woods” is one of six sculptures that adorn the streetscape in and around downtown Liberty.



Historic Downtown Liberty, Inc., provides seasonal banners.



This mural, “Sing A Song Of The Hope The Present Has Brought Us,” can be seen on the Garrison School Cultural Center.

Another set of murals located inside the Clay County Administration Building, shows significant events, places and people in Clay County history, including Mah-hos-kah “Chief White Cloud,” an Ioway Indian, and fur trader Pierre Chouteau; Henry Routt leading the 1861 raid on the Liberty Arsenal; the James Farm in 1875; and African American pioneers, businesses, churches and schools.

OI.b.06 - Effective wayfinding signage & OI.b.04 - Effective community gateway entry features

Over the last several years, City staff has worked with representatives from HDLI and the Liberty Arts Commission to develop welcome and wayfinding signage.

In 2016, after landing on a design that celebrates the historical charm of our community through colors and fonts, the City of Liberty installed welcome signs at seven entrances into our community.

The City is in the first phase of installing wayfinding signage with new parking signs and directional signage in and around downtown Liberty. The colorful, blue, white and spring-green signs are eye-catching and designed to be durable, adaptable and reflective. In the coming years, the contractor will begin adding additional signage along the main roadways, directing visitors to popular attractions and amenities.

In addition to the wayfinding signage for motorists, the City recently installed kiosks on two corners of the historic Liberty square directing visitors to businesses in the downtown area.

OI.c.04 - Condition of vacant lots, stormwater retention ponds, and swales

Vacant lots are expected to be mowed and maintained per City Code Chapter 21. Regarding stormwater, Section 30-97.9 is in place to ensure that new development occurs in a manner that has minimal impact to downstream properties as a result of proposed changes to existing drainage patterns, while maintaining sound site design principles. Sites shall be designed in accordance with the specific standards.

On-site detention or retention facilities shall be designed in such a manner that is complementary to the overall development and surrounding area. A facility easement and a covenant guaranteeing the maintenance of such facilities shall be required to be dedicated prior to the issuance of a final certificate of occupancy. Additionally, the Public Works Department has started a program to yearly inspect all stormwater detention facilities with the goal of ensuring required maintenance is regularly completed per City Code, facility easement and covenant requirements. Maintenance requirements and results of subsequent inspections are maintained in the City’s GIS system.

Chapter 31 of the City Code puts in place management controls and regulations applicable to stormwater, as well as the City’s design criteria and construction specifications and standard details. Such controls shall limit any activity which will adversely affect hydraulic and treatment functions of best management practices, detention facilities, open channels, drainage swales or enclosed stormwater conveyance systems contained within the stormwater system.



As part of a phased wayfinding signage project, colorful blue, white and spring-green parking signs that are designed to be durable, adaptable and reflective have been installed in and around downtown Liberty.



In addition to parking signs, two kiosks have been installed in downtown Liberty. Each kiosk features a map of businesses and government offices on one side and a history panel on the other. The history panels currently highlight the history of the Garrison School and Liberty square.

OI.c.05 - Lack of snipe/stake signs, billboards, and posted flyers

Snipe signs and posted flyers in the right of way are removed. Per City Code Section 30-88, all temporary signs shall be placed on private property, with the consent of the property owner, and shall not be located within a public right-of-way. Signs shall be kept in good condition and not be allowed to deteriorate. Any temporary sign in violation of these provisions may be removed by the City, and costs associated with its removal shall be the liability of the owner of the property on which it was placed.

There are limited allowances for billboards, as addressed in 30-87.5. Any nonconforming billboard which is removed is not allowed to be re-erected.

OI.d.01 - Volunteer funding and/or participation in community revitalization and improvement initiatives, such as Adopt-A-Spot, Habitat for Humanity, River Sweep, home repair programs (CHIP), disaster relief, clean-up days, etc.

See Adopt-A-Street and Team Up to Cleanup information under EE.b.03 - Litter and/or environmental clean-up procedures in use.

See Liberty in Bloom Cleanup Day information under EE.e.01 - Participation in Earth Day celebrations, and similar events that enhance public awareness of environmental issues.

Churches, families and individual volunteers from Liberty participate in Rebuilding Day, an event coordinated by Rebuilding Together Kansas City to make free repairs on homes in our community. Applications for repairs are received throughout the year, and the families that fall within the program's income guidelines (Housing and Urban Development 50% poverty level for this area) are approved for estimates.

OI.d.02 - Process is available for residents to fund public amenities such as memorial benches, brick pathways, etc.

The Liberty Parks & Rec Foundation's Annual Campaign and Golf Tournament offer residents and patrons a way to support programs and projects that would otherwise be beyond the scope of traditional funding sources. Funds raised in 2018 funds will be used for:

- Additional AED for the lower level of the Liberty Community Center.
- Additional shade structure for the outdoor pool.
- A new dog park (location TBD by the Liberty Parks & Rec Board).
- Stair lighting repairs in the Liberty Performing Arts Theatre.
- Youth scholarships for Parks & Rec programs.

The Liberty Parks & Rec Foundation's Heritage Bench program is a way to honor someone special, while also helping to beautify a park or cemetery, providing a useful amenity that thousands of park users can enjoy and appreciate for many years to come.

Similarly, the foundation's Heritage Tree program offers an opportunity to honor people and commemorate special events with a living legacy that will provide countless aesthetic and environmental benefits to our community.

Best Idea

After a snow-packed winter, followed by rain-filled spring days, we were holding our collective breath for our first Liberty in Bloom Spring Cleanup Day on May 5. As it turned out, we didn't need to, as more than 300 volunteers were able to spend 2 1/2 hours beautifying our city on a gorgeous, sun-filled day.

Organized and implemented by volunteers and three City staff, the day was a successful and rewarding initial venture that will now become an annual event.

For this endeavor, LIB board members combined their passion for the city and its environment with their strong belief in the strength of volunteerism and community service. There was an opportunity to engage in a common cause, and Liberty residents clearly showed they cared about their community.

Individuals and groups attacked a number of diverse jobs, and Parks & Rec staff and members of the Master Gardeners of Greater Kansas City were there to give guidance, assistance and provide supplies. Litter removal and cleanup happened at eight parks and five parks received flower planting, weeding and mulching in front of their entrance signs. Roadwork included efforts along some of the city's major thoroughfares, as volunteers mulched 140 trees along South Liberty Parkway and cleaned up litter along Highways 152 and 291. The downtown square benefited from cleanup, weed spraying and sweeping, while the Frank Hughes Memorial Library gained bush trimming, cleanup and painting. New underground drainage was installed, along with a new coat of pain at the Wilshire Park Shelter.

Volunteers also did yard work for "Meals on Wheels" recipients who might not be able to complete the work on their own, and at the Liberty Women's Clinic, as well as planted flowers at local churches. Twenty-two local elementary students joined in by planting flowers and shrubs at various locations at their school. It's also worth noting that many residents were seen cleaning up neighborhoods and beautifying their own yards and homes. While we can't know how much was due to promotion of the event or the welcome weather, it was gratifying to see.

Now, we will take what we learned from that day, combine it with feedback from AIB and plan for even more successful cleanup days in the future. Thanks again for visiting Liberty and know that you are always welcome!

